



Unrolling
The Scroll
Episode Three
The Things
That Shall Be

WHAT LIES INSIDE
THE OPEN DOOR???

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

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Dedication

Every time I write a book, there is a certain amount of head-scratching involved when I come to the dedication page. Sometimes it's the very last thing I do in completing the book, not because of a lack of candidates, but rather because it is so hard to pick one out of the many people who have significantly influenced my life, theology and ministry. This time, the honor goes to a man who I never had the privilege of meeting, but look eagerly forward to meeting in heaven, one Robert Van Kampen. I had never heard of Van Kampen and knew nothing of his work, but it was his book, *The Sign*, that provided the inspiration and encouragement I so badly needed when I first began this work over 15 years ago. As I have amply chronicled in other *Episodes*, the Lord had challenged me to teach the Revelation of Jesus Christ. When I first began the mission, I was firmly Pre-Trib in my thinking. But as I began to systematically study and outline both Revelation and the Olivet Discourse, it became painfully obvious that neither text, both foundational to End-Times theology, could ever possibly support a Pre-Trib Rapture stance. Now I was faced with a quandary. I could no longer in good conscience continue to preach Pre-Trib when I knew it was not true. Yet when I tried to present my new-found knowledge, I was scorned and rejected by all of my Christian friends, all of whom were firmly Pre-Trib. After months of futility and frustration, I had come to the verge of quitting the entire project, convinced that I was alone in my convictions. Then one day a large cardboard container mysteriously appeared in the mail. I was puzzled. I hadn't ordered anything, and neither had Bev. When I opened the box, I discovered, much to my amazement, a large book entitled *The Sign*. I had never heard of the book, or of its author, one Robert Van Kampen. Frankly, I had no idea who had decided to send me the book. To this day, that remains a mystery. Perhaps I'll find out in the Resurrection. I owe them a great debt of gratitude. As I began to read Van Kampen's story, I found a man that I could respect for his scholarship. He had embarked on a similar quest many years before, and for 8 full years, tried to match one Biblical passage with another in order to determine the correct order of events in the End Times. He, too, had faced categorical rejection from his contemporaries and peers for the views he arrived at. What controversial doctrine had he espoused? A **Pre-Wrath Rapture** viewpoint, exactly the same conclusion that I had arrived at on my own several months before! I was thrilled to the core of my very being. Here, for the first time, was another individual who, through careful scholarship and dedicated research, had arrived at the same general conclusion as I had! Finally I felt vindicated. I no longer felt alone in the universe. Somebody else saw the same thing that I did. That book gave me the courage to continue on in my studies and strengthened me in my conviction that what I was seeing was the truth. Although Van Kampen and I disagree on other issues, notably about how to synchronize the Olivet Discourse and the Seals of Revelation, nonetheless, we are still in unity about the critical placement of the Rapture, and the disastrous consequences for all of those who are vainly hoping to be air-lifted out of this planet before the Tribulation comes. Since that time, Brother Van Kampen has gone on to be with the Lord, so I guess we will have to meet in person as he comes back down and I go up. Regardless of the circumstances, I plan on giving him a great big hug and telling him how eternally grateful I am to him for being the man who strengthened me and encouraged me to continue on in my research. We will then spend a few moments outlining all the areas that we missed God on, have a good laugh over our short-sightedness, and then go on discussing the glorious, wonderful Word of God for perhaps the next hundred years. Without Van Kampen's book, none of these books would ever have been written. Brother Robert, I salute you, in the Mighty Name of Jesus! Amen and Amen!

Dr. Ray Young

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

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."* 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 third of seven episodes, 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!**

For further information on how to obtain additional copies of this book, any of the other Episodes, 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 ~ After These Things



“1 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 last Episode, we examined the **things that are**, or, at least, **were** at the time that Jesus was personally dictating this letter of all letters to his faithful servant John. Since John the Revelator was also the Bishop-in-exile of Asia Minor, today known as Turkey, it was impossible for him to visit his churches and assess in the Spirit was what going on in each city. Denied that privilege, he was still burdened with the responsibility for overseeing each body of believers to make sure that they walked the straight and narrow. And their walk, according to Revelation Chapters 2 and 3, was far from straight and even further from narrow. Once the Lord had dealt with the issues which were first and foremost on the mind of the Apostle, He then redirected John’s attention to **future** events. In that regard, the entire Book of Revelation is constructed much like a modern day business meeting. According to the *Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies*, a.k.a. *Robert’s Rules of Order*, published in 1876 by U.S. Army Major Henry Martyn Robert, **old business** is always conducted and dealt with totally before **new business** can be brought to the assembled group. Almost all deliberative bodies in the Western world adhere to these guidelines. Robert devised the rules after being asked to preside over a church meeting. When procedural and parliamentary issues came up, Roberts found himself at a loss as to how to proceed. Out of that chaos came his now-famous book. In the case of Revelation, the Lord felt it necessary to deal with **current business** (the Seven Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor) before He began the discussion with John about **future business**.

This is so very often the prophetic model found throughout the entirety of Scripture. Here’s the standard pattern that appears again and again:

First, the people of God will find themselves in a crisis. This crisis is generally a self-inflicted wound caused by the rebellion and sinfulness of the people themselves.

Second, the people of God come to the Man of God and plead with him to intercede with the Lord for their deliverance, an answer, direction or some other form of supernatural revelation. Sometimes step one never actually happens and we begin with this step because the Man of God already recognizes that things are in very bad order and takes it upon himself to intercede, even if the people have not requested it. Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, Jeremiah, Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jesus Himself all found themselves on their faces before the Father pleading for someone else’s needs.

Third, God hears the prayer and honors the intercession of the Man of God and appears to Him or speaks to Him about the **current need** of the people which brought him to the Lord in the first place. The Lord then deals with the issue and either acts or provides instructions about what to do. This completes the initial request dealing with **current business**.

Fourth, while God has the Man of God in a position of prayer and supplication, and while an active communications link has been established between the Almighty and the prophet, the Lord then **shifts**

the focus of the conversation to future events, things that shall take place. This is a universal pattern followed throughout Scripture, and it is precisely the pattern followed faithfully here by the Lord. During this second phase of the Divine conversation, the Lord begins to establish additional future information that turns into what we call prophecy. Ironically, it is almost always the **temporal need** which leads to the **future revelation**. In order to support and document this process, let me **temporarily** redirect your attention to one of the most famous End-Time prophets of all, Daniel.

As you have already discovered, in following one trail of Scriptural breadcrumbs, we always find ourselves encountering yet another trail of breadcrumbs and off we go on that trail as well! Since **Scripture interprets Scripture**, it is logical to expect that **one Scripture would lead to another Scripture**, and **one principle or doctrine would invariably lead to another principle or doctrine**. When you study the Bible, you are not reading a random collection of mindless sayings and fictional events. No, dear friends, you are reading the most marvelous, complex, interleaved **systematic theology** book ever written. As you follow these seven Episodes, you will begin to discover that all of this stuff amazingly seems to tie together. One event logically produces the next. One thought automatically leads to a second related thought. Now, the Bible at a random glance does not appear to be this way. It's only when you start to dig deep that suddenly you discover the amazing network of interconnectivity from one passage to another.

When Daniel began to realize that the Holy Spirit was working on him and in him, he did what any good Jewish scholar and administrator would have done; **he began to study the lives and works of other prophets to see how God had dealt with them in the past**. That shouldn't come as such a surprise to us. After all, if you want to become a good baseball player, you study the films and writings of other famous and successful baseball players who have played in the past. If you want to become a successful real estate investor, you would do well to read Donald Trump's book, *The Art of the Deal*. A truly wise man becomes wiser by studying the works of other wise men. That's why I am constantly learning. I love the learning process. I gain more information, am able to make wiser choices for me and my family, and grow in my own walk with the Lord. In short, it makes me a better man and a better Man of God. If ego and pride stand in the way of this learning process, the individual will soon become known as a fool, because he will eventually disregard wise counsel and cause himself great harm in doing so. In particular, as Daniel studied, he concentrated on the lives of two Major Prophets, **Isaiah** and **Jeremiah**. By reading the writings of these two great Men of God, Daniel gained crucial information and understanding that helped him to grow and mature into the incredible Man of God that he became. I have documented the amazing revelation that Daniel had by studying the prophet Isaiah in another Episode. Our attention today needs to be drawn to what he learned by reading the prophet **Jeremiah**.

*"¹ In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—² in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, **understood by the books the number of the years** specified by the word of the LORD **through Jeremiah the prophet**, that He would accomplish **seventy years** in the desolations of Jerusalem." – Daniel 9:1-2*

Why was Daniel studying Jeremiah in the first place? After all, wasn't **he** the anointed of the Lord? Why, his anointing alone should have been enough to sustain him, right? That cry is the lament of every failed man and woman of God down through history. They tried to place all their confidence in their anointing. Unfortunately, the Lord requires that we study to show ourselves approved, doesn't He? Only men and women of God who take upon themselves the responsibility to take that raw anointing and refine the vessel in which it is carried become forces for good and not evil. Paul told Timothy that in every household, there were vessels for noble purposes and other vessels for common purposes. And he further stated that if a man will **purify himself**, he will become a **fit vessel capable of every good use** (II Timothy 3:20-21). This is why Daniel was studying. He wasn't studying to find the Word of the Lord given to Jeremiah about the 70 years. He was studying to **show himself approved**. And if you study for that reason, and with that motive in mind, God will open His Holy Word to you and give you revelation after revelation after revelation. John wasn't looking for a book to write that fateful day on Patmos. Rather, he was simply in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, focusing himself on his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And **as he worshipped**, he heard a loud voice behind him, saying...

The result of that pure-hearted worship brought him into the presence of the Almighty, and produced this ultimate and final book in God's revelation to mankind. And as I have meditated on the 22 chapters of that marvelous book, this series of seven books has arisen out of it. I have learned more about Revelation, the End Times, the Lord and a million other topics than I ever thought possible. And, as Daniel searched the writings of the prophet Jeremiah, seeking to understand how his predecessor handled the prophetic burden and dealt with the forces inside of him that sometimes seemed to tear him in half, he stumbled across something that was on the minds and hearts of Jews all throughout the empire, "When do we get to go back to Jerusalem?" Quickly, Daniel made a series of calculations. He knew that Jeremiah had prophesied that **70 years would pass** before the Jews would be allowed to return to their homeland. In fact, Jeremiah had mentioned it twice, once in Chapter 25 and once in Chapter 29.

"⁸ Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words,⁹ behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the LORD, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations.¹⁰ Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.¹¹ And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and **these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.**" – Jeremiah 25:8-11

"¹⁰ For thus says the LORD: After **seventy years are completed at Babylon**, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.¹¹ For **I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.**¹² Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.¹⁴ I will be found by you, says the LORD, and **I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.**" – Jeremiah 29:10-14

It was one of these two passages, probably the latter, that brought Daniel to his knees. He knew that once 70 years were complete, the Jews could return home. Now he had to calculate backwards in time and determine what year it was that Jeremiah spoke these words. Then he calculated forward and discovered, much to his amazement, that the 70 years had **been fulfilled!** It was time to go home! Halleluia! But instead of running right out and organizing a wagon train home, Daniel did the next very wise thing. He submitted that revelation to intense personal prayer and intercession. What happened next floored him even more than the discovery of the 70 year prophecy.

"³ Then **I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.**⁴ And **I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, 'O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,**⁵ **we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.'**" – Daniel 9:3-5

Daniel had already learned two other major prophetic keys: **First**, that just because a revelation has been **given**, doesn't mean that it will be **implemented** automatically. That implementation will only occur if the Man or Woman of God gets down on their knees and prays and fasts and implores God to bring to pass what He has promised. The Lord always uses the "carrot and the stick" approach in moving us toward Him. In ancient times, a donkey would be harnessed to a cart in order to pull it. In order to get the donkey, and, of course, the cart as well, going, the driver used both a carrot and a stick for motivation. He would tie a carrot on the end of a long pole, and extend it just beyond the reach of the hungry donkey's mouth. The **carrot** is the positive, encouraging, rewarding portion of the message. The donkey knew that at the end of the journey, if he pursued the carrot with enough enthusiasm, he would finally "catch up to it" and get to eat it. But, on the other hand, if he did **not** pursue the carrot with enough enthusiasm and speed, there was always the stick waiting. If the donkey lolled around and didn't move forward as fast as the driver thought he should, the donkey

would feel the sting of the stick on his bottom. The **stick** is the negative, punishing, reproof part of the message. And every true message from God will always have a little of both. That's one of the major problems with the so-called prophets of today. Their messages are "carrots only". Yet prophets all through history have always had both the carrot and the stick. And so the people of God go nowhere, for a carrot alone is not enough to drive them forward and into the protective arms of a loving God. I know of no one who came to the Lord just because He was so darned nice and good. Everyone I know came to Christ because they were in such desperate straits that they had no choice. And that, dear friends, in what the stick is all about.

The **Second** prophetic key that Daniel understood is that **prophetic revelation releases more prophetic revelation**. What do I mean by that? The **first** prophetic revelation is the trigger to move you into an intense time of seeking after God. That intense time of seeking after God then brings you **into His presence**, where you receive **supplemental prophetic revelation**. And the longer you stay in His presence, the more revelation you get. And that's precisely what happened next:

"²⁰ Now **while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,** ²¹ yes, **while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.** ²² And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, 'O Daniel, **I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.** ²³ **At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:**" – Jeremiah 9:20-23

How incredible! While the fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous man (James 5:15) is still on his lips, the answer comes! The archangel Gabriel informs Daniel that he received his flight plans **the very moment that Daniel began to pray!** He further informs him that he is **greatly beloved**. God **loves** those who seek after Him, who are fervent and passionate about a relationship with the Almighty. Yes, I know, He loves everyone. I love all my children, too. But I love even more the ones that come to me and say that they want to spend time with me because they love me, too. Daniel's **second** revelation is the result of the correct, fervent response to the **first** revelation. But there's more!

"²⁴ **Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.** ²⁵ Know therefore and understand, that **from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.** ²⁶ And **after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.**" – Daniel 9:24-26

Omigosh! Suddenly revelation is pouring into Daniel faster than he can comprehend or deal with it. Gabriel has just told him that **seventy weeks** or weeks of years, 490 years in all, will pass before everything will be taken care of. But in the process, Daniel has just become the first person in the history of the world to learn the **exact timing of the appearing of the Messiah**. 490 years later, acting on this prophecy and a special star in the heavens, *Magi* from Babylon would come to Herod in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is He who is born King of the Jews?" (Matthew 2:2). How did they know about a king to be born in Israel? Through the writings of the greatest Magi of all times, a man named *Belteshazzar*, whose Hebrew name was **Daniel!** Just as Jeremiah's writings had been preserved for Daniel to read and study, so Daniel's prophecies, given completely in ancient Babylon, had been preserved by the Magi of Babylon down through the centuries and studied with the same intensity and reverence that Daniel had afforded the works of Jeremiah. In addition, Gabriel has just instructed Daniel that Messiah will be **cut off, but not for Himself**, referring to His crucifixion and death for our sins! That alone would have marked Daniel as one of the greatest prophets of all time, but there's even more!

"²⁷ Then **he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.**" – Daniel 9:27

Wanna know where the Pre-Trib camp gets their Seven-Year Tribulation from? Right here! That covenant with many for **one week** refers to **seven days of years**, and the 3½ year / 3½ year split comes from the phrase **in the middle of the week**. Now, interpretations of this verse abound wildly in all directions. Some prophecy experts say it refers to what the Roman General Titus did to Jerusalem in AD 70. Others say it refers exclusively to a future Anti-Christ. Some say it is a multiple fulfillment and refers to both. Either way, it is the most dramatic, detailed vision ever given to a solitary human being. Later on in his career, Daniel will be given even more detailed information than this. The level of revelation is so high, and the detail so astoundingly accurate that some critics have said that these "prophecies" aren't really prophecies at all but rather written down **after the fact**. That can't be true, however, since Daniel in its current form was already in the Greek version of the Old Testament called the **Pentateuch** several hundred years before these events came to pass!

Now, all of this comes as a direct result of seeking after God based on an initial revelation! If you are a Man or Woman of God, and you want more revelation from God in your life, then **stick your nose in the Sacred Scriptures** and don't let up until the revelation starts to flow afresh into your tired limbs. I am anointed of God just talking about it! I can feel the fire of God flowing in my belly. Halleluia! Maybe them old-timey Pentecostals were right after all! It **is** enough to make you want to run and shout!

Just as Daniel experienced a veritable flood of revelation about the End Times by studying and seeking God, so John did the same by being in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. He had current day concerns just like Daniel. But once God had finished dealing with the **current events**, it was time to shift gears and **move into the future!**

Once we've established what **that** was all about, we find ourselves staring straight into another mystery. What on earth is this "*door open in heaven*" stuff all about, anyway? Ironically, it's much the same issue as shifting from a current focus to a future focus, only now it's about moving from a **temporal viewpoint** to an **eternal viewpoint**. If I'm thinking about and talking about temporal, temporary things, it's hard not to have an earthly viewpoint. Frankly, the vast majority of our prayers are temporal, being prayed about temporary things. As a pastor, I even developed an acronym for it. Over the years, I have heard a number of excellent songs from a Contemporary Christian rock group called **F.F.H.** Their initials stand for **Far From Home**. I've borrowed the initials, but not the interpretation. In my 30 years in the ministry, I have found that the overwhelming majority of prayers and prayer requests center around my own version of F.F.H., **Finances, Family and Health**. That's why TV ministries spend so much time on these subjects; they occupy most of the waking thoughts of their viewers. I'm no different. I just add one more letter into the mix: **M** for **Ministry**. For me, that includes ministry opportunities, ministry and personal anointing, the books I write and all the related things that make up the one thing that drives me from the moment I wake up till the moment my head drops exhausted on the pillow. Ministry consumes me. I so totally identify with what Paul said, "*Woe be unto me if I do **not** preach the Gospel!*" (I Corinthians 9:16). It should also include a whole lot more prayer than it does, and a whole lot more fasting, but, hey, I'm working on it and making some small progress. Other than that, finances to pay bills and fund ministry outreaches and publish books; my five children, none of whom unfortunately at the writing of this article are following the Lord, even though I personally led each one of them through a prayer of salvation when they were children; and my health, battling and overcoming a heart attack, malignant, inoperable cancer, losing 80 pounds because of extreme reactions to chemo, terrible peripheral neuropathy in both hands and feet, total deafness in my right ear and partial deafness in my left ear; these are the things that I pray most about. Frankly, I should spend a great deal more time praying for other people than I do. And I do pray a great deal about Ruth and Raj and the 50 orphans and 80 teenage college students in Narsapur, India. I am strongly tempted to move there, because of the overwhelming opportunities to minister the Gospel. I've even thought about how I could work it out. Believe it or not, I am on total disability. You would never guess it from the intensity and passion of the pen that God has put in my hands, but

just remember that for almost three years, everything in my life was taken away from me **except** my ability to write. And so write I have. Although this is the third book in the series, it is the fourth book that I have written. Long story there, not worth the telling. When I get done with these, there are a whole series of Christian Science Fiction books just racing around in my head, begging to get out on parchment (or at least in a Word Processor somewhere!). All of these are **temporal concerns**. But when the power of the Holy Spirit comes on me, at some point in the conversation between the Almighty and the Far-Less-Than-Mighty Me, there is going to be a change in the **location** of the conversation so that the **nature** of the conversation can change. Paul experienced the same thing in his life and ministry. According to Luke in the Book of Acts, Paul started preaching straightaway after his conversion experience. But in Galatians, Paul lets us in on a little secret: before he started preaching, he took a little camping trip.

" ¹⁵ *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,* ¹⁶ *to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, **I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,*** ¹⁷ *nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but **I went to Arabia,** and returned again to Damascus."* – Galatians 1:15-17

Arabia? What the heck was in Arabia? Later on, Paul answers his own question.

" ²⁴ *...which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—* ²⁵ *for this Hagar is **Mount Sinai in Arabia,** and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—* ²⁶ *but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all."* -- Galatians 4:24-26

OK. I'll buy that. But answering one question raises another. Why on earth did Paul feel compelled to travel all the way to Arabia to Mount Sinai? Well, Moses went there, specifically directed by the Lord. So did Elijah, when it was called Mt. Horeb. And it is entirely possible that when Jesus was driven or compelled by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness, that He, too, went to the next most important mountain in the world. When Paul got there, what happened? The answer to that question is also found in one of his letters, written to the church at Corinth.

" ¹ *It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: ² **I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven.***"
-- II Corinthians 12:1-2

Paul had what we would call an out-of-body experience. Driven to the mountain of God by the overwhelming desire to understand what Jesus had just placed on him ("*I must show him how much he must suffer for My Name's sake*" – Acts 9:16), Paul found himself pulled up out of his body into the **3rd Heaven**, the heaven of heavens, so that he could receive the **Gospel to the Gentiles**, a radical paradigm shift involving the abandonment of Jewish legalism and the introduction of justification by faith alone, and a shift from the Jews to the Gentile world which would never be accepted by Jerusalem. We owe Paul a tremendous debt of gratitude for being willing to suffer for His Name. Without him, you and I would probably never have heard of Jesus, and would never have come to a saving faith in Him.

Keeping Paul on an earthly plane would not have sufficed for this enormous download to occur. Everything mortal and temporal had to be removed from the scene, and the only way to do that was to **open a portal into heaven so that Paul's spirit could pass through and receive all of this new information**. Only then could his spirit be returned and rejoined with his body. So it was for the Apostle John. He was shown a doorway into heaven. Why? So that he could be shown the **things that will be**. **Future** tense. **Supernatural** revelation. **Eternal** viewpoint.

Again and again, all through history, men and women of God are pulled out of the **temporal** and into the **eternal**, out of the **flesh** and into the **Spirit** so that God can impart into them things that have yet to happen, or to see the world in a way that would be impossible in the natural. I don't have time in

this article, but I could show you at least another dozen or so examples of this in your Bible. That is why John is show a doorway open into heaven, and instructed to come up **there**, instead of being stuck down **here**.

There is another critical issue that must be dealt with. Having correctly defined and documented exactly what **did** happen on that fateful day on Patmos, I must now deal rather harshly with what **didn't** happen. For most Pre-Trib advocates, Revelation 4:1 is a pivotal Scripture. They say that John is representative or symbolic of the church and that the open door in heaven is the Rapture. **Nothing could be further from the truth.** As we will find out down the road a bit, the actual Rapture is **clearly** documented as occurring at the end of the 6th Seal, the Great Tribulation, in Revelation 7:9, when John sees a vast multitude from every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue standing before the Throne and the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches. In Revelation 7:13-14, one of the 24 Elders actually comes up to John to ask who these people are and where they came from. When John is unable to answer, the Elder calmly identifies them as **those who have come up out of the Great Tribulation.** This timeline also clearly synchronizes with the Olivet Discourse found in Matthew 24 and 25. Jesus clearly says that **he who endures to the end shall be saved.** But I am not concerned in this article with defending and defining where the Rapture actually occurs. I am far more concerned with the cavalier attitude with which most Pre-Trib advocates treat the Holy Word of God, and I would like to ask them a question: **Who gave you the right to change what God says and tell Him that He doesn't know what He is talking about?** Seem a little harsh? Good! It's intended to. One of the things that is most offense to God is when we **fail to take Him at His Word.** That can mean simply not walking in faith. Without faith, it is **impossible** to please God (Hebrews 11:6). But it can also mean **altering the meaning of what He has said to suit our purposes.** One of the most deadly warnings in the Bible is found at the very end.

*"¹⁸ For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;** ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the **Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.**"*

– Revelation 22:18-19

Just in case you didn't quite catch that, let me help you a bit. If you **add** to what God has said, pretending that what you have added is the Word of God and teaching other that it is, God will **add to you** all the **plagues** listed in Revelation. Seriously, do you **really** want boils all over your body? Do you want every disease known to man and a few that we haven't even encountered yet raging throughout your flesh? No??? Didn't think so. Then why do we not only **permit** but actually **teach** in cemetery (er, ah **seminary**) that the Word of God is **symbolic** and **allegorical** and that it is not only **all right** but **good hermeneutics** and **Biblical exegesis** to do so! Yeah, I know those words, but they don't mean a lot unless you hold the Word of God as inviolate and untouchable. Heathens! Am I raging? You betcha! **What demon in hell told your or your seminary professor that it was all right to twist the Word of God???** How can John be the church? According to the rules established in both the Old and New Contracts (Testaments), you are **not allowed to alter the words or the meaning of the contract without severe penalties for doing so.** In business, if you and I sign an agreement, it becomes legally binding. If I sell you my car for \$7,000.00 (like my '94 Town Car is gonna sell for that much!), and you give me the money, you have no right to come up to me a few days later and demand that I give you \$3,000.00 of that back just because you now have come to the conclusion that the wording in the contract should say \$4,000.00, not \$7,000.00! Yet that is what we do **constantly** with the Word of God. We say that **this** actually means **that** and that this word is **symbolical and allegorical** and God didn't really mean **that**, He meant **this instead.** Abomination! Isn't that the same line that Lucifer used on Eve in the Garden? How did that whole thing come out? Not well for either party? I see. And if Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and **forever** and **He doesn't ever change**, then why in the world would the rules for interpreting Scripture change? Do you see what I am driving at? When I challenge a current interpretation of a word or phrase or sentence, I don't make up an alternate, allegorical meaning. Instead, I go to the **root word or words in Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek to see what they actually mean.**

But adding things to the Word of God isn't the worst thing you can do. The Lord specifically says that if you **take away** from the words written in this book, that God will **take away from you your right to eternal life!** **Friend, when your name is erased from the Book of Life and you are denied access to the Eternal City, where is the only other place you can go???**

Do you see now why I become so angry with most so-called "experts"? Almost without fail, they take Scriptures, one after another, and say, "Well, **this doesn't mean that. It means this instead**". They pay little or no attention to the actual words, phrases and contexts used. They grab a little of this and a little of that and throw it into their spiritual, allegorical, symbolic blender. God only knows **what** it is when it comes out, but you ain't gonna get **me** to swallow something that looks like **that!** If I have offended you, well and good. If you expect me to apologize, you're gonna have a very, very long wait. Friend, I don't **think** I'm right on this issue. I **know** I'm right. And that's not arrogance to say it that way, either. **I have placed my absolute trust in the Holy, inerrant Word of God and He has never failed me yet!!!**

Let me ask you, as the Apostle Paul might have, have you ever laid hands on someone and seen their tongue grow into their mouth? I have. Have you ever shut the sky in a one hour driving radius around a major city for three weeks during rainy season? I have. And I have done much, much more. Has God ever given you the actual name of someone in a studio audience that you have never met nor heard of before? He has done that for me! What??? Am I some sort of superman? Hah! Go to the end of this book and take a good hard look at the picture of the aging, goofy-looking guy in the glasses and tell me if you think he looks like superman! Am I some super-spiritual Elijah? If only. I'm working on it, buddy, I'm working on it. I have more flaws than a bad theorem. More weaknesses than a bridge made out of knotty pine. I get tired, my feet hurt constantly and I fall off stages every now and then (did that in India!), yet God uses me to perform mighty signs, miracles and wonders. Why??? **Because I honor Him and His Holy Word as being literal, logical and chronological. Because I steadfastly maintain that God's word needs no adding to or subtracting from. All it needs is simple explanation and interpretation of what He said.** When I teach this series to people for the first time, they tell me two things again and again. **First**, that they had **no idea** that teaching on the End Times had become so **badly twisted**. **Second**, that they are amazed how **easy all of this is to understand** when somebody just sits down with them and **takes God Almighty at His Holy Word!**

Now, if I haven't chased you out of the room, let's sit down together for just a second, shall we? You do realize what I just did, don't you? When Jesus got tired of the circus chasers who were only in the ministry as groupies so that they could see more bread and fish miracles, He **deliberately** said some things that He **knew** were going to outrage and offend the faint of heart. **Eat His body**, He thundered. **Drink His blood** He added. And then, the vast majority of the "faithful" proved that they weren't very faithful after all and headed out the door, leaving a large cloud of dust behind them. Then Jesus turned to the remaining Twelve and glowered at them. "**Well,**" He almost snarled, "**are you going to leave, too???**" It was what athletes call "gut-check" time. The Twelve looked at one another, and then looked back at Jesus. "**Master,**" Peter replied, "**Where else would we go? You alone have the Words of life and truth!**" Dear friends, I want you to know that I am telling you the truth, and that many others are not. It hurts to cry out and have no one listen. It hurts to know that American Christianity is about to come to a horrible, perverse end. It is devastating to watch the car you are riding in heading straight for a brick wall, and yet the driver not only refuses to see that it is there, but pretends not to hear you at all. Even the so-called "revival" sites talk about a "*final window of opportunity*" that America might escape through. Hah! Fat chance of that! We passed that window a long time ago, and never even looked out of it. And most of all, it hurts beyond belief to watch false prophets prophecy smooth lies to an ever-adoring public who throw money at them like it is going out of style. And yet we sit here, crying out to God for the resources to save the 400 million children of India under the age of 14. We could convert the entire sub-continent in one generation. But no, we will spend more money on **dog food** than we do on **missions!** Didn't know that? It's true! My heart cries out for America and for the church. There is a terrible judgment coming, and coming soon. It is inescapable. It is inevitable. And it is coming for **you** and for **me**. If we are not ready, it will carry us all away into a Lake that burns forever, not cools and soothes.

Forgive me for being so angry. If you've never ready any of my stuff before, I've probably scared you right out the door. But if something inside of you is whispering that this man speaks the truth, you'd better hang around to see what else I might say. I might scare you badly enough to truly get you saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost! I might offend you badly enough for you to pick up your dusty, unused, unread Bible and crack it open to see if I'm telling you the truth or not. I will stop here for today. If I don't, I'll probably preach at you for another ten pages, and we can't have that, can we? We'll take a brief breather for now, because tomorrow, you and I are going to be ***In the Spirit.*** Amen and Amen!

Day 2 ~ In the Spirit



“² Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.” – Revelation 4:2

People often ask me where I come up with the pictures for each of these articles. I tell them it often isn't easy. I use the internet constantly in writing these books, and I generally have a link open at all times to either the *Yahoo* or *Google* image search engine. In the case of today's picture, I went through at least 10 screens full of pictures on both sites before I settled on the four or five that I thought best represented the topic I wanted to talk about. I then compared one picture to another, to try and find one that stood out from the rest. This wonderful picture of a man worshipping the Lord finished in a dead heat with another picture. I prayed briefly, and here you have it!

There is nothing so profoundly misunderstood in traditional Christianity today as what the Bible means by the phrase **in the Spirit**. Dead, intellectual Fundamentalists have stripped it of all of its power and glory. So, already you know I'm going to upset some people with what I am about to say. Now yesterday I was fairly hostile, because I was dealing with a subject that is very near and dear to my heart, the literal accuracy and non-negotiability of the divinely inspired Word of God. On this subject, I can be a little more dispassionate, because I have walked in the shoes of some of the critics, and I understand where they are coming from, or, in a literal sense, where they are **not** coming from.

In order to understand what the Bible means by the phrase, "*in the Spirit*", we have to do a little research and look at the **circumstances surrounding the use of the phrase**.

In Revelation Chapter 1, John says that he was **in the Spirit on the Lord's Day**. Later on, in Chapter 4, the passage we are looking at today, he says that he was **in the Spirit** and was suddenly caught up through the open door and into the very Throne Room of God Himself. Later on, in Chapter 17, he will find himself **carried away in the Spirit** to the wilderness where he will see the Great Whore of Babylon. And finally, in Chapter 21 he will be **carried away in the Spirit** one last time when he gets to behold the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven in all her glory. If you look at the four passages, there's an interesting difference between the first one found in Chapter 1 and all the rest. In the final three passages, it's almost as if John is **shifting gears**, going from one phase of the vision to another. But in the first usage of the term, being **in the Spirit** is something that John has **chosen to do**, in some way or form which is a mystery to most of the church in America. Notice I said, **in America**. We have so lost our connection with the supernatural element of the Gospel in Western society that it has crippled the church as a whole. Frankly, it has only been in the last hundred years or so that Western Christianity has begun to recover its supernatural heritage. It rightfully owned that heritage by inheritance through almost 6,000 years of God's supernatural intervention in the affairs of Israel. It took direct ownership of that heritage on the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the 120 in the Upper Room. And then, somewhere during the 3rd Century, while trying to make itself look pleasing to those who had been raised up in Greek philosophy, it began to disassociate itself from the very thing that made it pleasing to God. By about the 5th Century, all it had were distant memories of the "good old days". Sign, wonders, miracles, visions? Why, those things all passed away with the Apostles. Even the Early Church Fathers sometimes bemoaned the fact in their writings that the miraculous no longer seemed to be part of the church anymore. And for the life of them, they couldn't figure out why. Hmmm... Yet all the while the very tools required to reactivate an

ongoing condition of **being/walking in the Spirit** was sitting right there in front of them in the Word of God. By the time the Middle Ages had arrived, the church was bound by legalism, compromise and superstition. They believed in the miraculous, but had absolutely no idea how to access it or activate it. By the time of the Reformation, a doctrine of **secessionism** had firmly developed, stating that all of the miraculous, including the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, had passed away with the Apostles. With the advent of scientific, skeptical rationalism in the "Enlightenment", the supernatural soon became passé, and by the 19th Century, if it could not be measured, pushed, prodded, quantified or reproduced in a test tube, it was deemed as simply a figment of someone's imagination.

From that point on, the next few steps were automatic. If God was a supernatural being, and there **was** no supernatural, then, by definition, there was no God! Beginning in the 1950's a secular, humanistic theologian named Harvey Cox began to teach that **God was dead**. If God was dead, or had never existed because there never was a God, then that meant that mankind was totally on its own, with no one to ever hold it accountable for its actions. That logically also meant that there was no such thing as absolute good, evil, right or wrong, and that if it felt good, you should do it! In fact, as the folks at *Nike* have successfully proven, it doesn't even have to feel good, "*Just Do It!*"

This horrific tumble into the very worst that humanity has to offer all began because the early church became embarrassed about the fact that Christianity is based firmly on a supernatural foundation. After all, it is impossible, according to medical science, for someone to rise from the dead. And yet I have had two resurrection accounts cross my desk in just the last two weeks, and I **personally** know three men who were "toe-tag" dead for anywhere from 2 to 8 hours!

I want to take this little argument one logical step further, in the interest of scientific rationalism. In science, there are two main categories into which we place our ideas on how the world works; **theories** and **laws**. A **theory** is something that has been **proposed** but has not yet been **proven**. A **law** is a statement of **fact** which, no matter how many times you test it, **always comes out the same way**. Gravity is a law. Sin and death are a law. Evolution is a theory. Please notice the difference. As a result, all it takes is **one exception to the rule** to discredit a so-called law. If you say that there is no such thing as the supernatural, all I have to do is show you one documented case which clearly violates that stance, and you are proven wrong. Let's say you do not believe in supernatural healing. Fine. All I have to do is show you **one example** of documented supernatural healing and you and your "law" have just been discredited. You say that it is impossible for someone to rise from the dead. Fine. Would **500 eye-witnesses** be sufficient to disprove your stance? That's **minimum** how many people saw Jesus alive and well after they rolled the stone across the tomb entrance that fateful day. Frankly, when people say that they don't believe in the supernatural power of God, it is not because of any evidence in their favor. Rather, it is because they **choose** not to believe.

Now, let's argue in the opposite direction. Let's say, for the sake of argument, that there **is** a God. That also means that there must be a **supernatural**, since God, by definition, is supernatural. If there is a supernatural, then that means that the Bible's multiple claims of **supernatural intervention** have to be taken seriously. And if supernatural intervention is real, then the Bible's claims of a **supernatural inheritance** for the Church also have to be valid. And if the Bible's claims of a supernatural inheritance for the Church are real, then it **must be possible for a Christian to walk supernaturally in a realm called "the Spirit"**. If **that** is true, then the only question in your life should be, "**How the heck do it get from where I am into that state as quickly as possible?**"

Dear friends, you might be asking yourself why on earth I just took you through this logical deconstruction and reconstruction of Christian belief. It's because I went through it myself. As a child growing up, I did not question the faith of my fathers. All of my family were believers, including all four of my grandparents and my mom and dad. But their faith was a Norman Vincent Peale "*power of positive thinking*" kind of Christianity. It was a kind of faith that produced "nice" people. "*I like Ike*" people. And growing up as a child, I did not question my faith. But when I went to college to be a minister, I found my faith attacked and belittled constantly, mostly by men inside the university's very own theology department. At a Methodist-supported university in the heart of the Midwest, there was a professor in the theology department who was an openly avowed communist and atheist, teaching impressionable young men and women who said that they were called into the ministry. In all of the

theology classes that I took at the University, **not one** had the Bible as part of the required reading material for the class! Seriously! Small wonder, then, that when I graduated from college, and was accepted to attend a Methodist seminary in Washington, D.C., I did two things: (1) I decided not to continue on with my call into the ministry and (2) I stopped going to church. It would not be until the age of 25, following the loss of twin sons, that I would turn back to God in grief and anguish and begin to attend services again.

Finally, when I was 29, I reached the moral crisis in my own life which I have outlined on the previous page. I had received Christ as my Savior when I was seven years old, watching Billy Graham on TV. Thank God for Billy Graham. How many souls will be in heaven at the Judgment Day because of that one man saying, *"Please come!"* I had experienced the love and power of God when I was 16. Yet by the time that my unbelieving, rationalistic, skeptical, scientific, **church-supported** university got done with me, I wasn't sure what I believed anymore. When I started back in church, I told the wise old pastor of the Presbyterian Church that I went to that I wasn't even sure of the Virgin Birth. He nodded and said that I should just take things one at a time, and everything would sort itself out. Thank God for his counsel. He gave me the encouragement to start back on the very long path that I had to follow. For the Pharisees who are reading this book, let me warn you of something. Many of the people you currently stand in judgment of have come back a very long way already just to sit inside the four walls of your church so they could be criticized and ridiculed by you. But if you were to measure the amount of spiritual growth they have made in the last year compared to you, slowly sliding backwards for a whole decade, it won't be too much longer before they **catch up** to you and **pass** you, going so fast that you won't even see them! There will just be a little *blur* in your side view mirror as they go by you as if you were standing still!

I had been back in this "church" thing for about four years when I started attending a Bible study that had spontaneously formed among some of us who sang in the choir. It would turn out later that three of the members of the Bible study were already baptized in and filled with the Holy Spirit, and would lead the way for me to make the next big step in my spiritual walk. We were praying one night after Bible study when Carol, who was leading the group, began to pray very boldly. She began rebuking and binding and loosing and all kinds of other things that I, as a "good Methodist", had never heard done in a prayer before. For me, holding hands while we prayed was kind of a breakthrough in and of itself. I had been able to successfully incorporate all these new things into my life up until that point in time. But then Carol did something I had never heard anyone do before in my entire life. One moment she was praying in English, and then suddenly she switched to an entirely different language. Now, I am a fair student of languages and accents, and I can pretty well tell you where someone is from within a sentence or two. Carol was speaking in what was clearly a Slavic, Eastern-European kind of language. I could detect nouns, verbs, sentence structure and everything that is necessary to make up a legitimate language, but I couldn't identify the actual language itself. Carol prayed in that language for a little while, and then, just as suddenly as she had switched from English to it, switched back to English again and wrapped up the prayer with a hearty, *"Amen!"* Afterwards, as we were talking, I turned to her and said, *"What on earth was that other language you were praying in tonight?"* *"What do you mean?"* she responded coyly (like she didn't know what I was talking about!). *"That other language"*, I responded. *"You were praying in English and then suddenly switched over to some other language, obviously from Eastern Europe, and then back to English again. What was that all about?"* *"Oh,"* said Carol, casually, *"that was my **prayer language.**"*

Now she had my curiosity aroused. I had no ideal what in the world a prayer language was, so I began to question her about what it was and how she had obtained it. That triggered a second speed-read Bible study on the Holy Spirit, the Baptism in/of the Holy Spirit, speaking in unknown tongues, Spiritual gifts and a whole raft of other topics. When we were done, I was absolutely floored! I had been in church all my life, and I had **never** heard a sermon on **any** of these topics! Most of the young pastors who came to our church from a seminary in New Jersey were told to carefully follow the Lectionary or outline for sermon topics provided by the Methodist Church every year. Needless to say, speaking in tongues wasn't high on the list of preferred topics, particularly since it had caused so much strife elsewhere in the church when some poor soul had accidentally caught on fire for Christ and had quickly been surrounded by the leaders of the congregation and denomination, all of whom seemed determined to stamp out any "excesses" and "emotionalism" that might erupt in their churches. What I am about

to say is going to sound harsh, but it comes from repeated dealings with Methodism and most other main line denominations. The Methodist Church, once the most on-fire, supernatural church organization in the whole world, seems hell-bent and determined to remain in a spiritual coma and die that way, without ever waking up again. It is a great heartache for me, since one of my personal heroes is one John Wesley, who had over 200 dramatic supernatural healings and miracles attributed to his own ministry, including the raising of one man from the dead. God had been preparing to take me to the next level for some time before the Bible study, to ensure that I would be able to receive what I was being taught. My journey back, as I have said, began when I was 25. Just months before the Bible study happened, I had gone through a real spiritual crisis in my own life, and began to read Scripture constantly. I would read for up to 2 hours a day, underlining everything, or so it seemed. During that period of rapid personal growth, I was just like a teenage boy, drinking in the Word of God like a teenager can drink up an entire gallon of milk at one sitting, just opening the carton and swallowing it whole while standing in front of the refrigerator. As I read through the Book of Acts, I came to one inescapable conclusion: either the Book was lying, or they had something I didn't have. I had been taught that when one received Christ that one also received the Holy Spirit and that one was also filled with the Holy Spirit and baptized in the Spirit, all at the same time. I had also been taught that my infant sprinkling "baptism" was sufficient. I soon discovered by personal experience that I had been taught wrongly on almost every conceivable point. After Carol's comment, I found myself pouring over everything I could find on the Holy Spirit. In fact, the Lord spoke to my heart and told me to get a copy of the New Jerusalem New Testament and to highlight every usage of the phrase "*the Holy Spirit*", whenever and where ever I found it. When I was done I couldn't believe my eyes. The entire New Testament totally depended on the Holy Spirit. Not a single decision was made without His direct and personal involvement, just like a CEO in a corporation. When I thought of the many meetings that I had been a part of where He was nowhere to be found in the room, I shuddered. Was the church really that spiritually empty and morally bankrupt? Sadly, the answer was yes. The more I studied, the more I was shocked to discover that our methods were not only being used in the **absence** of the Holy Spirit, but in most cases were actually in **direct violation** of the Holy Spirit. The more I read, the hungrier I got for my own personal experience with Him. Yeah, Him. Not it. You can quench an "it", but you sure can't grieve an "it". You can only grieve a "Him". The Holy Spirit is a person with a personality like you and I. That's a whole 'nother subject, though!

I asked the Bible study group to pray for me. They did, but to no avail. Then I started visiting every Full Gospel church in the Yellow Pages, hoping that they could help me out. Ironically, I got pushed, shoved, pulled, jerked, yanked, taught and everything else imaginable under the sun, but all to no avail. I began to plead with God, to cry out to him, asking Him what I had to do to receive what His Word promised I could have. Finally, one day while I was praying in my bathroom, I cried out in desperation, "*What's wrong with me?*" Finally, I had asked the right question. For the first and only time in my life, the Lord answered me in a literal, physical voice that I could hear with my own two ears, and He said four simple words: "***Clean up the Temple!***" When He said that, I knew exactly what He meant. No interpretation was necessary. I had been a chain smoker for ten years. During that period of time, I had made many attempts to stop, all unsuccessful. Either the Holy Spirit or that unholy spirit was going to have control of my mouth, one or the other, but not both. I have outlined my deliverance experience in one of the other episodes, so I won't do it here. Suffice it to say that later on that day, the Lord Jesus Christ successfully stripped the nicotine addiction and the demonic oppression that went with it out of my life. Two weeks later, I was gloriously baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in unknown tongues at a FGBMFI (Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International) meeting in Evansville, IN, ironically, at the dining center of the very same university where I lost my faith to begin with. Isn't it odd how things work out when you are led by the Lord? After all the many decades of telling those stories, it just how dawned on me how completely the Lord has taken me full circle in my life, and it just now dawned on me how logically those two events tied together.

As I have traveled down this spiritual road, I often stop and ask fellow travelers to tell me **their** story. I have found that I learn nothing if I do the talking. And every person has a unique story to tell, me included. Perhaps what happened to me will in some small way help you. The one thing that I have learned is that God is not a God of "magic formulas". People say, "*Do this, and it will all work out*" or "*Do that, and you will be blessed*". I have found it's not quite that simple. I have also learned that

God is a God of immense creativity and diversity, and when people share with me how they were baptized in the Spirit, I find that no two stories are alike. I know of one man whose nickname is "Bathtub Jones" because he was sitting in his bathtub when God sovereignly baptized him in the Holy Spirit. Here's how it happened to me:

I went to the Full Gospel Businessmen's meeting that night full of expectant hope. I knew that I had satisfied what the Lord had told me to do by removing the demon of nicotine addiction from my life. That left my mouth free and clear to be used by the Holy Spirit. I don't remember much about the speaker that night except for the facts that he was from Chicago, reminded me a lot of Rodney Dangerfield, was bald, had been delivered from \$80,000.00 worth of debt and constantly kept wiping his mouth with his handkerchief. All I could think of was being filled with the Spirit of God and finally receiving this thing called the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Finally, the speaker was done, and people came forward to be prayed for. That included me. I found myself surrounded by a group of earnest Spirit-filled men, who began to give me the same advice I had heard all along from the various churches I had visited. None of it helped. I could feel the power of the Holy Spirit rising inside of me as it had in the past when I was prayed for. But every time, it would rise up from my belly into my throat and stick there. This time, it was doing the same. I did everything I knew do so, all to no avail. Finally, after about 15 minutes of intense prayer, I collapsed into the arms of the men who were around me, beaten and despairing. I had just about given up all hope. Then, suddenly, a voice **from inside of me shouted, "No!"** Suddenly, I found myself back on my feet, hands uplifted, worshipping God. And suddenly, from **inside of me** there came a mighty river of power, pouring out of me and taking the form of a language I had never heard in my life. I was ecstatic. Finally! I was bathed in a joy the likes of which I had never felt in my life. Before I had been totally unable to speak in tongues. Now, I couldn't stop speaking in tongues. I spoke in unknown tongues all the way home, an hour's drive. If memory serves me correct, and it's been 30 years since then, I spoke in unknown tongues for six straight hours. But it wasn't the fact that I was speaking in unknown tongues that was the most marvelous. It was the indescribable joy and power which I felt flowing through me when I did. Now I could finally understand the calmness with which the 1st Century martyrs had faced certain death. That constant joy remained with me for six non-stop months. I would be working on a computer program and suddenly be overwhelmed with the presence of Almighty God. It was wonderful! As I began to reflect on my experience, suddenly certain Scriptures began to make sense to me. In the Book of Acts, the Holy Spirit had come **upon** them from the outside, **falling** on them in the form of visible, holy fire. But Jesus had also said something in the Gospel of John about the Holy Spirit coming **up from within a person** like a mighty river (John 7:37). That had been my own experience. The voice shouting "No!" within me had clearly been the Holy Spirit, unwilling to let that moment pass without me being baptized in the Spirit. And so He had coming pouring out of me, manifesting in the gift of unknown tongues, just as the Bible said. As I compared Scripture to Scripture, it all fell into place. I had been born again when I was 7 years old. Despite my erratic walk with the Lord, I was nonetheless His and had been so for a very long time. I had in fact **received** the Holy Spirit when I experienced the New Birth. I had been **born of the Spirit** at that point in time. But I was clearly not **baptized, immersed or filled with the Spirit** at that time; otherwise the Biblically documented manifestations of that event would have taken place. I know that by now I have offended most of my Oneness friends, who stoutly maintain that the New Birth, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in Unknown Tongues all occur at one time. Granted, they **can**. But they don't **have to**. Down through the years, as I have listened to the testimonies of others, I have found that each experience and the actual sequence of events is **unique to the individual and the situation in which they find themselves**. For example, in Acts 2:38, Peter lists the sequence of events as (1) repent, (2) be baptized and (3) receive the Holy Spirit. But in the case of Cornelius and his household, God never even gave them time to recite the Sinner's Prayer (which, by the way, is not found anywhere in Scripture except vaguely in Romans 10:9). Instead, **while Peter was still preaching to them**, the Holy Spirit sovereignly fell on them and they began to speak in Unknown Tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. That's the only reason that they felt at liberty to baptize them on the spot, and why they didn't catch you-know-what when they got back to Jerusalem and calmly informed the Council that they had baptized Gentiles into the faith without first circumcising them and turning them into good little Jewish proselytes. I also discovered that the teaching of my parent denomination about getting the whole ball of wax when you are christened as a child is utter nonsense. There was clearly a point in time when Christ entered into me, as the result of a **personal decision on my part** to permit Him to do so. And, to poke some other folks in the nose

while we're at it, I'm not exactly sure that I had reached some theoretical "age of accountability" before I did so. God knew what the right time was. He knew when **I** would be ready for **that** step in the process.

For six months, then, I was gloriously, rapturously **filled with the Holy Spirit, walking in the Holy Spirit**. That **condition** had been caused by an initial **event** called the **Baptism in the Holy Spirit**. But as the months went by, I noticed that the presence of God began to slip away from me, a little at a time. What was going on? Was I losing my salvation? No. I had received Christ when I was 7. What was going on? **I was drying out**. When I had been baptized in the Spirit, I was like an almost empty glass suddenly being filled with water to the point that the water was overflowing the vessel and pouring out on everyone and everything around it. That's what John 7:37 is all about. But unless I **continued to pray in tongues** on a regular basis, the level of the anointing of the Holy Spirit would inevitably begin to drop, just like the water in the glass slowly evaporating under the penetrating glare of the noonday sun. Even after that wonderful experience, I have had times in my life where I felt as empty and dry as the bones of a Texas longhorn left out on the backside of the desert to bleach. Why? Because I did not **maintain** the condition of being filled with the Spirit by praying in tongues on a regular basis. Now, this flies in the face of conventional Full Gospel and Charismatic teaching on the matter. But it doesn't fly in the face of Scripture or common sense. I know far too many individuals with a Pentecostal background who proudly proclaim that *"they was filled with the Holy Ghost in '43 and have been in the way ever since!"* I have no doubt that they had an **experience** and were **initially baptized in the Holy Spirit** in 19- and 43. And I have no doubt that for a period of time that they walked in a condition of **fullness** of the Spirit. But, based on their conduct when I first met them, I also have no doubts about them **being in the way** since then! Since He is the **Holy Spirit**, the first characteristic of someone who is **filled** with Him would naturally be that they would be **holy**, that is, that their lives would take on a genuine purity without being legalistic. And since the Fruits of the Spirit are also His, then it would also logically follow that another evidence of someone being truly **filled** with Him would be that they would be filled with faith, hope, love, patience, self-control and all the other virtues of Christ. The ultimate objective of all of this process, after all, is to make us into **individualized copies of Christ**. Paul, speaking to the Galatians, said, *"Oh, my little children, how I be in travail until **Christ be formed in you!**"* (Galatians 4:19). Other discerning men and women in ministry share this viewpoint with me. I can clearly remember an incident years ago involving the famous evangelist Morris Cerullo. He had been invited to speak in Madisonville, KY, at a church that we had some inside contacts with. As a result, we were allowed in the lobby early, ahead of the rest of the crowd who were all locked out until the doors were to be opened. About a half an hour before the doors were opened, the power of the Holy Spirit swept through the building like the shock wave after an explosion. I had never felt anything like it. Immediately, all the Gifts of the Spirit turned on inside of me, just like electrical power tools that have just been plugged into a wall socket with the power switch turned "on". I began walking up to one person after another, prophesying accurately into the lives of strangers whom I had never met before. I knew that this would be an extraordinary meeting. In fact, there were many healings that night, but only one thing that Cerullo said has stayed with me since then. In his message, he said, *"I have met many people in my life who spoke in tongues. **But I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of people I have met who are filled with the Holy Spirit!**"* When Cerullo first made the statement, it not only jolted me but also rang true at the same time. We had already begun to encounter what I now jokingly refer to as "Charismaniacs". I also call these folks "Granola Christians" because they consist of **fruits, nuts and flakes surrounded by a bowl of milk!** I have no doubt that at some point they had an **initial experience with Christ and the Holy Spirit**. I also have no doubt that **absolutely nothing has happened to them since then!** It is these once-filled but now-empty Christians that cause most of the reproach in the body of Christ and drive most baby believers out of the church. They rightfully expect something better from us, and when we do not deliver it, become discouraged, offended and fall away.

So what, then, is the correct order? Ideally, one should **hear about the saving, redeeming, delivering and healing power of the Lord Jesus Christ**. One should then **believe in their heart and confess with their mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord**. Immediately afterwards, they should be **immerse- baptized in Jesus' Name for the remission of their sins** (the Oneness folks are right about that point, to be sure!). And at that point in time or shortly thereafter, they should also be

immerse baptized in the Holy Spirit, with the evidence of the event being that they begin to speak in Unknown Tongues. All of that constitutes a good starting point!

But due to the crazy inconsistencies of our lives, these checkpoints may or may not be executed in the correct order. They may happen out of sequence. Certain key events may be temporarily skipped over. But either way, at some point in the believer's life, all of these events should come to pass. Anything less than that puts one at serious risk of being left behind when the Resurrection/Rapture finally does occur.

Yet even if all of that is true, there is nonetheless **something more** in order for someone to find themselves in John's enviable position on that fateful Sabbath. You must **maintain** that condition of fullness in the Spirit by "**building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.**" (Jude 20). By praying in tongues on a daily basis, it helps to keep your glass full to overflowing, so that what is inside of you is (1) of God and (2) pours out on those around you. This is non-negotiable. They once asked Smith Wigglesworth, the great British apostle, what the key to his miracle ministry was. Wigglesworth was a former plumber, with little education and even less couch. "***I rightly don't know***", he said with his Cockney accent. "***All I know is that I goes and prays two hours a day in tongues and then I goes and ministers to the people!***" Wigglesworth might not have been the brightest bulb on the Christmas tree, but he was smart enough to do the **one thing** required for supernatural power and insight. In fact, he was a whole lot smarter than most of us so-called scholars, who can find time to do everything else but **spend time with God in prayer, praying in the unique language that He graciously gave us as a gift so many years ago**. Am I pointing fingers at you? Perhaps. If the shoe fits... Am I pointing fingers at me? Hey, what do **you** think???

Other great men of faith down through the ages have all agreed: the key to apostolic power is to **pray at least two hours a day, preferably in tongues**. Can't do that, you say? Don't have the time? Then do what Jesus did. **MAKE the time!** Jesus got up **every single day** before the crack of dawn and the maddening schedule crush of the day and spent **hours alone with the Father**. That's where His power came from. Benny Hinn has also said the same thing. His **corporate** anointing would be absolutely zero if not for his **personal anointing**. And his personal anointing is nothing without his **personal devotions**.

When I pray, and I don't pray nearly enough, I mix **praying with the Spirit** (Unknown Tongues) with **praying with the understanding** (in English), as documented in I Corinthians 13:15. Because I am very musical (I didn't say I was **good!**), the clearest flow of the Spirit from inside of me comes when I **sing in the Spirit**. Others who have heard me do this asked if I was singing in either Spanish or Italian. Trust me, dear saints, I don't know either language. But I do have to admit that when I sing, it does sound something like that. What? I listen? Sure! Why not? I have learned more from listening to what the Holy Spirit was saying to the Father through me in Unknown Tongues than I could possibly begin to list in a dozen articles. And also please remember that they are called Unknown Tongues because they are **unknown to the speaker, not the hearer**. I have dozens of documented situations where the hearers understood **perfectly** what was being said, while the speaker was **clueless**. Why? To keep our intellect and our will out of the way, so that when we pray in the Spirit, we truly do pray **according to the will of God** (Romans 8:27). Let me give you one example from my own personal files. When Beverly and I were first dating, we were attending an Assemblies of God Church. Beverly was quite distressed about her daughter Kathy's situation, for reasons that we won't go into here. One Sunday night, we were at a service and during praise and worship the Lord began to deal with me that He wanted to give a prophecy through me. For various reasons that I can no longer remember, I was madder than a wet hen at Him, and stubbornly refused to do it. Twice He came to me and said, "*I want to speak through you tonight*". I stubbornly refused. Then, finally, He spoke with a sternness in His voice that I have not heard very often and said, "*Are you going to do it or not???*" I knew that if I said no at that point in time, I would find myself in really big trouble. And so, when a lull in the worship came, I opened my mouth, and prophesied something like this: "*I will bring your children*", says the Lord, '*From the north, from the south, from the east, from the west; **by twos and by threes shall I bring them***', says the Lord, '*by twos and by threes shall I bring them*'. There was a brief pause, followed by a chorus of hearty Amen's from the congregation. The service then proceeded on to other items. Later on during the service, Bev's daughter Kathy showed up with her oldest daughter and her boyfriend in tow. "*How interesting!*", I thought to myself. "*I prophesied about*

twos and threes and lo and behold, here are three, right in the middle of the service!" That would have been cool in and of itself, but what happened next was electrifying. Kathy was sick, and so after the service, we all went forward to pray for her. The pastor lined everybody up in a straight line across the front of the sanctuary, and then began to pray for each person, one at a time. I stood behind Kathy, slightly to her right. We were near the end of the line, and so it took quite a while for the pastor to get to us. All during that time, I was faithfully praying in tongues. At no time did I speak in English to Kathy, except for once to say, *"Don't worry honey, he'll get to you soon!"* Yet all the while that I stood there behind her, she kept looking back at me, giving me the strangest glances. I had no idea what was troubling her, but we would soon find out. Finally, the pastor arrived at her. We prayed a powerful prayer of agreement, and she instantly was healed! Halleluia! We sat back down rejoicing. And then the most amazing thing happened. Kathy turned around in her seat and said to me, **"What was all that stuff about twos and threes about???"** I looked at her incredulously. *"What do you mean?"* I replied. *"While we were waiting for the pastor to get there, you kept saying things about north, south, east, west and also about twos and threes"*, Kathy responded. *"Oh, yeah. You also said something about him getting to me soon"*. I sat there slack-jawed. Kathy had **not** been in the church earlier when I had issued the prophecy **in English**. Yet as I stood behind her, praying in Unknown Tongues, she had heard every word of the prophecy **as if I were speaking to her in English**. In fact, she was startled to discover that the only thing I **had** said in English was about the pastor getting to her soon. Needless to say, it created quite a stir in the congregation when I shared what God had done.

Now can you begin to understand what happened to John on the Isle of Patmos? When he said that he was **in the Spirit**, it clearly refers to the fact that he was worshipping and praising God in Unknown Tongues, creating a **clear communications channel** between **his spirit** and **the Father**, using the **Holy Spirit** as the **communications device**.

All of that is wonderful, but the Holy Spirit is invaluable in one more critical way. By remaining in this **condition of Spiritual saturation**, it not only makes it **difficult to sin**, it makes it **impossible!** Don't believe me? Then take the time to read Romans Chapter 6-8 and follow the story of a good, devout Jewish boy who found himself dealing with an unclean spirit, a Messenger of Satan, attached to his flesh. Listen to his complaint of how, while in his mind he **wants** to obey God, in this flesh **he can't**. And then shout and cheer with him as he finally discovers that if He will **walk according to the Spirit** (the highest form of Spirit activity that a human being can do in this planet), he will **not satisfy the desires of the flesh**. Here's the actual quote:

*"¹ There is therefore now **no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.** ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us **who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.** ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but **those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.** ⁶ For to be carnally minded is death, but to be **spiritually minded is life and peace.**"* – Romans 8:1-6

I will close today on this thought: what if **every waking moment of your life** were bathed in the peace, the love, the joy and the purity of the Holy Spirit, not just those rare 1.5 second spurts here and there while you have the praise tape on? What if every single thought you had was on nothing but what the Lord wanted in your life? Would it be possible for you to sin? Would it be possible for you even to be tempted to sin? The answer is, resoundingly, **"No!"** I have been there, dear friends. And I can testify to you that when you are in that condition, it is **impossible** for your mind to even entertain the **concept** of sin. You are surrounded by His glory, filled with His presence, washed in His Spirit, bathed in His love. Everything else pales into absolute nothingness in comparison. And then you can say, just like John, that you were **in the Spirit on the Lord's Day when you heard a loud voice behind you saying, "Come up here!"** At that moment, your spirit will flash out of your body and travel to the Heaven of Heavens, and you will heard things so wondrous that you can't even talk about

them, and see things so marvelous that you can't even describe them. Pray, dear friends, to be **in the Spirit continuously. Amen and Amen!**

Day 3 – Twenty-Four Fine Fellers!



“³ And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. ⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”

– Revelation 4:3-5

In the classic movie Western *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, there is a line that will be remembered all throughout movie history: **“Who are those guys, and why do they keep following us?”** Much the same could be said about the **Twenty-Four Elders**. Exactly **who are those guys, anyway?** The answers to that question are as bewildering as the images found in Revelation itself.

Some people believe that the 24 Elders are **angels**. It didn’t take long for me to discount that theory, for several reasons. First of all, there is only one record anywhere in the Bible of an angel **sitting on a throne**. In fact, that very desire was one of the reasons that Lucifer was evicted from Heaven in the first place. In Isaiah 14:13, Lucifer boasts that he will **exalt his throne above the stars of God**. Now, the question here is whether he was talking about a throne **that he already had** or about **one that he wanted to have**. In a sense, it would be kind of like bragging or daydreaming. You know, brother, **when my ship comes in**, I’m going to do this and that and the other thing... All in all, I suspect he’s bragging. If I were to try and recreate the tone of his statement, it would go something like this: *“When I end up in charge of this joint, I’m going to put **my throne** above everyone and everything else.”* Everything else he says is future tense, so I don’t see a problem with placing this throne of his in the future as well. In addition, of the five things that he says he is going to do, **none of them** have every come to pass.

What, then, is the role of angels? Certainly not to rule over us or anything in creation. Instead, God has created them and assigned them to **minister to His needs and to ours**. Listen carefully to what the writer of Hebrews has to say about the issue:

“⁷ And of **the angels** He says: **‘Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.’**”
-- Hebrews 1:7

“¹⁴ Are they not all **ministering spirits** sent forth to minister **for those who will inherit salvation?**”
-- Hebrews 1:14

It’s pretty obvious that angels are in the employment of God in order to first and foremost minister to Him and His desires. Some angels seem to have no other purpose than to surround the throne of God with praise and worship. And then, secondarily, they are assigned to minister to us, to help us, transmit messages from the Throne to us, sometimes rescue us, and sometimes to escort us to our Heavenly Home. But no matter how you slice the bread, it still comes out the same: angels are **servants, not rulers**, and as such have no need for thrones. In fact, Paul reminds us that in the Resurrection, **we will judge angels!** (I Corinthians 6:3) That’s hard to imagine right now, because the divine pecking order has us lower than the angels at the moment. But in the Resurrection all of

that changes. Suddenly we are seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus, ruling and reigning with Him.

That last statement brings up the other reason why the 24 Elders can't be angels. **No angel has every worn a crown.** Crowns fit right in with Thrones. Both imply rulership and authority. Although angels do have divine authority imparted to them by their Creator, they are never given the authority to sit as a ruler in any situation. According to Daniel, however, they can make certain judgment calls. Nebuchadnezzar was brought down into total insanity for seven years as a result of the decree of the **Watchers**, a special group of angels otherwise known as **cherubim** and **seraphim** (Daniel 4:16-17). Still, when all is said and done, angels do not have the right to sit on thrones or wear crowns. That right is reserved for the Father, the Son and, just imagine, us!

Now we know that these 24 splendid fellows must be human, and not angelic. Great. That narrows the field down to, what, maybe 21 billion or so souls? Right now our planet has almost 7 billion people on it. The same number of people have inhabited the planet in all of past history, according to archeologists. And you must figure that the Pre-Flood earth had to have had at least that many as well. So, if you add up the 7 billion before the flood, the 7 billion after the flood and the 7 billion alive right now, you come up with 21 billion human beings who have either lived or are alive right now. With that number in mind, let's try and narrow the field a little bit.

The Greek word that we translate as **Elder** is the word **presbyteros**. We get the modern English words **presbytery**, **presbyter** and **Presbyterian** from it. The word actually means a **human elder or leader with significant rank and authority**. So we know right away that we're dealing with some people with clout. One of the suggestions, and I tend to favor it, is that twelve of the 24 are the **apostles themselves**. Jesus made some very specific statements about those who had sacrificed everything to follow Him.

"²⁸ So Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, **you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones**, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' " – Matthew 19:28

"²⁴ Now there was also a dispute among them, as to **which of them should be considered the greatest**.²⁵ And He said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.'²⁶ But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and **he who governs as he who serves**.²⁷ For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? **Yet I am among you as the One who serves**.²⁸ But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials.²⁹ And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me,³⁰ that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and **sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**.'" – Luke 22:28-30

With statements like that in mind, it is very clear that in the Resurrection, the twelve, minus Judas, who mindlessly abandoned his potential rulership for all eternity for a lousy 30 pieces of silver, shall rule over the 12 tribes of Israel. Who will be assigned to which tribe is a good question, but not one for our deliberation today. We know that this will be their place in the Resurrection. But is it their assignment right now, **prior** to the Resurrection? Unfortunately, that's a question we can't answer with certainty. But it would be a good guess to say that since they were close to the Master on earth, it logically follows that they would be close to Him in heaven as well. Given all of that, I cast my vote for 12 of the Thrones to be occupied by the Apostles. But, having said that, we immediately encounter yet another problem. **Which 12?** You see, when Judas betrayed Christ, it left an empty spot. That spot was filled by the disciples in Acts 1:25-26 when they cast lots and chose Matthias. But some scholars argue, and I tend to agree with them, that the disciples made their very first administrative mistake by picking a replacement **by casting lots**, or essentially using **random chance** to pick a successor. Now I know that this method had been used successfully by Israel in the past in order to determine the will of God in given matters, but this was the New Testament, and a whole new way of relating to God was about to be unfolded by the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Had the disciples waited to name a replacement until after Pentecost, they might not have chosen Matthias. According to church tradition,

he was the only disciple not to distinguish himself in ministry. I suspect that **Paul** is the man who should have been the new 12th disciple. Only time will tell.

There is another issue that arises unless you realize the true nature of visions. Critics have said that 12 of the 24 can't be the Apostles themselves because John is an Apostle and he is viewing them. That would mean that he was looking at himself. Because people don't understand time travel, they don't understand that it would be perfectly possible for John as a human nearing the end of his life (he was in his 90's when the vision occurred) to see John in heaven in the future. Remember, this is happening **in a vision**. As I have outlined elsewhere in these works, when you are in the spirit, your spirit is free to move forwards or backwards in time. Your body cannot. If you were to move forward, your body would also move forward, aging rapidly as it did. Eventually, you would come to a point where you would cease to exist because your body would die of old age. But your spirit is not subject to such limitations. According to quantum physics, it is also possible for there to be multiple instances of you in history. It is my understanding that every single cell in your body is replaced every seven years. If that is true, then the physical you that is reading this sentence right now is totally different than the physical you that will exist seven years from now or the physical you that existed seven years ago. John could easily see himself without even recognizing himself, since what he looks like in the spirit in heaven is clearly not what he looked like as a worn-out, tired old man in his 90's on Patmos. I even have a fascinating story to back that theory up. Many years ago, the great Pentecostal Healing Evangelist and Prophet William Marion Brahmam had a vision. In the vision, he was brought into heaven by an angel. As he arrived, a gorgeous redhead came up to him and gave him a great big hug and kiss, saying "*Thank you, Brother Braham, oh thank you so much!*" Brahmam, a man not given to displays of public emotion, was badly shaken by the encounter, but the angel simply stood by his side, watching the event unfold. Brahmam turned to the angel and said, "*Who on earth **was** that woman?*" The angel smiled and said, "*She is the ninety year-old woman that you led to Christ on her deathbed only a few weeks ago!*" Having passed into eternity, her spirit body was once again restored to what she would have been in the full bloom of her beauty and the full vitality of her youth. So it would not be surprising that John in his failing years might not recognize himself as the youthful, vital leader of mankind sitting on one of those 24 thrones.

We now have picked out 12 of the 24 individuals that we feel might be good candidates. But that still leaves another 12. How in the world do we go about picking them? Again, our source will be the Holy Scriptures. The first two candidates **must** be Moses and Elijah. Why do I choose those two? Because in Matthew Chapter 17, on Mt. Tabor, the Mount of Transfiguration, only two men stand with Christ in the vision, Moses and Elijah. It can be effectively argued that both of these men were true Apostles of the Old Testament, not just super-prophets. One of the characteristics of an Apostle is that he has an **active, ongoing signs, wonders and miracles ministry**. Both men clearly qualify on that count. Another characteristic of an Apostle is that he can **transmit the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands**. Moses was so filled with the Holy Spirit that God could take of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the 70 Elders, who immediately began to prophesy when it happened. The Bible also tells us that Joshua, his successor, was filled with the Holy Spirit because Moses had laid his hands on him. The third characteristic of a true Apostle is that they have **power over life and death**. The death of the firstborn of Egypt quickly qualifies Moses, not counting the multiple occurrences of those who came against him dieing at various points along the way to Canaan. As far as bringing someone to life, the closest he got was when he interceded for the entire nation of Israel on Mt. Sinai. God was so outraged that He threatened to kill them all and start over with Moses; out of whom He would make a great and mighty nation (Exodus 32:9-14). A fourth common characteristic of a true Apostle is that they **have power over fire and water**. With Moses, the Pillar of Smoke and Fire should suffice, along with the parting of the "Red Sea", or, it's real name, the Gulf of Aquabah, where the real crossing took place. There's no doubt that Moses qualifies on almost all counts. His disciple, Joshua, fails on all counts except the water-based miracle of the crossing of the River Jordan. But God had already told him that He would be with him in the same way that He was with Moses (Joshua 1:5). When the Lord told Joshua that, He wasn't just saying that He would be with Joshua, just like He was with Moses. No, dear friends, He was saying that He would be with Joshua **in the same manner** as He was with Moses. That way, when Joshua duplicated Moses' water-based miracle, the people all could rest assured that he was Moses' true inheritor.

Given those credentials, what about Elijah? Well, as far as signs, wonders and miracles are concerned, nobody but nobody except Moses had as many absolutely cool miracles happen in his ministry. Only Elisha had more, but that's because he asked for more. When Elijah was about to be taken from the earth in the tornado (whirlwind), he asked Elisha what he wanted from him. Elisha replied that he wanted a **double portion of the Spirit that was on Elijah** (II Kings 2:1-15). When most folks read that passage, they assume that Elisha was asking for **twice as much of the Holy Spirit as Elijah had**. Actually, that's not exactly what he had in mind, although he did end up with about twice as many miracles as Elijah. When Elisha asked for a **double portion**, he was asking for the **right of inheritance of the oldest son**. There is no record of Elijah ever having been married. Such is often the lot of the Prophet or Apostle. Family gets pushed to the rear of the bus, and marriage is often not even permitted because of the terrible price the man of God pays to speak the true, revealed Word of God to a rebellious people who don't want to hear. As such, Elijah had no natural successor to him in the ministry. Elisha was the closest thing he had to one. But there were several Schools of the Prophets at various points in the circuit that Elijah "rode", and technically any one of those individuals could have asked for permission to take up his mantle. Only Elisha pursued him relentlessly on that fateful journey from Gilgal, where the reproach of Israel had been rolled away, to Bethel, where Jacob came to personal faith in the God Almighty, to Jericho, where the walls came "a tumblin' down", to the Jordan where God performed one of the greatest miracles in the history of the world. Elisha had earned the right to ask for the mantle of authority. To show you why I say that it was that right of inheritance that he was asking for, here are some Scriptures to back up what I am saying:

"¹⁶ ...then it shall be, on the day **he bequeaths his possessions to his sons**, that he **must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the true firstborn**.¹⁷ But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife **as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has**, for he is the beginning of his strength; **the right of the firstborn is his**." – Deuteronomy 21:16-17

Are you getting the picture? If a father had **three** sons, he divided his property into **four** equal parts. The eldest son would receive a **double portion**, or **two** of the **four** equal parts. The other two parts would then be given, one each, to the other two sons. But since every matter must be established in the mouths of two or more witnesses, here are a few more Scriptures along the same line.

"⁴ And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. ⁵ But to Hannah he would give a **double portion, for he loved Hannah, although the LORD had closed her womb**. ⁶ And her rival also provoked her severely, to make her miserable, because the LORD had closed her womb." – I Samuel 1:4-6

Despite the regulations found in Deuteronomy, Elkanah was honoring Hannah **as if she had already given birth to his first-born**. In fact, Samuel, who would be born as a result of deep intercessory prayer on the part of Hannah, would outshine all of Peninnah's ungodly brood and earn the right of the firstborn.

"¹ Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, 'Indeed your father is sick'; and he took with him his **two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim**.² And Jacob was told, 'Look, your son Joseph is coming to you'; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed.³ Then Jacob said to Joseph: 'God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me,⁴ and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.'⁵ And **now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine**.⁶ Your offspring whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.' " -- Genesis 48:1-6

This is a fascinating passage, since it is actually the foundation passage for the double portion. Clearly, Joseph was not the eldest son. That role belonged to Reuben. But Reuben had disqualified himself by sleeping with one of his father's concubines (Genesis 49:3-4). This left the position of the firstborn open for a new candidate. Clearly, Joseph had earned that right, and by adopting Joseph's two sons as

his own, thus converting them from **grandsons** to **sons**, Jacob effectively gives the double portion to Joseph, because it means that Jacob's inheritance will not be divided among **12** sons, but rather among **13**. When we talk about the 12 tribes of Israel, that's not quite right. Actually, since Manasseh and Ephraim are now legally Jacob's sons, they each receive a portion, just like Joseph's other brothers. Sometimes the Bible talks about there being 12 tribes, sometimes 13. I know, it gets kind of confusing sometimes. Anyway, that's where that whole **double portion** concept comes from, and it was that tradition, established by Jacob himself, that Elisha was appealing to.

Whew! All of that to establish that **Elijah transferred his anointing to Elisha**, not necessarily by the laying on of hands, but by the transference of his **mantle**, a physical symbol of his presence and authority. So, it is reasonable to say that Elijah qualifies on that part. As far as the power over fire and water, I can think of no individual more thoroughly qualified than Elijah. He is the only man ever to call fire down from heaven not once, but **three** times! His mastery over water is also clearly established by striking the Jordan River with his mantle and causing it to roll back. Of course, after he was taken up in the whirlwind, Elisha calmly picked up his mantle off the ground, walked back to the river, and proceeded to open it up again and stroll confidently back across on semi-dry ground.

As we discuss Elijah, we find ourselves being drawn back to his disciple, Elisha. So, it would be not unreasonable to include **both** men in our list of qualifiers. If we add him on to the list, we are now looking at nine open spots. Once we go beyond these initial three, the sky's the limit. The remaining nine could be either from the Old Testament, the New Testament, or some of the great saints from the First Century on till today. Names that come to mind from the Old Testament include David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah and Hosea. What? I missed your favorite? Add him in, by all means! From the New Testament, we might recommend such men as Luke, Phillip, Barnabas, Silas, Apollos, Stephen and Agabus. Once we get past the New Testament and into the early church fathers, there is an almost endless list of great men of God, including such true saints as Clement, Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin Martyr and Irenaeus. Down through history from that point on, we could mention one Joseph of Cupertino, a.k.a. the "*Flying Friar*", a man so anointed of God that he went airborne at heights of 20 to 30 feet some 70 or 80 times during his ministry. In fact, he would enter into a state of pure rapture so frequently that the head abbot of his order forbade him to celebrate mass with the other monks, for fear that he would be so filled with joy over Christ that he would end up in the rafters yet again. True! When summoned to Rome by the highly skeptical pope of his day, Joseph went airborne in the presence of the pontiff at the mere thought of being in the presence of Peter's successor. According to church tradition, Joseph also had a rather remarkable healing ministry as well. As I have researched the Middle Ages, I find man after man and woman after woman of God rising above the masses, shaking off the false teaching of the church of their day, and ascending into the office of Apostle despite all the religious nonsense that surrounded them. Another man who would bear consideration would be Patrick of Ireland, who did a whole lot more than drive the snakes out! His ministry was marked by constant signs, wonders and miracles. As we move into the Reformation, we find such men as Martin Luther, John Hus, John Calvin, John Wycliffe, John Wesley (Geez! We're running quite a string of John's aren't we?), and our own Cotton Mather, Charles Finney, William Brahmam, and, of course, Billy Graham. In England, we would have to nominate Smith Wigglesworth, Jonathan Goforth (what a name for a missionary!) and the immortal John Bunyan of *Pilgrim's Progress* fame (And yet another John, for crying out loud!).

Now, having listed some of great saints that we **do** know about, we have to acknowledge that for every man or woman of God we know about, there have probably been a thousand or more equally anointed men and women of God in other countries that we have never heard of, such as Sundar Singh of India, one of the greatest missionary/apostles of all time. Just because they are not known in the English speaking world doesn't mean that they are not known to God. Another name that immediately pops into my mind is the awesome Watchman Nee, one of the greatest systematic theologians I have ever read in my life. Yeah, I know. I really **do** read constantly. John Wesley, my hero, said "*I am a man of one book*", referring, of course, to the Bible. But the truth of the matter was that he was a voracious reader (that's how I know the meaning of the word *voracious*!) and constantly interrelated Scripture with other information and current events so as to make his messages relevant to the folks that listened to him. Bev keeps me posted constantly on current events. She will drag me away from writing on a regular basis to show me something on CNN. Normally, I grumble all the way into the

living room, and then repent reluctantly when I find that the information was really, really worth the trip! Heaven has probably added another thousand or so candidates in just the last hundred years just from China alone.

As you can readily tell from this mind-numbing list, our chances of accurately identifying the remaining nine is about as good as the cat making it through the sawmill intact. The bottom line is that God and God alone has the right to make those kinds of determinations, and when we finally see who made the Heavenly Hall of Fame and we get to look at their qualifications and the purity of their hearts, we will readily agree that the Lord made the very best choices possible for the Council.

Now, some of you may say, "*Pastor Ray, how can you stretch the list of candidates down to the present age? After all, wasn't John's vision almost 2,000 years ago, and wouldn't the 24 Elders all have to have been in place at that time? Surely that means it must be Old Testament Saints that fill the remaining 12 spots.*"

My response to that is that you have not considered the Timeline itself. Let me share a kind of paradox with you. As I mentioned earlier, when you get involved with prophecy, you are **always** dealing with time travel, in one form or another. The prophet is being moved, at least in spirit, from the **present** into the **future**. Conversely, Word of Knowledge is nothing more than movement **backward** in the time stream to show things that have already taken place in that person's life. Moving backwards in time is no problem, **relatively** speaking (please forgive the bad pun!). Those events for us have already taken place. But future events, at least as far as we are concerned, are undefined and unknown. In reality, all future events are already established and known in the 3rd Heaven, where time is always in a state of continuous **now**. Consider the following: Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and **forever**. Notice Paul doesn't say **tomorrow**. That word forever implies a totally different kind of time. Anyway, back to the paradox!

If 12 of the 24 Elders are the Apostles, then John is actually seeing **himself** in the future, seated at the right hand of Christ. John was in his nineties when he died, and was close to death at the time when the Revelation of Jesus Christ was given to him. Once he died, he was freed to go to Heaven to be with his Lord. So there is no conflict in saying that John in about AD 96 could see himself far in the future as part of a ruling council in Heaven. And since we have accurately established that the Seals began to open in the early 20th Century, linked to the fact that the first global war based in the Northern Hemisphere took place in 1914, we can establish the presence of the 24 Elders fully in place sometime shortly before that. This would, of course, eliminate Billy Graham and Watchman Nee from our list of candidates, based on the timeline involved. But it would also mean that some of those seats might have remained open and unoccupied over the last 2,000 years until the proper individual died and came to Heaven to sit there. It's certainly an interesting thought, and I hope you have been able to follow the logic involved. Hey, I never promised that understanding all this would be a walk in the park, a nice little "7 Steps to Wealth, Prosperity and Power" booklet. If you want that kind of stuff, then please go to any 30% off table in any Christian bookstore and just scoop a dozen or so of them into your little red wagon. God knows, our bookstores are filled with mostly fluff anyway. But if you want something sharp, with an edge on it, and challenging, to make your mind clear, your heart pure and your spirit rise up, then you need this kind of stuff. This is meat, not milk. You've had enough milk to give you spiritual diarrhea anyway. You need a little protein to build your spiritual muscles on.

There is one final question that comes to mind when we are considering the 24 Elders. Just exactly what do they do, anyway? What position do they occupy in the heavenly hierarchy? One possible task might be that of **judging angels** at the Great White Throne Bema Seat Judgment. Paul says:

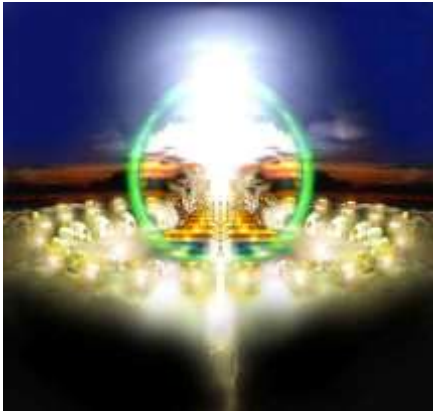
"³ *Do you not know that we shall **judge angels**? How much more, things that pertain to this life?*"
--I Corinthians 6:3

Frankly, as I have studied heavenly encounters and Heaven itself, I find that God delegates a great deal of His work to His subordinates. That, of course, is just good management. The far-fetched notion of sitting around all day long on clouds strumming harps is as far from the truth as we could

possibly imagine. Heaven is a busy place, if you desire to be busy, as I will, or it is a place of rest, if you desire rest. I suspect that keeping the universe going is a massive, intense task requiring a great deal of involvement on the part of angels and saints alike. After all, the whole structure is broken, courtesy of the incident in the Garden some time ago. There can be no doubt that the 24 Elders are clearly near the top of the divine management structure. After all, they do wear crowns on their heads. Just because they cast them before Christ as a symbol of obedience and subjugation at the beginning of the breaking of the Seals doesn't mean that they don't exercise the authority implicit in those crowns during periods of normal activity.

When all is said and done, there can be no doubt that we are truly looking at "*fine fellers*". The final thing that can safely be said of all of them is that they must exhibit the **character** of Christ as well as His power. If only the church would focus as much on the **fruits** of the Spirit as they do the **gifts** of the Spirit perhaps we wouldn't drive off most of the converts we make. Ah, well! Come back tomorrow, when we get to visit ***the Throneroom of Heaven***.

Day 4 ~ The Throneroom of Heaven



“³ And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. ⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.” — Revelation 4:3-5

In yesterday's *E-Pistle*, we took a quick look at the **24 Elders**. Today, we're going to back up just a bit and take a look at the incredible and amazing place where they are sitting, the very Throneroom of God Himself. As I examined this and related Scriptures, it became very obvious to me that what actually exists in Heaven has very little to do with our popular images of Heaven. You could also go so far as to describe everything as being **alien** to our senses, and rightfully so.

Let's begin with the Lord Himself. John says that He who sat on the Throne was like a **jasper** or a **sardius** gemstone. For a long time, I interpreted that passage to read that the Lord was sitting on something that had the color of one of those gemstones, but as I began to teach Revelation in greater depth, I soon realize that those two gem colors were being used to refer not to the Throne, but to the **Individual Himself**. Given that, we have to ask ourselves two simple questions: (1) What color is a jasper stone and (2) what color is a sardius stone? When I did my initial research, the pictures of both jasper and sardius stones both showed a **deep cherry red** color. That really threw me. I hadn't expected God to be an American Indian, a "red" man. And no offense to our Native Americans, but not even they are as red as the pictures I found. But when I went to Strong's Concordance, things got simultaneously worse and better. When I looked up the word that we translate as jasper, **iaspis**, things quickly got worse. It turns out that an *iaspis* stone can be a variety of different colors. Strong's says that the word means "*jasper, a precious stone of various colors (for some are purple, others blue, others green, and others the color of brass)*". Well! Thanks a lot, guys! That really ties it down a lot! After that initial definition, though, there's another little comment area, and it says this: "*There is one sort which is called 'Aerizusa', like to air, and another 'Crystallizusa', clear as crystal. So Pliny speaks of a white 'jasper' called 'Astrios', and which, he says, is crystallo propinquans, 'near to crystal', found in India, and on the shores of Pallene.*" (John Gill—Comments on Rev 21:11) Hmm... **That** rang a bell in the back of my brain. I then checked to see where else in the New Testament this particular word was used. And, lo and behold, guess what else I found?

"¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹ having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, **like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.**" -- Revelation 21:10-11

Finally I had some sort of a reasonable color correlation. Verse 11 stated that a jasper stone was **clear as crystal**. That linked directly back to Pliny's comment of a **white** jasper which he said was "**near to crystal**". So far so good. But there was one additional passage that I could go to, just a few verses down the page:

"¹⁸ The construction of its wall was of **jasper**; and the city was **pure gold, like clear glass.**" -- Revelation 21:18

Even though this wasn't a perfect match, it still carried the suggestion of an **opaque** texture, something you could see through.

The next step was to see what **sardius** translated out as. The Greek word, **sardines**, means "a *sardius*, a precious stone of which there are two types, the former is called a **carneian** (because **flesh colored**) and the latter a **sard**". Now, the "flesh colored" comment seemed a little closer to the milky white, almost transparent color of the Indian jasper. And since we minister in India, I was unreasonable prejudiced toward that particular interpretation. The key was to find out what on earth a **sard** looked like. Was God sardine colored? Ecch! I looked the term up in Wikipedia, and it told me that a **sard** was a **reddish-brown chalcedony**. Ummm... Wait a minute. Isn't that the color we started this whole mess with? Oh, brother!

This kind of stuff is why translators often end up being rather strange people. If they weren't a little weird before they started in the profession, they can't help but get that way after a few hard days at work dealing with stuff like this. After all that research, I had come full circle. God was either (a) the color of a Luden's cherry cough drop, or (b) a milky-white, almost translucent color. Common sense and what I already knew of the Bible told me to disregard the cough drop theory, and stick with the milky-white, almost transparent color. This would also agree with what our understanding of a spirit being generally looks like anyway. In fact, when we talk about ghosts or spirits, they are almost always described as translucent, see-through white. Finally, I felt reasonably confident that I had a color that was Biblically accurate and made sense as well.

Having resolved that issue as best I could, I then turned my attention to the Throne itself. Wow! What a piece of furniture! So awesome is the power radiating from it that it causes a distortion in the atmosphere around it, causing a rainbow to appear. Now, a rainbow is something that I don't need a dictionary to help define. A rainbow is caused by light passing through drops of water vapor, creating a prism effect. What made Noah's rainbow so extraordinary was that it was the first ever seen by mankind. Prior to that, the water barrier above the firmament (atmosphere) had blocked out all direct sunlight, diffusing it and generalizing it. After the Flood, the barrier was gone, and direct sunlight could penetrate all the way to the surface of the planet for the first time. I can clearly remember driving to the Annual Conference of the UMC and passing through an enormous thunderstorm that lasted for perhaps 3-4 hours. Finally, we drove out of the storm, and suddenly, spanning the entire sky in front of us was the biggest, most beautiful double rainbow I had ever seen in my life. One base originated in the far north. The other base terminated in the far south. The peak of the rainbow reached at least half-way to a point directly overhead. The colors were the most brilliant I had ever seen. And underneath the first rainbow was a half-tone "ghost" rainbow, only slightly smaller, and translucent, just like our "jasper" stone earlier in this article. Cars on the highway started pulling off the road and stopping, just to look. Even a State Policeman pulled his vehicle off the road and began filming the amazing spectacle. Unfortunately, we had no photographic equipment with us to capture the moment. I had to resort to the fading film of my aging mind to make my snapshot for my album.

The rainbow around the Throne, however, is not an ordinary rainbow. What? You expected something to be **normal**, for crying out loud? No, dear friends. **This** rainbow is a **bright green color!** So, what did I know about the color green? Turns out, not a lot. I knew that green was one of the three primary colors used in constructing all the other colors in a computer monitor. Everything is constructed out of an **RGB (Red, Green, Blue)** model. I also knew that green was considered to be one of the **Primary Colors** fundamental to human vision. And, of course, green is part of our famous old chum from high school physics and chemistry, Dr. **ROY G. BIV (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo and Violet)**. But was there a kind of energy that emitted **green light?**

Well, there was always **Kryptonite**, the fictitious element created when Superman's home world of *Krypton* exploded. Nah, probably not a good match! Let's see...what made Bruce Banner turn green, shred normally wash-n-wear, wrinkle-free permanent press clothes, and turn into the Incredible Hulk? Hey, he was green, right?

In researching the matter, I hit a brick wall. Blue light, it turns out, has a shorter wavelength. As we move through the colors of the rainbow, the wavelengths increase. Green, of course, is a mixture of blue and yellow, so that means that the light, and hence the energy signature, being emitted by the Throne is on a slightly longer wavelength than blue. Why that is so is a mystery to me. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that there is a particular reason, scientifically speaking, why the rainbow is totally green, and not consisting of the standard spectrum of colors. No, I don't even give consideration to some goofy, symbolic nonsense. That is what has ruined our understanding of the Word of God for thousands of years. If we don't understand the physical, literal sense of the passage, we calmly invent some foolishness to make it appear that we are wise, learned and, of course, spiritually discerning. Nonsense! I have no clue why this is so. **Something** is altering the basic nature of the light being emitted from the throne, suppressing the normal full spectral range of light. My hope and prayer is that I will have the privilege of coming back and altering this article in order to let you know that I discovered, by prayer and research, why the only green rainbow in existence surrounds the Throne of God.

Well, somebody say that God is good all the time, and all the time, God is good! I wrote the words in the above paragraph on Friday, March 21, 2008, on a Friday afternoon. We then went to church to teach an *Unrolling the Scroll* Seminar session, and also to watch Mel Gibson's incredible movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, since it happened to be Good Friday. In our teaching session, I mentioned how I go about receiving the revelations that I do, and commented as an aside that I was stumped on the subject of how on earth a rainbow could be green. Lo and behold, a member of the congregation who had never been to one of our teaching sessions before drew me aside at the break and shared with me that he had actually seen green rainbows, several of them in fact! When I asked him to relate the circumstances to me, he told me that he had been an airline pilot for DHL for over 20 years. When it hails and an aircraft is in flight, the hail can totally destroy the plane. And it **just so happens** that when sunlight passes through **hail**, it produces an **emerald green rainbow!** Wow! Never in a million years would I have ever suspected or come to know such a thing! But the Lord had the man with the answer right in front of me when I confessed my own weakness and lack of understanding. Maybe James was right after all. Maybe we **should** pray for one another and confess our sins and weaknesses to one another, so that **we** can get healed, informed and delivered! I have full confidence that there is more to the story. As the Lord provides more information to me, I will share it with you. Isn't God good? How totally cool!

As we move into Verse 4, we encounter those 24 Fine Fellers that we met yesterday. We've talked enough about them already, so we'll move on to the scenery around the Throne itself. Coming out of the Throne are **lightnings, thunderings** and **voices**. Can you imagine the incredible level of power that must surround the being know as the Father? And furthermore, can you even begin to comprehend how much sheer energy must be contained in His being itself? Small wonder, then, that the Bible says that to look on God face to face is a guaranteed recipe for certain death. This is why, when Moses requested that he be shown His Glory, that the Lord had to mercifully decline his appeal. The best He could do for him was to hide him in a fissure of a rock surface, and let him see the fading rear of His Glory as He went by. This is also why Job, after complaining and grouching about his unfair situation through much of the book probably authored by him, thus granting his request for documentation (Job 19:23), found himself abasing himself in the dust when the Lord Himself appeared in all His Glory (Job 40:3-4). Frankly, the absolute, infinite power of God **is** frightening, if taken only by itself. When I was 16, I had the extraordinary privilege of standing in the very presence of the Lord Almighty. There were several things that I still remember quite clearly, even after more than 40 years have passed. I remember that there was power present such as I have never felt or experienced in my life. I knew that the power was so great that I should have simply ceased to exist in its presence. Imagine what it would have been like had you been standing next to the first A-bomb when it exploded over Hiroshima. You would not have died. You would not have been burned up. No, dear friends, you would simply have **ceased to exist**, as the atoms of your body would have been scattered to the four winds **instantly** as the ravaging force of the bomb tore through you. That's what it was like for me. But instead, I found myself encased in some kind of egg-shaped force field that somehow protected me from the destructive forces swirling around me. I could feel the energy pouring **through** my body, yet without harming me. And, at the same time, I was overwhelmed by the sensation of being **loved unconditionally**. That also was a completely new sensation to me. Most of us love conditionally. Do

this, and I will love you. Do **that**, and I will hate you. Not so on that remarkable day. I knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that **no matter what I did, I would always be loved**. It's hard to imagine that feeling, must less describe it. It is not a license to sin. Rather, it is an understanding that **despite my failures, He would always love me and be there for me**. I can't say that I have always felt that way in my life. Sometimes I have felt very alone and abandoned, just like Christ on the cross. But for that one moment in time, as I basked in His love and glory, I knew I was His precious, special child. And you are, too, if you love Him with all your heart. That experience wasn't just for me. It was for you as well. He loves you with an **everlasting** love. He created you and I for the specific purpose of being with Him for all eternity. That also is hard to imagine. But it is nonetheless true, and will remain true from one end of infinity to the other, if there be such a thing.

That explained the thunder and lightning, but what about the voices? Normally we lock people who tell us they hear voices away somewhere safe. How fortunate in some cases, and how sad in others. Joan of Arc would have been "diagnosed" as schizophrenic in our world today. We have, in our intellectual arrogance, labeled **any** communication in the spirit realm as a clear indicator of mental illness. Sorry, boys! I don't mean to be rude, but if you think I'm going to give up hearing from God, **you're** crazy! Now, not all the voices of the spirit realm can be trusted to be honest and "friendly ghosts", no more than every voice of every man on the street can be trusted to want a good outcome for you. Many are there to manipulate you, use you, and then discard you or even destroy you. So it is in the spirit realm. You hear the voice of your own spirit, frequently. Sometimes it's that "gut feeling" that you get when your head tells you that it's the right thing to do, but you tighten up in a knot inside when you get ready to do it. Sometimes the voice that you hear really **is** the Voice of God. I know that many years ago, I was considering a very important business decision. My head told me to one thing. But the Lord told me to go a different way. I pleaded. I argued. It made no sense. Finally, young and foolish, I kicked the traces off and went my own way. **\$20,000.00 later**, I realized what a fool I had been. Yup! My unwillingness to obey what I clearly knew to be that Still, Small Voice cost me a pretty penny! I have learned the hard way that **God always knows what He is talking about, even if you don't have a clue!**

All of that is well and good, but most people don't walk close enough to God to hear Him even if He was shouting at the top of His eternal lungs. They hear different voices, and the voices they hear do **not** have their best interests at heart. Those voices only look to deceive and misguide them, leading them into paths of eternal destruction.

I remember the old Rocky and Bullwinkle cartoon routine. Bullwinkle would say, "*Let's see what the spirits have to say.*" Rocky would respond, "*Are they **friendly** spirits?*" Bullwinkle would calmly retort, "*Friendly? Just listen!*" At that point, the cartoon would cut to a commercial break. Friendly? Sure! Welcoming? Absolutely! Manipulative? Without a doubt! In your best interests? **Not on your life!**

So it is with voices in the spirit realm. Keep a watch over your heart, dear friends, for out of it flow the issues of life (Proverbs 4:23). And do not trust every spirit, for not every spirit is of God (I John 4:1).

We still haven't solved the mystery of the voices coming out from the Throne of God? What are they? Frankly, your guess is as good as mine. Are they the voices of the 7th Seal Martyrs, coming from under the altar? Probably not. Wrong place. The Throne and the altar are not the same, although they are right next to one another. Are they the testimonies of the faithful down through the ages? Sounds good. Maybe. Is it the voice of the angels, singing His praises? Probably not. What is it, then? Here's what I think. Whenever God speaks, His voice sounds like the voice of many waters. I have shared elsewhere about the experience Billy Graham had many years ago in India. A trunk full of prayer requests was placed in front of him at a large crusade gathering. He was requested to pray for them. Instead, he led the entire coliseum in corporate prayer for the needs contained in the trunk. Everyone in the place began praying out loud at the same time. Graham said it sounded like Niagara Falls, the "sound of many waters". I believe that the voices coming from the Throne may be like the rocks themselves crying out, just like Jesus said. The Throne itself is so super-saturated with His Glory that it cannot help but speak of the matter itself! Perhaps I am wrong. If so, the Lord will correct me. But I do know this: **let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!** Perhaps even things that **don't**

have breath and life are granted breath and life **simply by being in the presence of He who is life itself.**

Having dealt with that issue, we can't take two steps without running smack dab into another mystery: **the Seven Spirits of God.** In order to give them a fair treatment, we have to examine all of the Scriptures that refer to them.

"⁴ 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,** ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth."
-- Revelation 1:4-5

"¹ 'And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the **seven Spirits of God** and the **seven stars:** 'I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.'"
-- Revelation 3:1

"⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. **Seven lamps of fire** were burning before the throne, **which are the seven Spirits of God.**" – Revelation 4:5

Now things get a little confusing. At first glance, it looks like the **seven Spirits of God** are the same thing as the **seven stars**, who we find elsewhere to be the **seven pastors of the seven churches.** Upon closer inspection, we start to see a subtle but very important difference. First of all, when the translators give us the phrase "**seven Spirits of God**", they are careful to **capitalize** the word **Spirits.** Any time you see a word capitalized like that in the Bible, you know you are looking at a reference to God. There are a few cases where I have found that they missed one that seemed to be obvious to me, but as a whole they seem to be pretty accurate. Also notice that the **seven stars** are **not** capitalized. That strengthens the argument that the seven stars which are the seven "angels" are really seven messengers or pastors. If that is true, however, who in the world are the seven Spirits of God? I had always been taught that there was a triune God consisting of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I can clearly remember an incident that first pointed out this seeming contradiction to me years ago. I was teaching a high school class in the church I attended, and one of the teen-age boys, filled with anger and rebellion but sharp as a tack, confronted me about this **seven Spirits of God** thing. Unfortunately, at that time, I really didn't know. In fact, I didn't understand this reference for a good many years until I finally hunkered down and started studying Revelation in earnest. My studies of Revelation led me to Daniel, and it was in Daniel that I found the answer I had been looking for.

"¹³ I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was **a watcher, a holy one,** coming down from heaven. ¹⁴ He cried aloud and said thus: 'Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, and the birds from its branches. ¹⁵ Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field. Let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts on the grass of the earth. ¹⁶ Let his heart be changed from that of a man, let him be given the heart of a beast, and let seven times pass over him.' ¹⁷ **This decision is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence by the word of the holy ones,** in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men.'"
– Daniel 4:13-17

As I have frequently mentioned, in order to solve one Bible mystery, I must present and solve **another** Bible mystery in order to solve the mystery I presented in the first place. Now do we not only not know who the **seven Spirits of God** are, we also now do not know who the **Watchers** are. This mysterious reference to Watchers occurs again in Daniel 4:23, as Daniel repeats and interprets the king's dream. So, who the heck are the Watchers? In order to solve **that** mystery, we have to return **back** to Revelation Chapter 5.

"⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having **seven horns** and **seven eyes,** which **are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.**" -- Revelation 5:6

Great! Just great, Pastor Ray! I thought you were going to **solve** a mystery. Now, we have just added **seven horns** to the list of things we don't understand!

All in due season, fellow campers, all in due season. Put the **seven horns** on the shelf for just a second and take a good second look at what was said just after that. John, having created a mystery for us earlier, now solves it by telling us that the **seven eyes of the Lamb are the seven Spirits of God send out into all the earth**. Friend, why are you looking at me like that? Don't you get it? No? It's all right; you're fairly new to all this interpretation stuff. Let's decode the symbols one at a time. Remember that I told you that all this stuff is **literal, logical and chronological**? Also remember from the last Episode that I explained to you that **if a symbol is presented, it is explained very shortly thereafter, and if it is not explained, it means that it has already been explained elsewhere earlier in the Bible**. Now, what I am about to say will make your head hurt just a little bit, so down a few aspirins with a glass of water and come right back. Back yet? Good. Here goes: In order to understand the reference to the seven Spirits of God in **Revelation**, you need to know about the Watchers in **Daniel**. And in order to understand the Watchers in **Daniel**, you need to understand the seven Spirits of God in **Revelation**. Now, now! Stop throwing things and calm down. Let me explain.

I have to admit that it took me some considerable amount of research to finally totally crack this one. Part of it became obvious as soon as I connected the three Scriptures. To explain, not all angels are created equal. Some appear to look totally human, except for the wings, of course. But there are at least two classifications of angels which are only marginally human, the **cherubim** and the **seraphim**. It would take another whole article to explain these two classes of angels to you, but suffice it to say that they are part **human**, part **animal**, and part **machine**. They are kind of like Divine **Borg** (courtesy of Star Trek fame). Ezekiel 1:5-25 and 10:1-22 have excellent descriptions of them, along with Revelation 4:6-9. The difference, according to tradition, between the cherubim and the seraphim is that the cherubim have **four** wings, while the seraphim have **six**. Kinda like military stripes, I guess. The more wings you have, the higher up in the angelic hierarchy you are. One thing that both categories of angels have in common is that **their wings are full of eyes**. Why so? Because they are **sentry beings**, hence the term **Watcher**. Both the permanent throne of God in Revelation and the mobile throne of God in Ezekiel have either a cherub or a seraph positioned at each corner of the platform on which the throne rests. Now, If I were God and I had created a class of angels with as many eyes as a spider or a fly, it would make perfect sense to send them out as **observers** or **Watchers** to keep an eye on the affairs of men and report back. Apparently, very important individuals have their own personal monitors. King Nebuchadnezzar had one. In Ezekiel 28:12-16, the Lord chews out Lucifer and tells him why he got the old heave-ho from heaven. He also reminds him that he was the **anointed cherub who covers (or protects)**. He reminds him that he was stationed **on the holy mountain of God**, and is also quick to remind him that he once was in **Eden, the garden of God**. I hinted at this in the previous article, but the real tragedy about Lucifer and the real untold story of the betrayal in the Garden in Eden was not that Adam disobeyed God, or that Eve was deceived by the serpent. The real story was that the spirit indwelling the serpent at that moment, something that Eve prior to the fall could still see with her spiritual eyes, was the very spirit or angel **who had been assigned to protect them from harm and report back to God about their doings there**. Eve trusted the serpent because she thought that Lucifer was still her friend. Little did she know that she had been betrayed and deceived. Lucifer, after all, was a **cherub** or **Watcher** before he turned on the Lord and attempted to overthrow Him. By interpreting Scripture using other Scripture, we discover that there is a team of **seven Spirits (angels/cherubs/Watchers) who are assigned to keep an eye on what is going on in this planet and report back to heaven**. We also make the fascinating discovery by examining the Daniel passage that they not only have **responsibilities**, they also have **authority** that matches their responsibilities. When Nebuchadnezzar, the mightiest king in the whole world, starts to get cocky about his wealth and power, it is the Watchers, not the Lord, who make the decision to bring him down a peg or two. Surprised? So was I. But if you have a management structure, you need to always make sure that the **authority you grant** and the **responsibility you demand** are equally balanced. Too much authority and not enough responsibility always lead to an abuse of power. Hmmm... I wonder if that's what happened in the case of Lucifer? Never thought of that before! Too much responsibility and not enough authority and you burn your

management team out. This is why Jesus said that to he whom much is given, much is required. Fair. Balanced. Even in heaven. Now we finally understand who the seven Spirits of God and the Watchers are. They are one in the same.

`Nuff on that subject! In Verse 7, we will encounter a more detailed description of the 4 Seraphim who surround and guard the Throne of God, but the explanation for that topic is far too big for us to consider today. I've probably already given you more than enough to chew on. So, turn the page and stick your bookmark on the page that reads ***Day 5 – Cross in the Desert.*** Until then, just remember: **He is always watching**, seeing if there is anyone out there on whose behalf He can show himself strong! Amen and Amen!

Day 5 ~ Cross in the Desert



“⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. ⁸ The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, Who was and is and is to come.’ – Revelation 4:7-8

Today is going to be a different kind of article. Normally, I begin the day’s materials with an appropriate graphic and Scripture reference, and then complete the rest of the article with simple text. But today’s topic is far too important and far too difficult to get a mental picture of for us to take that approach. Today, for the first time in this entire series of books, I am going to include a closing graphic in this article, or you may never get a clear picture of what is going on. Let’s begin with what the creatures look like. First of all, they are only marginally human looking. Second of all, there are some differences between the way that they appear in Revelation and the way that they appear in Isaiah and Ezekiel. Let’s run this trace backwards, and see what we find out.

In Revelation, the four creatures that surround the Throne of God are called **Seraphim**. Although that fact is not given in the passage we’re looking at today, it has already been explained in Isaiah. We also know from both Revelation and Isaiah that they each have **six wings**. That’s how we are able to determine what to call them in Revelation. Again and again, we find multiple Scriptures intertwining each other, linked together in some sort of divine matrix, more complicated by far than the world in which the fictitious *Neo* in the movie *Matrix* found himself.

In learning the order of the Books of the Bible, I have developed a few little mnemonic memory tricks. One of them is the acronym **IJED**, which stands for **I**saiah, **J**eremiah, **E**zekiel and **D**aniel. That’s the order in which the four Major Literary Prophets appear in the Bible. Since Isaiah comes first, let’s look at what he has to say about this matter.

“¹ *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.* ² *Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.* ³ *And one cried to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!’ ” – Isaiah 6:1-3*

Very quickly we find ourselves loaded up with a ton of information encoded in symbolic form. I find that I am fascinating that the train of His robe is so huge that it filled the entire temple. For those of you who have absolutely no idea what a train is, or thought that it was something that ran on railroad tracks, the train of a royal robe or a wedding gown is the long, flowing stretch of cloth that trails behind the wearer of the garment. In theory, the more regal the individual, the longer the train of his or her garment. A poor bride might not be able to afford any train at all, whereas a princess would expect a train that seemingly went on and on. God is so noble and regal that His train fills up the entire Temple in Heaven, no small place indeed! I wonder if this same train was what Moses was privileged to see on Mt. Sinai, when he requested to see God’s glory. In Exodus Chapter 33 Moses requested to see God’s glory. God replied that no human being could look on His face and live. That’s not a result of God being mean. It’s a result of God being merciful. The level of energy surrounding and emanating from His presence is so overwhelming that it would instantly destroy any mortal creature made of the matter of this universe that came into its proximity. Instead, God hides Moses in a large crevasse and covers him with His hand, and then once the full radiant energy of His being has largely passed by, He

uncovers Moses so that he can see His back. I suspect that part of what Moses saw was that train trailing the Lord's garments, still crackling with power, but no longer lethal. During his two stays on the mountain, his body absorbed so much radiation that it glowed at night and you could read a good book by it. Under normal circumstances, he would have been dead within days. Only the phenomenal healing virtue of the Lord protected him during that period of time.

The next topic we need to deal with is the six wings of each of the Seraphim. Their use is just as fascinating. Two wings, we are told, cover the **face** of the Seraph. Dear friends, God is so holy, so utterly pure and so filled with indescribable power that **even His most trusted angels dare not look on Him directly**. And Lucifer had the temerity to think that **he** could replace someone like **Him**? Excuuuuuse me! Two more wings are used to cover the Seraph's **feet**. Why? Because, as Watchers, they are required to visit and **walk upon** the planet earth, saturated with sin, carnality, corruption and death. Those feet are unclean, and, as such, must not touch anything regarding the absolutely pure and sinless Throne itself. Finally, two wings are left over to **fly with**. Given that divine division of labor, it suggests that while the **Seraphim** are permitted to visit the earth and walk upon it that the **Cherubim** are not, since they only have **four** wings, not **six**. If there are two less wings, then one of those three functions must not be performed. It can't be the flying part. And if seraphim with six wings are required to cover their faces in the presence of the Almighty, then surely Cherubim have the same requirement. That only leaves the two wings that normally cover the feet. And the only reason that the feet would not need to be covered would be if they are never defiled. I know that I am dealing with theory right now, but it certainly would make sense. I think I'll add it to the thousands of questions I already have stored up for the day that I stand in His presence.

Once you begin to meditate deeply on the things of God, it always answers many questions and creates even more. If what I just suggested is correct, then it may be that the Watchers/Seraphim have a **rotating schedule between heaven and earth**, while the Cherubim do not. Hmmm...

The next topic of interest is **what the angels are saying**. Although there are some differences between the Revelation passage and the Isaiah passage, one thing is for certain: they always begin what they are saying by crying out **"Holy, holy, Holy"**. Why three times? I would suggest that it is because our God is a **Triune God, three-in-one**. The **Father** is holy. The **Son** is holy. And, of course, the **Spirit** is holy. That's why we always refer to Him as the **Holy Spirit**. Now, let's take this one step further. If all three parts of the Godhead, the **Elohim**, are holy, and the Spirit who lives within you is holy, doesn't it stand to reason that **you** should be holy as well? Our age has vastly underplayed the absolute necessity of holiness, purity and sanctification before the Lord. As a result, ministry after ministry has crashed and burned as a result of moral failure. The long-standing stability and success of a ministry, as well as the permanence of the mark which it will make, is based not on the level of anointing which the man or woman of God carries. No, dear friends. I have seen heavily anointed ministries crash and burn again and again due the moral failures of the leaders of those ministries. I know you probably get tired of hearing me talk about this, but may I also point out that there is **absolutely no sin in Heaven**. It's simply not permitted. The glory of God would instantly lash out and destroy any creature, **human or otherwise**, who stood unclean in its presence. That's what happened to Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's two sons, when, drunk as skunks, they brought unauthorized fire before the Lord. Oh, dear friends, there is such a story there! And we don't have time to study it today! We're already too far off course already! But I want you to consider something before we move on. If the Glory of God would instantly destroy any sin found in its presence, then Lucifer and the fallen angels **had** to be removed from heaven when they sinned! The mercy of God is certainly beyond my comprehension! Could it be that it was as much God's **mercy** as His **judgment** that cause them to be taken from His presence? Could that self same mercy be the reason that Satan is not immediately cast into the Lake of Fire, but rather cast into a temporary retaining cell called the **Abyss** for a single God-day of 1,000 years? Could it be that he is turned loose on the earth after the 1,000 years **because God loved him so much that he wanted to give him one last chance**? I stagger at the concept. I can't prove that it is true, but this is where the Scarlet Thread has led me in my deliberations. People often ask me where I get the revelations that I have. They don't mean it in a negative way. They simply are amazed at the insights that I have regarding the revealed Word of God. I have found that I teach many things that I have never heard another man or woman of God teach, yet I can back up every single word I say with multiple Scriptures, all in context. I simply reply that I

spend a lot more time with God than I do with man. Man can teach me some things. But man can **never** teach me the deep things of God. Only God can. And He can do the same for you, since He is no respecter of persons. Sometimes the revelation pours out of my spirit, from His Spirit, faster than I can type.

Now we turn to Ezekiel, who will fill in a little bit more of the picture for us. As the story begins, Ezekiel is experiencing an **open vision**, an event which occurs while one is **fully awake**. In this case, Ezekiel will encounter the cousins of the Seraphim called **Cherubim**. The two species are clearly related to one another, as we will soon discover.

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

Now we're starting to get down to brass tacks. Remember the faces of the seraphim in Revelation? Well, now you know where they came from! The only minor variation is that in Revelation, one face is described as a **calf**, where in Ezekiel it is described as an **ox**. Either way, it's a **cow**, OK??? Also, the faces in Revelation are shown, one per creature, where in Ezekiel each individual creature is shown as have all four faces. Kinda weird, huh? What are all these faces about, anyhow?

Down through the years, there have been all kinds of theories about these four faces and what they represent. One of the Early Church Fathers decided that they represented the **Four Gospels**. He associated the **man** with the Gospel of **Matthew**, the **lion** with the Gospel of **Mark**, the **bull/ox** with the Gospel of **Luke** and the **eagle** with the Gospel of **John**. I've even seen stained glass windows ornately decorated with all of the associated pictures. Unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth. Remember how I've said again and again that **Scripture interprets Scripture** and that **symbols not explained in a passage have already been explained elsewhere?** Well, it's true again in this passage. Unfortunately, for the casual reader, the meanings are hidden deep within Scripture and some very interesting traditions that developed early in the history of the children of Israel.

Whenever movie makers depict the Exodus from Egypt, they show the children of Israel leaving as some rag-tag, confused, motley band, with no order whatsoever. Scripture, however, provides us with an entirely different picture. When the people of God left Egypt, they left in strict marching order (Exodus 13:18). When they camped in the desert, again they set up camp in a strict military arrangement. Didn't know that? Still believing the Gospel according to Cecil B. DeMille? **Never** trust the movie depictions of Biblical events. I've gotten to the point where I almost won't watch so-called Christian theme movies any more because of the extreme liberties that the writers and producers take with the Word of God. Remember, in both the Old and New Testaments, God warns that we are to neither **add to** nor **subtract from** what is written, for reasons that we can't go into here. Severe penalties, including the loss of eternal life, are listed for those who play games with the Word of God. But, I digress. Let's return to the camp in the wilderness.

One of the most difficult books to read through in the Bible is the Book of **Numbers**. It contains a seemingly endless list of things to do and not do, how to construct certain things, etc, etc. When I first started reading the Bible, I felt the same way. But as I matured in the Word, I began to discover incredible hidden secrets buried away in the midst of the myriad details. Lest we grumble about all the laws and details in the book, take a good look at our own culture. How many laws do we have on the books of our own jurisprudence system? Ten? I think not. And how many blueprints and diagrams do we have tucked away in filing cabinets showing us how to construct all of our majestic buildings and marvelous gadgets that we rely on so heavily? More than that found in Numbers? I would think so. Numbers contains all of the rules for doing everything for the people of God. Remember, they had

been slaves in Egypt for perhaps 350 or more of the 430 years that they spent there. They had absolutely no sense of self-governance. Such things had not been permitted to slaves. All they knew was the harsh whip of their Egyptian overlords. So, in order to attempt to teach the people once more how to govern themselves, a complete set of legal, economic, political and engineering systems had to be given to them. Left to their own devices (and we know how **that** went when Moses went up on the mountain for only 40 days!) they might **never** have come to a point where they could have become a cohesive, effective nation, able to govern and defend themselves.

So Numbers becomes the record-keeping book of the Old Testament. Numbers is called Numbers because at the very **beginning** and the very **end** of the book the people are **numbered**, or counted, as in the form of a census. Normally, the figures from a census are deadly dull and boring, but in this case, they play a critical role in our little investigation. I first made this discovery as I was flying on an airplane to the Boston area for a three-week programming school. I was in the very back, with my Bible and a yellow lined notepad out scribbling furiously. A rather wild-looking individual was sitting next to me, and we struck up a conversation. It turned out that he was a Vietnam veteran who had backslidden out of church. He had a dream in which the two factions of the congregation where he attended actually got into a fist fight in the middle of the service. The very next Sunday, the two leaders of the two factions actually did get into a knock-down, drag-out brawl in the middle of church. That kind of discouraged him, and he stopped going to church. As we talked, I had the privilege of leading him back to Christ.

Having played the role of evangelist, I went rejoicing back to the task of studying to show myself approved. The first thing I did was to make a list of the census **per tribe**. The results were as follows:

Reuben	46,500	Issachar	54,400	Benjamin	35,400
Simeon	59,300	Zebulun	57,400	Dan	62,700
Gad	45,650	Ephraim	40,500	Asher	41,500
Judah	74,600	Manasseh	32,200	Naphtali	53,400

All total, the number of **men** age 20 or over was **603,550**. It doesn't take long to see that it was a huge group of people that existed from Egypt that fateful morning. If there were over 600,000 **men** over the age of 20, then it only stood to reason that there must also have been at least 600,000 **women** over the age of 20. That pushes our total to **1.2 million**, and we haven't even counted the kids yet! It is recorded that the Hebrew women were **exceedingly fertile**, so we are talking way more than 2 kids per household. Let's be conservative for just a moment, and assume that each household had only **5 children per household**. Now, if I multiply **5 children x 500,000 households**, allowing for widows and unmarried individuals, I end up with an additional **2.5 million children**. That pushes the total population to at least **3.7 million**, and we aren't done yet! In addition to the children of Israel, a vast **mixed multitude** came out of Egypt with them. That's where Moses' little Cushite bride came from after he divorced Zipporah. If you were a slave in Egypt, and you saw the entire Hebrew population permitted to leave, how long would it take for you to also become a fervent follower of YHWH? Man, I'll bet more folks got religion that morning than at any time in world history! We have to speculate that at least **500,000** slaves also left Egypt at the same time. That would push our total population to around **4.2 million!** And that, dear friends, is a **conservative** number!

Lest we think, as some arrogant Bible commentators have suggested, that these numbers are highly inflated, let me remind you of the **other** census that was taken just before they entered into the Promised Land. As the children of Israel were camped at the Acacia Grove in Moab, just across the river from Canaan, an identical census to the first was taken. This second census is found in Numbers Chapter 26, and, lo and behold, we find that the people had slightly decreased during their 40 years in the wilderness! The number of men 20 years and old now came to **601,730**. Given the number of people who had died because of disobedience, it's a small miracle that any of them survived. God even threatened to destroy them all and start over with Moses, but he talked Him out of it (Exodus 32:9-14). This second census supports the validity of the first census. Certain tribes fared well in the desert and increased. Others were rebellious and decreased. All in all, the Bible presents a faithful, accurate record of exactly what happened and how many people left Egypt and traveled in circles for an agonizing 40 years after that.

Now that we have the actual census numbers established, we need to look at the **marching and camping order** for this huge group of people. By the way, sophisticated satellite imagery of the Middle East **still shows that a huge group of people left Egypt and traveled in the desert!** Yup! After all these years, the trail still shows! If a few thousand people walk over an area, it won't show for very long. But if nearly 5 million people put their sandals up and down, it makes a **permanent** impression!

The marching and camping orders for this huge group of people were very precise. At the very center of the columns and also when they camped were the Levites, whose job it was to carry, assemble, disassemble and care for the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. Maximum protection would logically be provided for this most important of all Hebrew artifacts. On the **east** side, under the standard of **Judah**, were three tribes: Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. The combined census of males 20 and older for these three tribes was **186,400**. Since all the tribes had only so much space on each side of the square area surrounding the Tabernacle, it meant that this group of people would extend in the form of a **long rectangle** away from the center of the camp. In fact, and this is a very important thing to remember, the **eastern leg** of the camp was **by far the longest**.

On the **southern side** of the camp, under the banner of **Reuben**, were Reuben, Simeon and Gad. The total male 20+ census for them was **151,450**. Again, **remember the numbers**.

On the **western side** of the camp, under the banner of **Ephraim**, were Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin. The total male 20+ census for them was **108,100**. Now, think about the dimensions we have established so far. The **eastern side** of **186,400** was slightly longer than the **western side** of **108,100**. Again, **remember the numbers and their relationship**.

Finally, on the **northern side** of the camp, under the banner of **Dan**, were Dan, Asher and Naphtali. The total male 20+ census for them was **157,600**.

Once I had these four composite totals, I began to think and sketch a little on my notepad. Remember that the Levites and the Tabernacle at the center of the camp formed a **square**. That way, any attempt to take the Ark of the Covenant would have to break through at least three tribes plus the Levites themselves. Then I added a long rectangle on the eastern side of the square, to represent the tribes under Judah. I added a slightly shorter rectangle on the western side of the square, to represent the tribes under Ephraim. Hmm... Things were getting interesting.

I then added two equal sized rectangles for the southern side under the banner of Reuben and the northern side under the banner of Dan. When I was done, **I was looking at a cross!** I was shocked. I quickly re-checked my numbers. Yup! They were correct. There was no doubt about it. If someone had been flying overhead in an invisible airplane like Wonder Woman's, they would have seen **a giant cross in the desert**, composed of **all the children of Israel**. At the heart of the cross would have been **men who were totally sold out to serve God**. At the heart of those men would have been the **Tabernacle**. At the heart of the Tabernacle would have been the **Holy of Holies**. At the heart of the Holy of Holies would have been the **Ark of the Covenant**. And at heart of the Ark of the Covenant would have been the **Mercy Seat** and the **Ten Commandments**, with the Mercy Seat **overshadowing** the Ten Commandments. What an incredible statement to make to all the universe! Even then, the cross of Jesus Christ was foreshadowed for all the world to see except for the very people being used to foreshadow it! What a paradox! And how very like our own lives. We are used to make statements to all the world about what and Who lives inside of us, while we are blissfully unaware of how many lives we are impacting and the level of our witness.

Finding the cross at the heart of the matter was cool enough for one day, and so I rejoiced in the Lord all the rest of the way to Boston. Remember? We were on a plane flight, right?

It wasn't until recently that the final piece of the puzzle fell into place for me. And when it did, it linked to and permanently explained the mysterious four faces of Revelation's cherubim and seraphim. Let's look back at the cross for just a moment. If we had been in a helicopter, hovering near the camp on

the southern side, looking at it as we would on a normal map, with **north** being at the **top** of the map, **south** being at the **bottom** of the map, **west** being on the **left hand side** of the map and **east** being on the **right hand side** of the map, we would have made the following directional associations:

- (1) The cross would be laying **on its side**, with its **base** on the **eastern** or **right hand side** of the map.
- (2) The **top** of the cross would be on the **western** or **left hand side**.
- (3) The cross would therefore be pointed directionally from the **east** to the **west**. (Does this ring a bell? Hmmm? When Christ returns, it will be like lightning traveling across the sky from the _____ to the _____. I'll let you fill in the blanks.)
- (4) The camp of **Judah**, bearing the banner of the **Lion**, would be on the **eastern** or **right hand side**.
- (5) The camp of **Ephraim**, bearing the banner of the **Ox**, would be on the **western** or **left hand side**.
- (6) The camp of **Dan**, bearing the banner of the **Eagle**, would be on the **northern** or **top side**.
- (7) The camp of **Reuben**, bearing the banner of a **Man**, would be on the **southern** or **bottom** side.

Have you made the connection yet? No? Don't feel bad. It took me a little time to get it, too. Let's take another look at that passage from the Book of Ezekiel.

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

Do you see it yet? The **Lion of Judah** is on the **right**, **exactly** like the configuration of the camp of the people of God in the wilderness! The **Ox of Ephraim** is on the **left**, **exactly** like the configuration of the camp. The **Eagle of Dan** is on the **top**, and the **Man of Reuben** is on the **bottom**. The Ezekiel passage is not specific about whether the Man of Reuben is on the bottom or the top, but if it is on the bottom, then that places the Eagle of Dan on the top, **perfectly imaging** the arrangement of the camps in the desert. Finally, we have a match! Scripture once again **perfectly** interprets Scripture. And a symbol presented to us in Revelation needs no wild human imagination to conjure some wild, totally inconsistent interpretation, because, just as I have taught all through this series, **the interpretation has already been provided earlier in the Bible**. This does raise one minor question, though. Is **Revelation** echoing **Ezekiel** echoing **Exodus**, or vice versa? In other words, does the chain of cause and effect **start** with Revelation or **stop** with Revelation? I am going to suggest to you that it is **neither** and it is **both**. Do I have you truly confused? (As if this article wasn't confusing enough all by itself!) What we are looking at is something called a **closed time loop**. Now, we do not have time to explain closed time loops today. I promise you that tomorrow I will come back to this subject and give it a thorough scrubbing, because it explains one of the greatest mysteries of the whole Bible, the mystery of Melchizedek. For right now, suffice it to say that a closed time loop is a time structure where event **A** links to event **B** which links to event **C** which, instead of moving on to event **D**, instead links back again to event **A**, in a cyclical, repeating pattern. Some examples of a closed time loop in the Bible include:

1. Jesus – Melchizedek, where:
 - a. Jesus is a High Priest in the order of Melchizedek.
 - b. Melchizedek has neither mother nor father.
 - c. Melchizedek has neither beginning nor end of days.
 - d. Therefore, Melchizedek must be Jesus in the Old Testament.
 - e. How can that be? Stay tuned for tomorrow. Details at 6:00.
2. Psalm 22, where:
 - a. Either Jesus is quoting David, saying "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" or...

- b. David is quoting Jesus, seeing the crucifixion in a vision, feverishly writing down what he sees that man on the cross saying.
- 3. The Four Faces of the Cherubim/Seraphim/the Cross in the Desert, where:
 - a. The four banners of the four tribal groups in the wilderness echo the four faces of the cherubim in Ezekiel, or...
 - b. The four faces of the cherubim in Ezekiel are echoing the four separate faces of the seraphim in Revelation, or...
 - c. The four separate faces of the seraphim in Revelation are echoing the four banners of the four tribal groups in the wilderness, or...
 - d. You get the picture. In a closed time loop, there is no such thing as a **beginning or an end**. Like the Energizer Rabbit, it just keeps **going and going and going...**

See why we can't get into that subject today? We will run out of time shortly, and there is no way under heaven or earth that I can deal with the subject adequately so that you can understand it in under a page. Nope! Not gonna happen! We still have one cool picture to show you at the end of this article!

Speaking of cool pictures, here, then, at the end of this article, is the absolutely best picture I have ever seen. I borrowed some of it, and constructed some of it myself. I have not seen another one like it anywhere. So be blessed, and enjoy looking closely at it for a few minutes, and then we'll close up for today.

The Cross In the Desert



**West
/Left**

Camp of Ephraim, flying the "OX" standard

Tribes
of
Ephraim
Manasseh
Benjamin
108,100

Camp of Reuben
flying the "MAN" standard



Tribes
of
Reuben
Simeon
Gad
151,450

Camp of Dan
flying the "EAGLE" standard



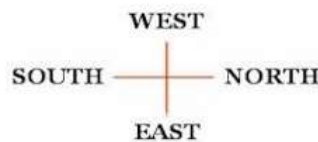
Tribe of Levi

Tabernacle

Tribes
of
Dan
Asher
Naphtali
157,600

**South
/Bottom**

**North
/Top**



Tribes
of
Judah
Issachar
Zebulun
186,400

Camp of Judah, flying the "LION" standard



**East/
Right**

There it is, folks! I consider it to be one of the greatest things God has ever revealed to me. Remember, to view the cross as it would appear on a map, you have to turn the previous page **on its side**. We think in terms of **north** and **south**, because of our magnetic poles. God, on the other hand, views things from **east to west**, probably because of the general orientation of all the orbital patterns in our solar system, but also perhaps for other, more "mystical" reasons. For example, you can travel either north or south only so far until north becomes south and vice versa. On the other hand, there is no point on our globe where you can travel east until it becomes west, and vice versa. You can travel east indefinitely, circling the globe for all eternity. The same is true for traveling west. That kind of links into the eternal, infinite nature of God, and maybe it even hints at more than that. Who knows?

We have conclusively solved the mystery of the faces of the Seraphim and the Cherubim, found the hidden Cross in the desert, given meaning and life to seemingly dead census statistics and opened up a hideous can of worms regarding closed time loops, all using Scripture to interpret Scripture and without

falling into the trap of turning to subjective interpretation. As I have studied the Bible, I have never seen these principles that the Lord gave me fail me yet, nor do I anticipate that they will. And they won't fail you, either, dear friend. Put your hope and trust in the Lord your God, and in His literally, divinely inspired Word. The author of Psalm 119 said, "*Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee*" (Psalm 119:11). Hide His Word in your heart, dear friend. **It will never, ever fail you.** We will see you again tomorrow when we will find out all about time in ***It's About Time.*** Until then, take time to fast, pray and seek His face. His glory will be revealed to you. Amen and Amen!

Day 6 – It's About Time!



“⁹ That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.¹⁰ Is there anything of which it may be said, ‘See, this is new?’ It has already been in ancient times before us.¹¹ There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of things that are to come by those who will come after.”

– Ecclesiastes 1:9-11

What is time? In another book that I have written, entitled *How to Survive the Coming Crash*, I talk about the nature of time for the entire first chapter. Understanding how God views time gives you a certain power, not **over** time, but rather learning how to flow **with** time, anticipating what is coming next and being prepared when it happens. What if you could anticipate an upcoming global economic crash? What if you knew, within a span of only a few years, when the world economy would be turned upside down? Would it change the way you think? Would it change the way that you prepared yourself economically? Would it affect your business plans? Marriage plans? College plans? To understand the direction of future events would be to enable you to prepare for whatever that future might be. Furthermore, what if you could not only **anticipate** the future, but actually **travel** through it? What if you could go into the future to see the horrors of the Bowl Judgments, or see the Eastern sky split open as untold millions or even billions of riders on white horses led by One Whose Name is Faithful and True come to invade our planet and take it back from the wicked hands of Satan? What if you could then move forward in time from there, to witness the rebuilding of our earth under the benign and divine administration of Christ and His resurrected Immortals? Or, better yet, be there with John to see the Heavenly City coming down from outer space to rest on a brand new earth?

Let's take it a step further. What if you could go **back** in time? What if you had the power to **change history**? Such is the power of only one man in the history of the entire world. Such is the power of the Risen Christ. But before we can examine **how** He is able to do it, and **what** He has accomplished by doing it, we must take a brief look at the nature of time itself.

One of the most famous cosmologists of all time is the tragic genius Stephen Hawking. Crippled and bound to a wheelchair by ALS, also known as Lou Gherig's Disease, Hawking has nonetheless become one of the greatest minds of our century or any other. It was Hawking who stood against Sir Fred Hoyle's Stead State Theory of the universe which stated that the universe had always existed and would continue to exist forever. Hawking proclaimed that the universe by mathematical certainty must have both a beginning and an end, just as the Bible says. Yet, despite the fact that his brilliant mathematical breakthroughs tend to support, at least in principle if not in timing, what Scripture says, Hawking steadfastly refuses to believe in God. He denies the very One who could save him, heal him and deliver him to make even greater discoveries. It is perhaps one of the greatest tragedies and paradoxes of our time, and it must grieve the gracious and merciful heart of God, who made Hawking and his brilliant mind. In his landmark work, *A Brief History of Time*, Hawking discusses time as being like an **arrow**, moving ever forward in one direction, and one direction only. Unfortunately, Hawking is not totally correct. I know that sounds like the very heart of arrogance, coming from a total unknown like me, but then I have flown in the face of conventional wisdom and current knowledge time and time again, bolstered only by my understanding of the revealed Word of God. I believe, no, I **know** that if a man or woman will meditate deeply on the things of God, that those very things will begin to reflect back to him or her deeper knowledge and understanding in one moment in time than all the empirical research in the world can uncover in a million years of scrabbling for knowledge one tiny bit at a time.

God has no problem with revealing the deep secrets of the universe to those who place Him first in their lives.

What, then, is time? As always, the truth is contained in the Holy Scriptures.

To our mindset in the Western World, we see time as an arrow shot from a bow. The arrow had a starting point, and it is always moving toward a desired target or goal. It is this kind of thinking which, frankly, produces progress. Historically, any culture which makes a decision that it is going to look at the passage of time in this manner will exhibit growth and achieve things. The Arrow of Time always assumes that it is going **somewhere** to do **something**, and that most of the time, that something has meaning and purpose. You couldn't hold a business meeting, set agendas, build houses, cook meals, attend classes or even get up if you didn't have a reasonable expectation that what you were doing would eventually be over and accomplish a task. This kind of task-driven, results-oriented philosophy has been emulated successfully all across the world, giving us the level of civilization we currently enjoy. But as successful as it has been, it is not without its own pitfalls and problems. If we begin a task expecting an end and a result, and it doesn't happen, we become frustrated and angry. We in the Western World expect to do something for a period of time and then be done with it. If we are forced to do the same thing again and again without achieving a result, discouragement sets in, then apathy, and finally, defeat.

If we observe nature in action, can we support this Arrow of Time philosophy? Of course! Many things in our lives have an observable beginning and ending. At the risk of being ridiculous, here are some examples:

The word that I am typing on the page has a beginning and an end.
The sentence that contains that word has a beginning and an end.
The paragraph that contains that sentence has a beginning and an end.
The article that contains that paragraph has a beginning and an end.
The book containing that article has a beginning and an end.

Every second has a beginning and an end.
Every minute has a beginning and an end.
Every hour, every day, every week, every month, every year and every decade all have a beginning and an end.

So much for the world of small things. But what about larger things?

Every life has a beginning and an end.
Every civilization has a beginning and an end.
Every species has a beginning and an end (disturbing thought!)
Every planet has a beginning and an end.
Every star has a beginning and an end.
Every universe has a beginning and an end.

Hmmm...so everything including the observable universe seems to have a beginning and an end. What does the Bible have to say about the Arrow of Time? Let's take a look at the last book in the Bible, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and see if Scripture supports the concept:

*"⁷ 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. ⁸ '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.' "*
-- Revelation 1:7-8

Wow. That's pretty conclusive, isn't it? If Jesus Himself is the **Alpha** (first letter in the Greek alphabet) and the **Omega** (last letter in the Greek alphabet), that pretty well covers it all. And, just to emphasize the fact that there is an Alpha point and an Omega point, He adds that He also is the

Beginning and the End, and, in a passage a little later, adds that He is also the First and the Last. There can be no doubt about it; the Bible supports the concept of the Arrow of Time.

If the Arrow of Time were the only way of looking at things, I could quit writing here and now, but, as we have already discussed, there's more than one way to look at reality, which brings us to our next major viewpoint, **The Wheel of Karma**.

While the philosophy of Linear Time came to dominate the Western World, the Eastern World was going in an entirely different direction. Taking the same set of observable circumstances, eastern religion and philosophy came to a totally different set of conclusions: that everything in life tended to be **repetitive** and **cyclical** in nature. Although there are many symbols in eastern thought that express this idea, including the Yin and Yang of Buddhism, no symbol captures the concept of cyclical thought better than the Hindu Wheel of Karma.

As someone who has been raised in a Christian, Western environment, I personally find the Wheel of Karma to be somewhat offensive. Now, if you believe in Karma or are a Hindu, please accept my immediate apology. But also give me a few moments to explain why I recoil from this philosophy, even though there is just as much truth to it as there is in the Arrow of Time. The Wheel of Karma is the philosophy of Cyclical Time taken to its logical extreme. We support an orphanage in India. And India, of all the countries in the world, probably has as much promise and poverty coexisting at the same time as any country in the world. I firmly believe that if the people of India had the yoke of Wheel of Karma taken off of their shoulders, that they could rise up in a matter of a few generations and come to dominate the world in any number of areas. One of the reasons that America excelled and came to dominate the world economically, politically and militarily was that America, unlike Europe where most of our ancestors came from originally, was a land of opportunity. Here, it did not matter who or what your father had been or done. It did not matter if he was an Irish peasant digging potatoes for a living, or a gilded gentleman living in a mansion and casually enjoying the luxuries which his father or mother had bequeathed to him. In America, intelligence, creativity and hard work defined your success or failure. This is why people have poured into this country all through our history, even to this day. Despite growing problems with culture, race, religious and monetary issues, America is still by far the best country to move to if you are interested in starting your life over from scratch. Although we are no longer the limitless plain with a mule and 40 acres for each settler, nonetheless, America is still better than almost any other country in the world. Freedom in the hands of people who are willing to work together to achieve something is one of the most powerful forces for good in the world. God provided an amazing, unique opportunity to the Founding Fathers to create One Nation under God, with Liberty and Justice for all. No other nation had this opportunity to be a blank slate, or *tabula rasa*, in the hands of people who chafed under brutal totalitarianism, aristocratically arrogant monarchy or morally corrupt theocracies. For the first time since the founding of the nation of Israel in the days of Joshua, a nation was being carved out from scratch, with land, the basis of all prosperity, being placed into the hands of every family and every individual.

It is precisely this inalienable right, granted by God Almighty, that every man should have the opportunity to create his own future and make his own decisions that Karma takes away from those who are Hindus. According to Hinduism, there really is no such thing as an Alpha and an Omega point in life. You are born into a caste system based on your Karma from your previous lifetime, no matter if you are an untouchable or a Brahmin. No matter what your station in life, you are there because you **deserve** to be there, based on your conduct in your **previous** life. If you are poor, it is because you deserve to be poor. If you are a leper, it is because you deserve to be a leper. If you are a child, orphaned when your untouchable parents were killed in an accident, and you are slowly dying of starvation and begging for even a scrap of bread and scavenging through trash heaps for rotten food, it is because you deserve it. What a hellish doctrine! And since you deserve what you do or do not have, and where you live, and what your situation is, no matter how horrible, then there is no sense to ever try to change anything. Your best option consists of merely suffering in silence, in order to create "good" Karma, so that your next lifetime will be just a little better. And so it goes, according to the Wheel of Karma, endlessly recycling your soul and spirit from one body to another until perhaps, after 10,000 or more lifetimes, you finally move far enough up the ladder that you can obtain Nirvana. What is Nirvana? That you simply **cease to exist**, and merge back into God. If ever there was a doctrine of

demons, the doctrine of reincarnation is it. No hope, no future, no realistic possibility of ever obtaining what Christianity gives full assurance of through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, all in the span of a single lifetime. Why then is India not fully Christian? Because we have not walked in the power of the Holy Spirit, in signs, wonders and miracles. If the church would only show them the true power and love of God, the Indian subcontinent would change in just one generation, transform itself, and then transform the world.

Despite all of that, there is an element of truth to the Wheel of Karma. It is correct to say that things do repeat themselves, on a regular, cyclical basis. But it is not the kind of cycle which traps the individual in an eternal loop without an exit point. It is rather a predictable, anticipatable event which the wise man can **see coming** and **take action to avoid**. If you are a race car driver driving the Brickyard in Indianapolis, and you know that the last turn is a bit on the steep side, you can adjust accordingly. And you can adjust each and every time that you come around that turn, because you know the pattern, the cycle that exists there. This is the power of the Wheel. It is not designed to trap or enslave those who encounter the normal biorhythms of this universe. It is rather designed as an early warning signal, a flashing light that says, "*Warning! Danger ahead! Take care*". There is an old saying, full of wisdom, which simply states, "*Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it*". How very true this is. Each generation comes into this world with both opportunities and pitfalls. The enemy stands ready to use the same old tricks on a whole new bunch of rubes and suckers. But we have something, a wonderful weapon, which we never seem to use. That unused resource is the weapon of wisdom, based on experience, and founded in the historical record. If only we would take the time to examine the cycle, we would see where we are in the loop, and what it is that we have to do to avoid the next bump in the road.

Again, we must ask ourselves, "*Is this doctrine Biblical?*" This time, we must visit the wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon. Listen to what this son of David says in his book called Ecclesiastes:

*"⁴ One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth abides forever. ⁵ The sun also **rises**, and the sun **goes down**, and **hastens to the place where it arose**. ⁶ The wind goes toward the south, and turns around to the north; the wind whirls about continually, and **comes again on its circuit**. ⁷ All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place from which the rivers come, there they return again. ⁸ All things are full of labor; man cannot express it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. ⁹ **That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.** ¹⁰ **Is there anything of which it may be said, "See, this is new?" It has already been in ancient times before us.** ¹¹ There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of things that are to come by those who will come after."* -- Ecclesiastes 1:4-11

Clearly, there can be no doubt. The Bible also supports the Cyclical view of time. But how can both the Linear and Cyclical views of time both be right at the same time? Is the Bible in error? Hardly! Instead, it hints at a marvelous mystery woven into its fabric. Many of the deep things of God are not readily visible. He hides them to see who will have the diligence to search them out. And, sad to say, very few do. Most Christians have the most superficial understanding of this marvelous covenant which we have been given. Most do not understand or appreciate the power that has been given into our hands. And very few indeed are willing to devote the time and effort required to walk in either the power or the deep things of God. All of them require a price, some more steep than others.

So, what then is the truth? Is time Linear or Cyclical? The answer is that it is **neither**, and **both**. What? Is an explanation required? Absolutely! To understand the true nature of time does not mean that you can control it. We **exist** in **four dimensions**, but have **mobility** in only **three**. In a very similar fashion, we are a **triune being**, made by a **Triune God**. Our basic makeup is that of **spirit**, **soul** and **flesh**. Understanding that dichotomy is not part of this article. Suffice it to say that you **come to earth as a spirit**, **enter into a body**, and **develop a soul**. When you die, your spirit and soul leave this earth, casting the old, worn out flesh aside for the guarantee that you will inherit a new body, indestructible and eternal. That is true for believers and unbelievers alike. Most people don't know that. For those who love the Lord, that immortal body will **live forever** in the New Jerusalem, saturated with His love and glory. For those who don't, that same immortal body will **die forever**,

constantly enduring the agonies of death without ever being able to experience a termination point. Either way, the process will be on-going and eternal. Not only is our being triune, but **the universe in which we have mobility is also triune**. What do I mean by that? Consider. A **straight line** consists of only **one** dimension, **length**. A **square** requires **two** dimensions, **length** and **height**. A **cube** requires **three** dimensions, **length**, **height** and **depth**. We have mobility, the ability to move and interact, in those three dimensions. I can move forwards or backwards. I can move left or right. And, within reason, I can jump up and down. I have mobility in all three dimensions. But if you will remember, I said that we exist in four dimensions, not three. What is the fourth? **Time**. And it is in time that we have no mobility. We are caught in the river of time like a leaf in the current, swirling around, but constantly moving forward, with no control of our own. We cannot arbitrarily move forward or backward out of sequence with the time stream. Despite all the wonderful science fiction stories about time travel, it is simply not possible for us in our mortal bodies to move in either direction. Since our bodies are trapped in the time stream, if we were to suddenly move forward in time 20 years, our bodies would accordingly age 20 years. Eventually we would come to a place where we would no longer exist. The same is true if we were able to move backwards in time. We would come to a place where our physical bodies no longer existed. In terms of our **spirit**, we are **eternal**. In terms of our **flesh**, we are clearly **temporal** and **temporary**. The only way to circumvent this nasty little problem would be to surround the individual with a bubble of temporality, a little slice of "now" in which we would have to safely stay, not straying into the "yesterday" or "tomorrow" we were visiting. Science fiction? For the moment, yes. For the future, definitely not. There will come a time in the future of mankind where those who have made themselves sons of the Living God will possess indestructible, immortal bodies, not subject the laws of space and time as we know them. Jesus has such a body right now. It is the only one of its kind in the universe. He is a "first fruit" or prototype of what we will become. And that, dear friends, is very exciting. After His resurrection, He made certain very interesting excursions into time, interacting with man at critical junctures in the past in order to shape their future into the present that He needed it to be. Head hurt yet? Don't worry. Suffice it to say that all through the Old Testament there are what the theologians call "theophanies" or guest appearances by the Son of God in His resurrection body. The 4th Man in the Fiery Furnace and Melchizedek are two examples of such intervention.

For the moment, we cannot move through time. But we can analyze it, determine what kinds of biorhythmic cycles exist in it, and anticipate and plan for their occurrences when they do come. It is no different that going to bed at a reasonable hour (which we rarely do in our house) so that you can get up bright and early the next morning to go to work. It just takes a little more planning and insight to understand these larger cycles.

All of that is true, but I said earlier that time is neither Linear nor Cyclical, but rather a combination of both. How is that possible? Consider the following example. Let's say that I was holding a crayon in my hand, with my arm extended over my head. That would be **one point in time**. I would then start to slowly move my arm at its full extension around and around. It would create a **circle**, or a **two-dimensional entity**. If I just kept doing that, the crayon circle would get thicker and thicker, as more and more lines were laid down. But what if, as I moved my arm with the crayon in my hand in a circle, I started to **walk forward**? What kind of geometric entity would I create? Now stop and think about this for a second. In fact, go ahead and grab a pencil or pen and actually do it yourself. Have you figured it out yet? No? Let me help you a bit. You would create a **Spiral**, a **circle extended over width**. A coil or spring is an example of a spiral. It goes not only around and around in a repetitive cycle, but forward from a fixed starting point to a fixed termination point. In other words, if you combine **Linear** geometry with **Cyclical** geometry, you always come up with a **Spiral**. And that, dear friends, is the **true nature of time**. Not merely going from one point to another. Not merely repeating the same dreary loop over and over again. But a divine combination of the two. Progress from a determinable point of origin to an equally determinable point of termination. A start and an end. An Alpha and an Omega. A first and a last. A beginning and an end. Yet, within that movement through time, predictable, determinable cyclical patterns of behavior that can be analyzed and anticipated, in order to best respond to them. What shall we call this view of time? How about **the Double Helix of Life?**

When God created mankind, he wove together a marvelous biochemical computational system, capable of analyzing data, responding to new situations, and, incredibly enough, capable of creating new computational systems by combining the best of the two previous systems. I am referring, of course, to the marvelous way in which any two creatures on this planet create new life. There is always an egg from the mother, containing all of the DNA programming that took her from being a single celled individual traveling down her mother's Fallopian Tube to crash land on the wall of her uterus, eventually to grow into the being that she is now. There is always a sperm, containing all of the DNA programming from the father. And when these two meet, a marvelous and frankly both mystical and scientific event occurs, a new, combined program results, and a totally unique life form is created. But it is the way in which that information is encoded that I want to look at more closely. For a long time, we really didn't understand how the DNA molecule was woven together. But as science has advanced the frontier of knowledge, we have come to realize that it is constructed as a **double helix**, or two interwoven helices. (Helices for the more sophisticated of you out there!) Why a helix? That is a good question, and one that I'm not totally sure that I have the answer to. But I'd be willing to bet that it has something to do with creating a mechanism in which **two different sets of encoding are bound together in the most durable fashion geometrically possible**. That's exactly what DNA needs. You have one set of encoding or programming coming from the father, and another set of encoding or programming coming from the mother. It's almost as if the structure binds the two dissimilar chains of information together in a bond that cannot be broken. As a pastor, I can see all kinds of analogies pouring out of that picture, many relating to marriage, some to Christ and the church and some pointing to the perfect **three-fold cord** referred to in Ecclesiastes, which I always take to represent a husband, his wife, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Any time material is interwoven in this fashion, it drastically increases the strength of the cord that is formed. And that's really what we are looking at, a biological cord joining two previous lives into one new life with a dramatically increased strength of unity.

In fact, if you search the Scriptures, you will find that many things in the Bible come in matched pairs, such as faith and works, holiness and grace, liberty and responsibility and the like. Always, true Christianity involves taking the two opposites, both of which are equally true, and intertwining them together to achieve a harmonious balance between the two. Faith without works is dead, says James, the half-brother of Jesus. Yet works without faith cannot save, either, says the Apostle Paul. Both are equally true, yet if one tries to exist without the other, eventually the individual will veer off to one side or the other and become unbalanced and unstable. Consider the individual who says they have faith, yet have nothing in their life that indicates that faith is there. Can that kind of empty faith save them? James reminds us that even the demons know that God exists and that He is one, and they tremble in fear. On the other side of the pole are those individuals who have been in church all their lives, and are constantly doing something in the church. God bless them for their activity, but their motive is also important, in fact, **why** they do what they do is often more important than **what** they actually do. Many people spend their whole life trying to build up enough good works to make heaven. That will never happen, no matter how hard they try. The Bible says that none are righteous, no, not one, and that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. That's why we need a savior. If we could save ourselves, there would be no need for someone else to save us. And here's the catch: no amount of good works will save you, only faith and faith alone. Yet true faith will produce as many good works as the person who has no faith. Do I have you scratching your head? Let me explain. I do not work for God because I **have** to work for Him in order to make heaven. I am saved by grace through faith, and not of works, lest any man should boast. But it is precisely because I **am** saved that I love Him so, and **want** to work mightily for Him all the time. So my living faith produces an ongoing stream of good works, not in substitution **for** faith, but **because** of faith. Another person sitting beside me may have never really trusted Jesus to save them, and are convinced by bad doctrine or incorrect reasoning that the more things they do for God, the better the chance that they will make heaven. Unfortunately, there is never a point of "enough", because it is always based on **man's** righteousness, not **God's**. **Self-righteousness** is the one thing that Jesus constantly fought against and constantly condemned. The only true righteousness comes from God, and is given as a free gift to all who ask in faith, believing. It is this relationship with God by faith as the basis and foundation of it that marks Christianity as being totally different at its core from all other religions. Christianity is based on the righteousness of **Christ**. All other religions are based on the righteousness of the **individual**. Salvation is what **God does for man through Christ**. In all other religions, salvation is what **a man**

achieves on his own. Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ produces this **paired bonding of faith and works that produces balance and enduring results.**

Now, take these concepts that we have been discussing, and transfer them over to the understanding of time. Again, we have two polar opposites, **Linear Time** and **Cyclical Time**. On the surface, it seems that the two are completely incompatible and cannot exist in the presence of one another, just like matter and anti-matter. Yet, when we look closely at the two, we find that they cannot exist **apart** from one another, and must have one another in order for things to run properly and in balance. And, just as with the DNA double helix, we combine two different things to come up with something which doesn't compromise the content of the original two programs, but rather creates a marvelous new single entity out of the two. Think with me for just a second about all the things that we have been talking about in this article. We need **Linear Time** in order to be able to move from one point to another, achieving goals and accomplishing projects. Without it, there could be absolutely no **change**, and change is indispensable to the process of **growth**. And without growth, there is no way that **life can exist in the universe**. All life is constantly in the process of growing and changing. I have heard it said that your body replaces 100% of its cells once every seven years. If that is true, then the person you are at a cellular level now is not the same person you were seven years ago. It is common medical knowledge that your body grows and expands until about the age of 25 or so. At that point, it begins to lose its viability and starts to age. From that point on until your death, you are fighting a losing battle, slowly but surely giving ground against that most evil of all enemies. But what theologians call **the Law of Sin and Death** is also what scientists call **the Law of Entropy**. And the Law of Entropy simply says that left to themselves, things break down, fall apart and die. That applies to everything from radioactive decay to the expanding universe theory. It is believed that our universe is constantly expanding. It is further believed that it will continue to expand at an ever-increasing rate until it finally dissipates into nothingness and ceases to exist. Interestingly enough, we will actually get to see that happen just before the Great White Throne Judgment. (Revelation 20:11) The universe in which we dwell right now is seriously damaged, and is being held together by the power of the risen Christ, who created all of this that we see and live in. But once this universe is worn out, it will be discarded and replaced with a brand new one, bright and shiny, but without the double helix of time loaded into it. Why? Because everything that needed to be accomplished was accomplished in the universe in which we all live right now.

Just as we need **Linear Time** in this universe in which we live, we also need **Cyclical Time** as well. Why? Because the existence of Cyclical Time inside the mechanism enables us to **create and detect repetitive patterns within Linear Time**. These eliminate the need to micro-manage the fundamentals of our lives. Otherwise, without the ability to create cyclical patterns of our own or be governed by larger cyclical patterns that constantly surround us, we would be paralyzed into total inaction just breathing, walking or doing even the most fundamental of actions.

What is the result of merging Linear Time and Cyclical Time? The **Biblical Pattern of the Double Helix of Life**, a brilliant merging of two **different kinds of time** into something totally new for the purpose of **repeating a series of patterns until a desired goal is finally achieved**. If at first, you don't succeed... You get the picture. And it was a triune Being originally called the **Lord**, the **Word** and the **Spirit** who mutually agreed to create this kind of time so that a fourth entity, called the **Bride**, could be woven into the matrix of Divinity in Eternity. Had this new kind of time not been introduced, no change would have been possible, and several critical goals could not have been met. First of all, the **Lord** desired to also become a **Father**. The **Word** desired to become a **Son** and a **Groom**. In order to do that, a kind of time had to be introduced and woven into a fabric called space/time so that these changes could take place. And all of this triggered the creation of an intelligent race of beings on an obscure planet on the edge of the Milky Way Galaxy. This new species would be a unique blending of **flesh** and **spirit**, something never done before up until that point (I can't say that point in time, because time didn't exist as we know it back then!). Out of this bizarre blending of flesh and spirit would eventually come a group of people who would willingly respond to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit, and would draw near to God to be cleansed and purified until they could merge into a totally new being called **the Bride**. With the creation of this entity, it allowed the Word to become a Groom, giving Him a mate for all eternity. And, in order to do this He found it necessary to enter into human form and take on a flesh suit like all mankind, thus becoming **the only begotten, or naturally born, Son**

of God. In doing so and becoming a Son, it allowed the **Lord** to become a **Father**, for no man is a father until he has a child. I start out as a child. I become a man. I marry, and become a husband. But it is not until I **produce a child** that I am considered a **father**.

What made all of this possible? **The Double Helix of Time**, weaving direction and purpose together with repetitive patterns to simplify and shorten the process. Oh yes, dear friends, it **did** shorten the process, immeasurably so. As a programmer, I learned a very important lesson early in my programming career. **Never reinvent the wheel.** Don't write and rewrite code over and over again when a **standard, repetitive subroutine or module can be written that can be used over and over again.** Hence the cyclical nature of the double helix. Woven together for strength. Carrying the virtues of both parents without any of the evils. **Creating something new so that something wonderful could be created using it.**

Now, you may say to me, "*Pastor Ray, all this philosophical stuff is well and good, but what **practical** value or application does it have for my life?*" Ah, there's the \$24.00 question! What, indeed? First of all, you use these twin constructs throughout all your life to determine your success or failure. If you fail to be practical, diligent and hard working in regard to **Linear** time, you squander your opportunities and spoil your efforts. Management of the passage from **here** to **there** is what efficiency and effectiveness are all about. Top managers are where they are because they are more effective at **managing their time** than those around them. They rise to the top of the organizational chart because they are able to **accomplish more in less time** than their co-workers. At the same time, successful businessmen are successful, at least in part, because they are able to recognize **business cycles** and adjust their business plans accordingly. Let me provide you with a real-life example of that. I was in the computer industry for 30 years. During 12 of those years, I ran my own company. Concurrent with that, I taught computer science and business at a junior college. In no way could I be considered a dummy. Yet it was my **failure to recognize an economic cycle change** which destroyed my company in only two years. After doing a lengthy financial analysis of my own company, I discovered a repeating **cycle or pattern** in our growth. In that respect, I was being very wise. I found that our company **grew for three years at a rate of 100% each year, and then retreated for one year in a personal mini-recession.** Without fail, I saw the pattern repeated three times. And I knew that in the year that I made this discovery, we were poised to start on another massive growth cycle. I was elated! Now was the time to wrest control of the local computer market from my hated enemies, *The Sound of Music*. Yeah, I know. Now it sounds pretty dumb, doesn't it? But back then, fueled by anger and a desire for revenge against a selfish, manipulative, carnal Christian salesman who worked for them and who had manipulated me and betrayed me, it was the very essence of life for me. I had all the internal patterns worked out. Surely this was the proper time for me to move from being a **VAR** (Value-Added Reseller), with low overhead and no retail presence, and become a full-fledged computer retailer, complete with a store of my very own. With that in mind, I signed a long-term lease for a 2,000 square foot store on 3rd Avenue in Jasper. It had high visibility, heavy traffic, and it looked like a sure bet for success. I couldn't have been more wrong.

While I had correctly analyzed and anticipated the **internal cyclical** patterns of my own company, I had foolishly ignored the **external linear** patterns of the computer industry in general. It proved to be my downfall. At the same time that I launched my own computer retail operation, the mass marketers such as Target, K-Mart, Wal-Mart and others all decided to start offering the same types of equipment as I was offering, with one minor difference. **Their retail prices were below my cost!** If I could purchase a particular component for \$100.00, they were selling it to the general public on their shelves for \$95.00! Instead of the battle being between individual retailers, which would have been a fair fight that I might have won, I found myself and all other individual store owners battling against the megatrend of **mass merchandising** and purchasing on **economies of scale** rather than purchasing units one at a time, as I was doing. I simply could not compete. I ended up with a high profile, high cost, high overhead, low profit operation instead of a low profile, low overhead, high profit operation such I had enjoyed as a VAR. In the first year of operations, we set a record for sales at **\$250,000.00.** Halleluiah, right? Nope! At the same time that we posted **record sales**, we also posted a **record loss** of **\$20,000.00!** Not-so-praiseworthy, huh? I soon discovered that hardware sales accounted for about 90% of all our troubles, but only about 10% of our profit. The following year was equally disastrous. Saddled with an additional \$40,000.00 in debt, and without the deep pockets of a financial

partner or retail chain to see me through the hard times, I found myself in both corporate and personal bankruptcy, **all because I had failed to correctly analyze the Cyclical and Linear patterns of time in the industry in which I worked!** How's that? Is **that** a practical enough application for you? Good! I know **I'll** never forget the lessons I learned!

These are important issues, but there are even more important issues than those which deal, not with time itself, but with a series of critical passages **back in time** by the Risen and Resurrected Christ which shaped our eternal destiny and outcome. We don't have time to start that discussion today, but come back tomorrow, when we examine the world's first and only **Time Traveler**. Until then, may the God of all grace and mercy give you and your loved ones **time to repent, be saved, be baptized and to be filled with the Holy Spirit** (Acts 2:38). And then, you can spend the **rest of eternity** together with one another and Him, in a world without time and joy without ceasing! Amen and Amen!

Day 7 ~ Time Traveler



“¹ For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² 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’. ³ Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the son of God, remains a priest continually (forever)” – Hebrews 7:1-3

In yesterday’s article, I dug us in pretty deep regarding the basic nature of time and why God designed it that way. I probably left some of you scratching your heads, trying to follow my logic. Unfortunately, it isn’t going to get any easier today. In fact, it’s probably going to get a little worse. I have spent years researching the Word of God, the physical sciences and in deep prayer, and the answers that have frequently come to me are always in agreement with the Word and the discoveries of science in the last 200 years, but they don’t always fall into the category of garden variety Suburbanianity that America practices instead of Biblical Christianity. That makes some folks mad. It makes other folks uncomfortable. It thrills some folks, and bores others. Oh, well! I didn’t write this series of seven books in order to be socially acceptable. I wrote them because God commanded me to write them. And, as such, I have an obligation to write what I see, just like any good investigative reporter. So, if as you read this “Day”, you find things that you question, or that you find objectionable, just remember, I’m trying my level best to please my God, and as a prophet, that sometimes means saying things that aren’t popular.

There is considerable agreement among Bible scholars that the Old Testament is peppered with what are called “*theophanies*”, or guest appearances of Jesus Christ as God Himself. Some of the events which typically are grouped in this category include the 4th Man in the fiery furnace, the man who wrestled with Jacob at the Jordan River, the three gentlemen who visited Abraham on their way to nuke Sodom and Gomorrah, the Commander-In-Chief of the Lord’s Army talking to Joshua and last, but not least, **Melchizedek**. As a man of faith, I have no doubt that they occurred, but as a man of science, I can’t help but ask, “**How in the world did He do that???**” This constant quest to understand the **how** of the Bible has produced some remarkable insights that I have heard no one else ever teach. For this, I am eternally grateful to the Lord, who gives wisdom to those who are willing to ask Him. I have discovered that the Lord can download more revelation into my little pea brain in a matter of moments that I could have gathered by myself with decades of incremental scrabbling for one tiny detail at a time.

As I have taught all the things that I do, I find that they all fall into the category of something called **systematic theology**. That means that every single detail connects cleanly with every other detail. There are no loose ends, and I do not anticipate any, either. Along with this, the Lord has unrolled to me an overall perception of what this universe looks like and how it works. Actually, what this **multiverse** looks like and how it works. What I present to you now, I present to you as theory. I can no more prove the absolute certainty of what I am saying than you can prove that I am wrong. But I want you to think deeply, **very deeply**, about the things that I am going to present to you. Ready???

OK. I warned you. Here goes!

Quantum and particle physics have long been at odds with one another, unable even to speak the same language mathematically. One of Stephen Hawkings’ major projects was to develop a **Theory of**

Everything, a mathematical theorem that unified both quantum and particle physics. He thinks he has accomplished it. I tend to agree. None of us know for sure, but it looks good. In the process of doing all of this, astronomers, cosmologists and physicists have made some remarkable discoveries, and they tie in to what Jesus has known all along, because **He** was the One who invented and built all of this! At first, men thought that the sun revolved around the earth, and that the earth sat either on the shoulders of a very strong, very big man or a very large turtle. So much for **those** theories! Once we finally admitted that Galileo was correct, things started to move forward at a rapid rate, just like Gabriel told Daniel they would. It wasn't too long before we realized that there were eight, no, nine, no eight planets in our Solar System (I wish they would make up their mind!). Then we realized that there was more to the universe than just the Solar System. We soon came to the understanding that we were just one of untold **billions** of stars in a huge group of stars that we call the **Milky Way**. Shortly thereafter, we realized that many of the tiny dots in the sky that we thought were stars were really other **galaxies, also** filled with billions of stars. When we started counting, we soon realized that there were **at least several hundred million galaxies with billions and billions** (thank you, Carl Sagan!) **of stars. And there is no apparent end in sight! But wait, there's more!** Now, courtesy of **string theory**, we now strongly suspect that there may be waaaaaay more than just the three pedestrian dimensions of **height, width and depth** that we originally thought we had. There may be as many as **12**, instead. And, on top of all that, we now theorize that we are actually part of not a **uni-verse**, but rather a **multi-verse**, consisting of perhaps an **infinite** number of parallel universes, all with their own unique characteristics. Clearly, Mr. Roger's neighborhood is a whole lot bigger than we originally thought!

All of these discoveries are bound to have a profound impact on how humanity views itself. We started by believing, just as the Bible states, that we are God's highest creation and that the universe revolves all around **us**. That is typically the viewpoint of a child. Little children are all about themselves. It's "*Mommy, look at me!*" and "*Daddy, look what I'm doing!*" As a personality matures emotionally, the focus of their personality moves off of **themselves** and toward the needs of **those around them**. Untold mothers, fathers, grandpas and grandmas have devoted their lives to the needs of their children and grandchildren and have given sacrificially to make sure that those they loved survived and succeeded. Given that fact, project what **God** must be like. If He is the ultimately mature, stable and complete personality, then He must also by definition be the most **loving, giving, selfless and sacrificial being of all that exists**, no matter **what** universe you come from. Are you with me so far? You are??? Excellent! Now, let's move one step further. If God exists, and we know by faith (and by personal experience for many of us) that He does, then He would be **infinitely, ultimately interested in little bitty you and me and making sure that we end up just like Him!** So, instead of the unimaginable vastness of all we have discovered shrinking our importance and making us tiny and meaningless, it only serves to reinforce what the **Bible has been saying all along!** This is what I just **love** about following the feverish efforts of atheistic, agnostic scientists, theoreticians, archeologists and all the others who seem hell-bent and determined to prove that there is no God. Instead, their works **always** end up **confirming** instead of **disproving** what the Bible says.

As an example of that, let's take a quick look at Sir Fred Hoyle and Stephen Hawking. Sir Fred Hoyle was a world-famous cosmologist who believed in what he called a **Steady State Universe**. In Hoyle's idea, which he repeated advertised as absolute, perfect and unquestionable, **nothing in the universe ever changed**. Stars might die, but other stars would mysteriously arise to take their place. There would be **no beginning and no end** to Hoyle's view of creation, flying directly in the face of what the Bible said about there being a clear beginning and a clear end to everything. Then came Stephen Hawking, already being crippled by ALS, a.k.a. Lou Gherig's Disease. Hawking took a close look at Hoyle's theorems, and he wasn't impressed by what he saw. According to Hawking, his mathematics clearly showed that there had to have been a point at which the universe didn't exist, there had to have been a point at which the universe was created, and there had to be a point in time when the universe would also die. As our telescopes gained an ability to see far beyond our own planet, we discovered that everything that Hawking had predicted actually existed, including such amazing things as **Black Holes, Events Horizons and Singularities**. Now that we have been feverishly mapping the skies for quite some time, we have been able to create computer simulations that can compress, reverse or speed up the projected flow of time to see what has happened before us and what will happen after us. What we have discovered has rocked the scientific community, and, of course, confirmed the Bible,

although we do not agree with the cosmologists about the amount of time involved in the project. We'll get to that little argument in a second. Hoyle, who claimed to be destroying dogma by his scientific "discoveries", ended up refusing to admit that he was wrong even to his own death, thus proving him to be as big a dogmatist as the theologians he claimed to be fighting against. Put no permanent trust in science, dear friends. Remember, everything they bring to us is always labeled a **theory**, not a **law**. There is a **Law of Gravity**. There is a **Law of Sin and Death**. There is a **Theory of Evolution**. Catch the distinction? Don't ever forget it.

Even Hawking himself, who does not believe in God, has providentially provided me with the very scientific answers I was seeking to explain **scientifically** how Christ could move through time and space and make appearances in the Old Testament in possession of His resurrection body. In order to do that, we must spend a little more time in the science lab.

One of Hawkins's brilliant friends postulated the existence of **Black Holes**, stars that had used up all of their hydrogen and helium fuel and had reached a crisis point in their existences. Some stars simply explode when they reach that point and become **Supernovas**, events which light the sky for an extended period of time and then go black, just like a massive firecracker. Some theologians speculate that the star which the Magi saw was a supernova, which lingered brilliantly in the night skies for around two years while those undaunted men traveled all the way from Babylon to Bethlehem, using the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers to supply them traveling north and then the Damascus and Jordan Rivers traveling south. Other stars go out, not with a **bang**, but with a **whimper**. Unable to sustain their atomic furnace, they lose their grip and begin to collapse inward, shrinking at an astronomical rate (bad pun!). Unfortunately for the neighborhood in which they live, their whimper soon turns into a **growl**. Even as the star shrinks in size, it increases geometrically in **density** and **gravity**. Soon, it turns into a giant whirlpool, pulling anything and everything into itself, with no end in sight and no satisfying its overwhelming hunger for more matter and energy. Eventually, it turns into a black hole, a super-compressed thing from which nothing can escape, not even **light itself**. It is for this reason that I speculate that some black holes are actually used by God as prisons for the fallen angels, beings made up of light. Such a place would be the only place that an angel could not escape from. Once beyond the event horizon, their spirit being would be extended across the entire length of the black hole, and, since gravity and time are hideously distorted inside a black hole, they would never stop falling, but instead fall more and more slowly the further down they fell. Each galaxy seems to have a super-massive black hole in the center of it. Beyond that, there seem to be innumerable smaller black holes, some of which are very tiny and are referred to as **singularities**. Why am I telling you all this? Patience. All of this will come together at the end of the article.

We have one more cosmological mechanism which we must introduce to you. This one, we haven't been able to find or create, but which theoretical mathematics seem to state must be possible. This mechanism is the key to everything that will come later in this article. It is called a **wormhole**. A wormhole is kind of like a black hole, only it isn't a one way trip to oblivion. Instead, it is a puncture or rupture of space and time that connects **one** point of space/time with **another** point of space/time, often untold billions of light years away. If you have ever watched the TV series *Stargate SG-1* or *Stargate Atlantis*, you will quickly discover that the entire series is based on the ability to create **stable, non-destructive wormholes** from one point in our galaxy to another, using a 7-point triangulation system that gives the traveler untold thousands of possible points of reference in the galaxy. As the series progressed, we even discovered that it was possible to travel **outside of the Milky Way to other galaxies** by adding one more symbol to the 7-point grid. It's difficult to describe how wormholes would work, but the best example is that if enough power and gravity are applied to space/time, space/time **bends and folds in on itself**. We already know that **time itself is variable, not constant**. We have discovered that as we approach the speed of light, **time slows down**. In theory, time would come to a **complete standstill** if we were able to reach the full speed of light. What would happen once we **exceeded** the speed of light is anyone's guess, although I would wager that this is precisely where the **angels, demons and God Himself have their own existence**. In theory, not only could stable wormholes connect any point in space/time to any other point in space/time, moving billions of light years in a matter of moments, but that these same devices could also connect different **times** in space/time with one another, and if fact, could actually connect **any one universe to another universe inside the multiverse itself**.

Now that I've explained to you how some of these mechanisms work, I'm also going to give you Ray's own version of Hawking's *Brief History of Time*. Only mine will be called *A Brief History of This Universe*. I have said elsewhere that I am firmly convinced that what Paul refers to as the **Third Heaven** is actually a **parallel universe**, somewhere else in the multiverse. Still with me? No? Back up and read it all again. What? Back already? Got it now? Not sure? OK. One more time. Now, ready to go on? Good!

I cannot speak yet for the creation of the multiverse, but I think I can speak for the creation of **this universe**. Go back with me to the point before **anything existed in this universe**. It has neither matter nor energy in it. There are no stars, no planets, no galaxies, no gas, no dust, **no anything**. It is utterly, completely **empty**. Now come with me to another universe in the multiverse. Perhaps it is adjacent to this universe, perhaps not. That issue is, as far as theory is concerned, utterly irrelevant. But in that universe, there is matter, there is energy, there is life and there is **intelligent life**. But the matter of **that universe** is not like the matter that will exist in **our universe**. It is **vastly more complex, more densely coded, indestructible and immortal**. We do not know how many beings exist in this other universe, but we know that there is **one being, a composite being, consisting of three separate entities which are somehow one being while also being three**. Oh, yeah. The laws of physics in that other universe are totally different than the laws that now exist in ours. In our universe, everything eventually resolves back to **binary logic, ones and zeros, on and off, here or there**. Something can either be **on or off, black or white, here or there. But it cannot be both**. In that universe, something can be **multiple things at one time without violating the properties of the individual things themselves**. And this incredible, staggeringly powerful being of infinite personality development, patience, character, holiness, love and virtue exists in accordance with the rules of that universe. But that Triune Being wants more for itself. Specifically, although it **needs nothing for itself**, it wants to **procreate**. Out of the great and majestic love which flows inside its heart, one Member of the Trinity for the other, they decide that it would be a good thing, a very good thing, if more creatures existed **just like them**. But, for whatever reason, the circumstances in that universe are not conducive to the project. Perhaps so much power, so much glory, so much energy, so much goodness is wrapped up and encoded into this Triune Being that **their entire universe is completely, totally contained inside of them. They fill up where they live to the uttermost**.

And so, in order to create **more beings like them, the project must be done elsewhere / elsewhen**. Another universe must be sought out, one which was totally empty, totally devoid, so that the project would not damage anything happening in that universe. That would be the cardinal rule. **Life must not be destroyed in order to create more life. Unless, of course, that life can be resurrected and redeemed itself**. So this marvelous, wonderful, loving Triune Being that we will come to know as **the Lord, The Word and The Spirit**, and, later on in the time stream, as **The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit** began a search for an empty universe or perhaps simply made one from scratch. But we do know one thing for sure: **it was empty. The Bible says so. And so does every computer simulation run on the universe. The universe started out empty**. And then, according to the mathematical equations and the computer simulations, something dramatic, startling and enormously powerful happened. **Out of nowhere, a micro-dot of something**, not matter, not energy, not light, not heat, but *something* which had the makings of all of those things in them, was introduced, **injected** into this empty universe. Where did that come from? Perhaps it was gathered up from a series of black holes from all over the multiverse, a little from here, a little from there, not enough to disturb any one universe or destabilize it, but, all taken together, enough to make a **dandy** little universe of its own! Then, all of that matter and energy and light and heat was **compressed** beyond anything that our physical sciences can measure, far more than anything that a conventional black hole could do, until it was a teen, tiny, little **microdot**, a super-miniature **singularity**. Then, carefully, surgically inserting a **stable wormhole** between **that** universe and ours, the Godhead of Glory **gently made our universe pregnant by inserting that microdot across the wormhole into the nothingness of our universe**. What followed was what Sir Fred Hoyle had contemptuously labeled **"The Big Bang"**. As soon as the microdot had been inserted, the wormhole was closed, lest some of the fluidic energy backwash through the wormhole and be wasted. Every erg and joule of energy had to be devoted to the creation of **something out of nothing**.

Now, where there had been **nothing**, suddenly **everything** was happening in our universe! Racing outward in all directions, this cosmic fluid began to differentiate itself into matter, energy, light, heat and all the other components that make up what we know of the universe today. Everything was done at breakneck speed, **even time itself**. And this is where Hawking and all the other cosmologists are wrong. They blindly assume that time is a constant, when in fact even our meager science has proven that it is a variable. No, at the beginning of everything, **even time was in a hurry**. As the substance of everything was flung across the cosmos, protons, neutrons and electrons began to form out of the even more primitive components underlying them. Then the more primitive atoms, such as hydrogen and helium began to take shape. Gravity immediately began to exert itself, and began to pull various gases inward in an ever-increasing spiral until suns began to form. Accretion disks swept the skies largely free of random matter and shaped planets, comets and other stellar phenomena. Scientists tell us this took billions of years. The Bible says that light was created first, and then from it all other things were drawn, and that the entire process took one God-Day, or 1,000 Man-Years. I believe the Word of God. Long before Hawking or Hoyle or Galileo or Aristotle or any wise man, the **God of all the Universe** spoke to a refugee hiding in Midian from the might of the Egyptian military, and told him to return to the land he might have once ruled to tell Pharaoh to let His people go. Some years later, Moses would sit down to write the history of everything, and, sitting cross-legged in the sand, face to face with the Creator of it all, he listened carefully and wrote down what His Lord and Savior told him. Thousands of years later, **our science** would finally start to catch up with **God's revelation**.

Once the basic process of creation was finally done, the Lord then focused His attention on one planet at the edge of a spiral galaxy and created first life, then intelligent life there. Has He done the same thing elsewhere? I rather suspect so. After all, this is a pretty big place for just us. We already know what plans He has for **this** planet. No telling what plans He has for the others. In fact, I have a Christian science fiction novel entitled **Other Sheep**, dealing with exactly this subject just itching under my fingertips, waiting to be written. But before I tackle anything like that, I've got to take care of all seven **Episodes of Unrolling the Scroll**. After that, I have promised to write something called **Vegetables with Love**. Don't ask. After that, probably **What I Did While I Was Lost and Confused in India**. Somewhere in there, **Other Sheep** will happen, God willing.

Whew! In five short pages we have explained our universe, wormholes, black holes, singularities, the Big Bang and creation in general. Despite all of that, we have still not answered the ultimate question: **Where did God come from?** I don't know. And right now, I don't care. But we are closer to obtaining the ultimate answers. If I can push the barge a little closer to the shore, all the better. I don't expect to be the one to row all the way. Is part of what I have written wrong? Probably. Most certainly. Is most of what I have written right? Just maybe. And **that** would be **cool!**

There's another subject that we have to deal with, and it is related to what we have talked about thus far. This article is entitled **Time Traveler**. In the previous five pages, we have discussed the mechanisms that would make time travel possible, within limits. And now it's time to discuss the limits. We are terribly fragile creatures, all things considered. Our spirits, having come from God, are eternal and indestructible. But our souls and our bodies, hoo boy! That's a different story altogether! Proverbs says we have 70 years, 80 if we have the strength. We were meant to live forever, but we kind of messed that deal up. Even then, we were trucking along with just shy of one God-Day, or 1,000 man-years. But we messed that deal up as well. So we got reset to 120 years, and we somehow tanked that deal. Not only are our bodies fragile to the max, but they are also **stuck in time**. I can **move** in three dimensions, height, width and depth, but I **live** in four. The fourth is time. As time moves forward, so, unfortunately do me and my ever-increasingly-rickety body. Boy, I don't like this subject! At the age of 59, all pretensions about regaining my youth are long gone. The last four years of my life put me in jeopardy of an early exit on at least two occasions, and badly damaged my hands, feet, ears and throat. Frankly, I am eagerly looking forward to that resurrection body advertised in my favorite reading material. If I were somehow to invent a time machine just like the one shown in the lead graphic, I would run into problems that H.G. Wells never anticipated. Because my body is anchored in time (and there are reasons for that!), if I were somehow able to move **forward** in time 20 years, I would also suddenly find myself at the creaky age of 79! Another 20 years and there would be no Pastor Ray to kick around. Conversely, if I were somehow able to move **backwards** in time 100 years, I would have moved past the window in time during which I existed,

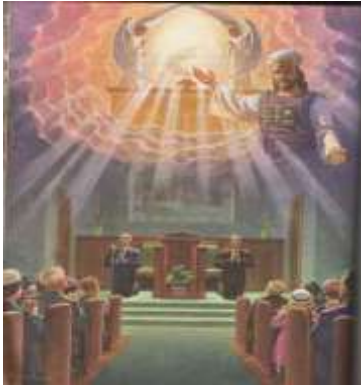
and so I would cease to exist. The only solution to the problem would be to create a little bubble of temporality around me, protecting me, but it would utterly prevent me from interacting with the past or the future, and force me into the role of a passive spectator. Even if I could figure out the physics involved, there would be yet another problem, and this one is, from our human perspective, probably insoluble. The problem lies with the solution. If you will remember, we said that a **stable wormhole** would be the only possible mechanism which would allow a being to move from **one discrete point in space/time to another discrete point in space/time** without **passing through all the intervening points in between**. Say what? Wanna run that one by me again, Pastor Ray? OK. It's softball time. I'm too old to play baseball anymore, except for a very friendly gentle game of pitch and catch with my son, Ben. They say softball is an old man's game. I can live with that. So, we find ourselves at a slow-pitch softball game. Still... We were playing some of the new *Wii* interactive games the other night at our daughter's house and having a ball. In bowling and golf, nah! But, ah, baseball! My childhood love! God bless Billy Crystal for trying out for the Yankees at the age of 60! Go, Billy! Anyway, when we did the *Wii* baseball game, I hit six home runs in only 10 pitches. No one else could muster more than two. I wonder... Nah! Back to softball! Anyway... If I am the pitcher, I will throw the ball into the air. It will head toward home plate. I, the batter, the catcher and the umpire will all track the trajectory of the ball. All of us will make a determination as to whether it will be called a ball or a strike. Based on the estimates of the other three, the batter will attempt to hit the ball, the catcher will attempt to catch the ball, and the umpire will yell "*Ball!*", "*Strike!*" or "*Ouch!*" if the batter slightly misjudges the flight of the ball and fouls it off his big toe. That's the way it works in a world without wormholes. But what if I were the only pitcher in the world who had mastered the ability to use wormholes? I would release the ball from my hand. All three men centered around the plate would expect to track the trajectory, just like normal. But suddenly, at the top of the arc of the ball, it would enter a miniature wormhole and disappear from our sight. It had exited from the previous point in space/time and entered the wormhole. From there, it would travel down the wormhole at a blinding speed and appear somewhere in the strike zone, reentering this segment of space/time at unpredictable point and time, but always in the strike zone. The catcher would simply hold his mitt at the agreed-upon arrival point and wait patiently. The umpire would have no choice but to call every pitch a strike. And the poor batter would lose his mind. His chances of even fouling one off the umpire's toe would be dramatically diminished. Such is the beauty of a wormhole. But there's a catch, remember? Unless my softball was made of indestructible material, it would never arrive at the other end of the wormhole. The awesome energies required to create and sustain the wormhole would utterly destroy any conventional matter from this universe the moment it entered the event horizon. We'd waste an awful lot of softballs before we caught on. Eventually, we would have to abandon the hope of wormhole travel, even though it promised us the hope of time travel, because our human, mortal bodies simply could not cope with the rigors involved in the journey. But remember, the only hitch in the plan was the operative word **mortal**. If I were a spirit being, like God is, or the angels or even the demons, I could travel through a wormhole without sustaining any damage, since my spirit is immortal. Likewise, **if I had an immortal body, like Jesus does**, I could also travel through a wormhole with no negative effects. Are you getting the picture? That would mean that Jesus could travel from any point in His space/time/universe to any point in our space/time/universe by simply forming a stable wormhole and passing **instantaneously** from one to the other. How awesome! How cool! How infinitely powerful that would make Him! (As if he weren't totally all-powerful anyway!) Now, consider the following thoughts: **God has this ability**. The angels and demons may, but only to a limited extent. I know for certain that **time travel** is completely out of their capability. Humans certainly can't, due to our mortality. **How could you possibly defeat a God who has total control of all space/time and has the ability to move backwards and forwards in time at will?** If the Lord didn't like the outcome of your life today, and you cried out to Him, invoking Romans 8:1, which states that **all things** work (literally, *are knitted*) together for the good for them that love the Lord and are called according to His purposes, He could simply pass **backwards** into **yesterday**, and make a small but critical change in the time stream. Time from that point on would **rewrite itself**, and the today in which you cried out to Him would never have happened, but an **alternate** today would have occurred, perhaps adding an additional universe into an already infinite number of universes in the multiverse. Or, because he just **loves** to make seemingly microscopic changes that the Devil finds undetectable until it is too late for him to do anything about them, He just might alter one micro-point which doesn't change the **circumstances**, only the **outcome**. This is one of the many reasons that I have absolute confidence in His ability to do **absolutely anything**. Remember, I've already seen Him

grow a tongue in the mouth of a girl that had none in India. She had been mute all her life, perhaps twenty years or so. After we prayed, she clearly repeated the following words: *Momma, Poppa, Halleluiah* and *Jesus*. Her mother almost lost her mind, and quickly left Hinduism and became a Christian. Everyone around us also knew her and was astonished. Friends, **my God can do ANYTHING!** If He can travel through time, affecting the time stream, then He could go back in time to the point where the child was being formed in the womb of her mother, and **correct the genetic defect that prevented her tongue from developing.** Suddenly, in one moment in space/time, a tongue would appear in her mouth, the direct result of the change made perhaps 20 years ago, and rippling forward at blinding speed through the existing time stream. So, then, what exactly is your problem with withered arms or blind eyes or lame legs or no legs at all? What, then would be beyond the abilities of a wonderful, loving, all-powerful God who is watching and waiting for one of His children to realize not only who **He** is but who **they are in Him!**

This whole concept of wormhole travel explains a **ton** of seemingly inexplicable events recorded all through the Holy Scriptures. It explains how Jesus could break bread at Emmaus and then suddenly disappear. All He did was open an event horizon and step **out** of our space/time/universe and **into** His own space/time/universe. And then, when all the disciples were gathered in the Upper Room with the door locked and the windows shuttered for fear of the Romans, it also explains how Jesus could suddenly **appear** in the midst of them and say, in the New Young Translation, "*Hi, guys!*" At His Ascension, He simply rose up into the clouds and then calmly opened up another event horizon and jumped back to the Throneroom of His Father, ready to sit down and enjoy the fun for a while. No wonder He said, "*Father, please forgive them. They don't have a clue!*" (NYT)

It also explains much, much more, including all of the events we alluded to earlier in this article. I have explained a great deal to you in this *E-Pistle*, perhaps more than you can fathom at this point. Just take what you can, and respectfully lay the rest on a shelf for another day, when you have more maturity, knowledge and wisdom so that you can properly assess what I have spoken to you. Even though we have covered a great deal of ground, we have not yet completed the circle. We have not discussed **Closed Time Loops**. That is a discussion that we must lay aside until tomorrow, when we find out what it means to be a Priest according to **The Order of Melchizedek**. Just remember that our God is always an **on-time God**. I am sure that the phrase now has a whole new layer of meaning for you after today. May God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him! I'll see you tomorrow/today/yesterday!

Day 8 – The Order of Melchizedek



“¹ For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,,² 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’.³ Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the son of God, remains a priest continually (forever)” – Hebrews 7:1-3

Over the last several days, we have carefully and patiently laid the groundwork for understanding the creation of this uni-verse, its basic nature, the constraints of the Arrow of Time, how to “bend” the Arrow back on itself using such exotic tools as wormholes, and what it would require to be able to jump from one point in space/time to another. All of that was very heavy stuff, and I have no doubt that for many of you, your head is still spinning. Now it’s time to have some fun with all that technical stuff you just learned. We’re going to illustrate exactly how Jesus used His resurrection body to perform multiple jumps back and forth inside the time stream, to accomplish things which otherwise would have been impossible. There are two ways that we can go about this. First, we could actually follow the events as they occurred, but since the events move **backwards** in the time stream, we might lose too many people on the way, and I certainly don’t want folks left trapped in Medieval Europe, Imperial Rome or, worst of all, just outside the gates of Sodom during its heyday. Nah! Instead, we are going to play the role of investigative reporters, following the evidence **forward** in the time stream, and then reconstructing the events as they **actually** happened. All of this begins with a tiny sliver of history located in Genesis. After Abraham and Lot parted company over grazing rights, Lot had moved into the Siddim Valley, a place described by Genesis as “...well watered... like the Garden of God” (Genesis 13:10). Granted, the territory was good, but the people living there were bad, very bad. It is common knowledge what eventually happened to Sodom (from which the valley got its name) and Gomorrah. It is not quite so common knowledge what living in proximity to these perverse, ungodly people did to “Righteous Lot”. Frankly, Lot may have been righteous when he went to live in that region, but by the time he and his daughters found themselves hiding in stark terror in a cave up in the mountains, things had gone downhill badly. But we haven’t come to that part of the timeline yet, nor is it of primary interest to us today, so we’ll just return to the story at hand. There was an ongoing battle in the area over who was going to rule over who. It seems that a certain *Chedorlaomer* was the big dog around those parts back then. Eventually, five of the “kings” that he ruled over got tired of him and rebelled. Actually, “king” is probably a real stretch of the imagination. “Mayor” might be a better term, or perhaps even “chieftain”. These towns that the “kings” ruled over weren’t all that big. Consider the fact that Zoar (which means “little”) had a “king”. Yeah. Right. Sure. The five rebellious kings attacked ole Cheddy and the other three “kings” that had aligned themselves with him. When things didn’t go well, the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled into the mountains, leaving the people of their cities exposed and vulnerable. Real heroes, those “kings”! Among those taken captive was a fellow named **Lot**. Up until that point in time, all these petty wars between these equally petty kings had been of no concern to Abraham. But when Lot was taken prisoner, it suddenly became Abraham’s business. Even if Lot was in trouble due to his own desires, nonetheless he was kin, and blood didn’t abandon blood. Abraham quickly assembled his “army” of 318 servants and headed out in hot pursuit of Lot’s captors. Striking under the cover of darkness, Abraham routed the armies of the five kings and rescued Lot, his belongings, all the women and others who had been taken captive, along with all the goods they had seized. Suddenly Abraham was catapulted from disinterested outsider to conquering hero. When he returned with everyone and everything in tow, he was greeted by the kings of Sodom

and Gomorrah, who had managed to crawl back out from underneath the rocks where they had been hiding. Abraham had nothing but disgust and distain for them, for they were not only perverts, but cowards as well. Another Gentleman, however, also came out to greet Abraham, and this Gentleman was as different from the cowardly kings as day is from night.

"¹⁸ Then **Melchizedek king of Salem** brought out **bread and wine**; he was the **priest of God Most High**.¹⁹ And he blessed him and said: 'Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.' And he gave him a tithe of all." – Genesis 14:18-20

Three tiny verses. That's all. Granted, there are some subtle hints, like the fact that Melchizedek was the King of Salem (Jerusalem). Another hint that nobody seems to catch on to is the fact that Melchizedek offered Abraham **bread and wine**. He could have offered him anything. Salem had to have been a major city even back then, so money was no object. And that town had mysteriously been exempted from the war that raged all around them. Even though the battle had raged far north of Damascus, it had bypassed Salem, a city whose name means "peace". The final bizarre event that hinted at what was really going on was that fact that Abraham paid **tithe** to Melchizedek, giving **him** 10% of everything that he had brought back.

Then, without bothering to explain all those strange loose ends and pieces of the puzzle that simply didn't seem to fit in, the Bible moves right on to Abraham's rebuke of the King of Sodom, and then on to Abraham's vision in Chapter 15. Nothing further is said about the event until much later in the Bible. The next time we encounter a reference to the event is in Psalm 110, penned by David under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

"¹ **The LORD** said to **my Lord**, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'² **The LORD** shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!³ Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.⁴ **The LORD** has sworn and will not relent, '**You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.**'" – Psalm 110:1-4

The first time I read this passage, I became confused. Who exactly was talking to who (or whom, if you prefer). Clearly, there were **two Lords** involved in the passage. The passage begins by referring to **The LORD**. That can only refer to the Father Himself, the Head of the Trinity. But then the passage refers to **another Lord, "my Lord"**. Who is David talking about? Now, hindsight is 20/20, and everybody is always an expert after the fact. But the simple fact remains that prophecy experts and Bible commentators generally agree that this is a **Messianic** passage, one that refers to the Coming Messiah before the event. If this is true, and I agree with them that it is, that means that **My Lord** could only refer to one other person, **the Lord Jesus Christ Himself**. "But Pastor Ray", you might argue, "How could David possibly have known about Jesus thousands of years before he was born?" The same way that David was shown, blow by blow, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, by vision through the Holy Spirit. We've already discussed closed time loops, and how Event A points to Event B which in turn points back to Event A, over and over again. Psalm 22 is a closed time loop. David, the ruddy faced young man with a slingshot tucked into his belt, is sitting on a rock with his lyre in his hand, allowing the anointing of the Holy Spirit wash over him. As he drew deeper and deeper into the Spirit, suddenly a time portal opened in front of his astonished eyes. He could see three crosses standing on a hillside, and his gaze was drawn to the man on the center cross. The man was beaten almost beyond recognition, yet somehow he managed to open his mouth and cry out, in David's native tongue, "**Eloi, Eloi, lama sabach thani!**" Hurriedly, David began to write down what he was hearing and seeing. "**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**" What could the man on the cross mean? And then suddenly, the rest of the revelation came pouring out. David was suddenly in the body of the man, crying out in agony with Him, not only hearing His Words, but feeling His agony, His passion. David, who would become the King by who all other Kings would be measured, a man after God's own heart, was seeing the King of Kings, the man who possessed that very heart inside His own chest. And that Man, nailed to a cross, was seeing a young man with a harp and the pen of a ready writer, writing down what He said. David was looking at Jesus who was looking at David who was looking at Jesus, creating an eternally looping event inside space/time; yet not of space/time, but

rather of a something/somewhere/elsewhere/elsewhen that doesn't exist in our universe, but does exist elsewhere, in a totally different universe, a universe which possesses rules which are so unlike ours that it is difficult to even conceive of them, much less explain them. Am I hallucinating? Taking recreational drugs? Spending too much time in the sauna? None of the above. In fact, much of what I have described to you has already been proven theoretically on a mathematical basis. The laws of our universe, which we so proudly hail as unchangeable and immutable are really only one of an infinite set of potential laws and rules. In another universe in our multiverse, the rules for the creation of atoms, neutrons, protons, electrons and the like might well be totally different from our own, producing matter **incapable of being destroyed**. Chew on that on for a while. We'll come back to it later on in this discussion.

The reason that David would recognize **My Lord** as being **our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ**, is that he had already encountered Him sitting on that grassy knoll, back in his youth, when he penned Psalm 22 and 23. And **The LORD (the Father)** has one more critical thing to say to **My Lord** in Verse 4. After hundreds of years of absolute silence, God gives us one more little hint about one of the greatest mysteries of all time and space, when He says, "**The LORD has sworn and will not relent, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek'.**" We've already established who is who in this passage, so an alternate translation with those identities in mind might read like this: "**The Father has sworn and will not relent, 'You (the Son) are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.'**" That's what the passage actually means, **now that we can look back on the events with the advantage of hindsight**. But what about David? He did not have the historical perspective that we have. When the power of the Holy Spirit came upon him and he uttered these words, don't you think he wondered about that final phrase? A High Priesthood **after the Order of Melchizedek**? What was **that** all about? What on earth did Melchizedek have to do with the Priesthood? He wasn't even Jewish, **was He???** Unfortunately for David, it is highly unlikely that the Lord ever explained what was going on to him. Jesus told the disciples that many prophets and wise men **longed** to look into the things that they were privy to, and yet **were never given that privilege**. Such is the autonomy of God. He is absolute, and has the right to make any decision He so chooses. And since He is God, any decision that He makes is automatically, absolutely right. Our job is to trust that this is so, and that is not always an easy thing to do. With only a small fragment of the total information at our disposal, we logically made value judgments based on what little we know. We have to, in order to function. What shirt shall I wear today? What pants? Shall I bring an umbrella? The forecast says that it will not rain. But the weatherman has been known to be wrong. With God, such unforeseen possibilities are not possible. Every moment of space/time that will ever occur is in full view of His eyes. He not only knows the beginning from the end, He **is** the Beginning and the End.

Having salted the stew a little bit, the Lord then says **absolutely nothing** about the matter until well into the New Testament. And then, suddenly, in the Book of Hebrews, He suddenly spills the whole can of beans. The unknown author of the Book begins Chapter 5 by talking about the qualifications for the High Priesthood.

"¹ For every **high priest** taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. ³ Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. ⁴ And **no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was.**" – Hebrews 5:1-4

Having established the critical fact that **God** establishes the office of the High Priest, as well as that of all Levitical Priests, the writer then drops the bomb of all bombs, at least if you are a good, devout Jew.

"⁵ **So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.'** ⁶ As He also says in another place: 'You are a **priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek...**'" – Hebrews 5:5-6

Another Priesthood? Not Levitical? Why, that is heresy! Or is it? No, it is not, because Scripture **has already stated that another Priesthood already exists!** What is mind-boggling about **this** Priesthood is not just that it has absolutely nothing to do with Levi, **it has nothing to do with Israel!**

If we go back in time and take another quick look at the original incident, we find that Melchizedek had no connection to Abraham genetically. For that matter, Abraham himself was not Jewish. Now, that statement may stun some people, because we traditionally consider Abraham to be the physical father of the nation of Israel, and the spiritual father of Christianity. Yet when Abraham walked the face of this earth, there was no such thing as a Hebrew. Remember, Abraham begat Isaac and Isaac begat Jacob, who was renamed Israel after his traumatic all-night wrestling match with the Lord at the Jordan River. Then, after Jacob come his 12 sons, who will become the 13 tribes of Israel after Joseph gets to divide two for one when his father adopts Manasseh and Ephraim as his own children, elevating them to equal status with Gad, Reuben, Asher, Dan and all the others. Abraham not only gave birth to Isaac, the child of promise. He also gave birth to Ishmael, the father of all the Arabs in the world. Three major world religions look to Abraham as their progenitor. All of these begats occurred before the name Israel was ever mentioned by God. Coming into Egypt, they would be referred to as **Hebrews**. After the dividing of the kingdom under Solomon's son, Rehoboam the Retard, there would be two nations: **Israel** in the north and **Judah** in the south. Both kingdoms would go into exile, the northern tribes lost amid the nations until the very end of the age. Much later, three surviving tribes, Benjamin, Levi and Judah would return to the area around Jerusalem to start rebuilding. After this, because Judah was so much larger numerically than the other two tribes, all of them would begin to be referred to as **Jews**.

Even with all of this, Melchizedek was already established as High Priest of God Most High and King of Salem when Abraham entered the region. Even though Abraham had absolutely no logical reason to offer tithes to Him, he did. Clearly, the Father of Faith knew something about this Man that was not apparent to others witnessing the event. Now, adding the sudden expose of Hebrews, we know that Jesus did not seek to become a High Priest on His own. In fact, since He was of the tribe of Judah, it would have been utterly impossible for Him to ever become a High Priest, since only descendents of Levi could be Priests of any kind, much less High Priest. Yet it was absolutely necessary for Christ to be a High Priest. I'm going to say something that may well shock and disturb you. **It was not enough for Christ to be Lord. It was not enough for Him to be Savior. He also had to be a High Priest.** Why? We'll get to that in just a second. Now, having established that Jesus is the Son of God and a High Priest according to or based on the Order of Melchizedek, the author of Hebrew begins to unfold this revelation hidden for thousands of years.

"⁷ who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, ⁸ though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. ⁹ And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, ¹⁰ called by God as High Priest 'according to the order of Melchizedek', ¹¹ of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing." -- Hebrews 5:7-11

Lord have mercy! Do you have any idea what he has just said? No? Congratulations, then. You fall into the same category as all those others who, not only in the First Century, but all down through the ages, have completely missed what is being said here.

In talking about Jesus, the writer of Hebrews, perhaps, Barnabas, perhaps Paul, makes some absolutely shattering statements. First of all, he calmly points out that even though Jesus was God's Own Precious Son, yet He **learned** obedience **through what He suffered**. As an integral part of the Godhead, the Word of God could no more of have conceived of disobedience than most of us would consider deliberately smashing one of our thumbs with a hammer. He was totally woven into the fabric of the Trinity, and decisions were always instant and unanimous, Lord agreeing with Word agreeing with Spirit. But in order to redeem stubborn, sinful, rebellious humanity, it was necessary for the Word to **become** the only begotten (naturally born) Son of God. At the beginning of time, when He was the Word, He was not the Son. I've talked about this in another article, and we don't have time to dig into it in depth here. When He detached Himself from the Godhead and became, for the very first time, an independent, autonomous Spirit Being, it must have been quite a shock. And then, He had to empty Himself of all His divinity, glory and power in order to be able to enter an egg fertilized by the Holy Spirit, this granting it personality and a soul. Only when He was born on that fateful night when Angels sang and stars stood still over mangers did He **become** the Son of God. At that point, the Lord also

became a Father. From there, Jesus would grow in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man (Luke 2:52). Eventually, after His 30th birthday, He would take upon Himself the task for which He had been sent to earth: the redemption of the race of men that He Himself had created (more on that later!). He would **learn** obedience as a separate, sentient being through what He suffered. Nobody has a problem with obedience as long as things are good and everything is going their way. It's when times get hard and pain and suffering come that we want to pull away from the pain. It is then that we learn what is inside of us. I am a great supporter of sports as a way of learning to **sublimate the self in order to achieve a greater good**. When you go out for football in high school during the dog days of August, it is blazing hot. Many young men who are not prepared for the demands the practices put on their bodies end up over at the far end of the practice field, hurling their guts out. Others, refusing to absorb the pain and discipline required for success, simply quit and walk away. They have made a choice that their **individual will and desires are more important than the combined will of the team and the coach**. As such, they lose the opportunity to learn **obedience**. Fathers, coaches and other mentors are sometimes called upon to challenge and discipline those who sit underneath their teaching. Those challenges force their sons and students to **stretch themselves and become something which they did not know they were capable of becoming**, something which **they were not at that point in time**, yet something which that Father, coach or mentor **knew intuitively that they were capable of becoming**. I just handed you something very, very deep. I want you to go back and re-read that last sentence a few times, one word at a time until you fully understand it. Why does God allow suffering in this world? Partially because it is the logical result of our sins, but also because it provides Him with a vehicle He can use to **test, strengthen and mature** us into beings **just like Him**. That is deep, but where we are going to go is deeper still.

The next statement I make will take a quantum leap into the deep well beyond where you wanted to go. I already had you out beyond your spiritual water wings, didn't I? Just wait. We are about to go into very deep water. The next thing the author says is that Jesus **was perfected or made perfect** through those things that He suffered. Here comes the next bomb: **As the Son of Man, Jesus was sinless but not perfect!!!**

OK. Now that you've retrieved this book from the corner of the room that you threw it into, let me explain what I said. We talk about Jesus as being the perfect, sinless Lamb of God. **Now** all of that is true. But there was a time when it **wasn't** true. It **would** be fulfilled, but it **had not yet been** fulfilled. It is also equally true that **now** Jesus is fully God and fully man, two separate natures co-existing within Him. But there was a time when Jesus **wasn't** fully God and fully man **concurrently**, just as there was a point in the space/time of this universe when He was not separate from the Father as an individual functioning human being. At the beginning of creation, the Word was fully God. John 1:1 clearly states that fact, when the Apostle says, "**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**" Fine and dandy for God, lousy for us. Because after the Garden Incident, it became necessary for a **man** to redeem the covenant and this planet by the power of a sinless life, since a man had thrown it all away through **disobedience** (starting to see the big picture yet?). **God** could not redeem the covenant broken by **man**. Only **man** could redeem the covenant broken by **man**. And so it became necessary for **God to become** (there's that word again!) **human**. In order to become human, a part of the Godhead had to detach Himself from the **Trinity**, leaving a **Duality** in place temporarily (Father/Spirit). Verse 14 describes that event:

"¹⁴ *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, the **Word** had **become** the **Son**. A part of the Godhead had **become a man**. As such, He would have to endure every single process of personality development that any other human child has to go through. He would frustrate his parents only once, when He was 12 and decided to stay in Jerusalem on His own to talk with the teachers of the Law. After that, He would be **obedient** to them about spiritual matters until it was time, and then His own mother would have to force the issue in order to make Him step out once again. During the time of His earthly ministry, He would refer to Himself time and time again as **the Son of Man**. Why? Because that's Who He was at that point in time, **fully human**. As such, it was possible to make mistakes, and He made them. To delineate all of the

situations in the New Testament where Jesus learned by experience would take a book in and of itself. **It is possible to be sinless and not be perfect.** How can I say this? Because of the Biblical definition of sin. Sin is best defined all throughout Scripture as **deliberate disobedience to the known will of God.** Scripture says that if you **know** what to do and **don't do it**, for **you** that is **sin** (James 4:17). Furthermore, Paul clearly teaches in Romans that without the Law, the known will of God, sin is not even capable of being recorded against us (Romans 5:13, 7:7). Oh, dear friends, there is so much to teach you! But before I can teach you **one** deep thing of God, I find that I must teach you **another** deep thing of God which helps to explain the **first** deep thing of God. In dealing with average Christians, I can fully appreciate the frustration of the author of Hebrews, when he said that there were many things that he wanted to explain, but that they were hard to understand because his readers were "dull of hearing", slow to understand and stubborn to learn things which grate against their preconceived notions. Listen, do you think I came easily to the knowledge that I have now? Our first reaction to new information that doesn't fit into our current way of thinking is to categorically reject that information. Friends, facts are facts. But I can glean many facts from places like the Science Channel without having to embrace their interpretation of those facts.

While the Word was here on earth in the person of Jesus, the Christ, it was **absolutely necessary** that everything He do be done **as a human, not as God.** If He had done **anything** as Who He really was, it would have cancelled the whole project. This is why He told Peter that if He had really wanted to, the Father would have supplied Him with more than 12 legions of Angels in the Garden. Now, a Roman legion contained about 6,000 soldiers. Since Jesus said more than 12 legions, we can safely assume that He had the power to call down a bare minimum of 72,000 angels, all with drawn swords and a serious attitude problem. Given that two angels caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and one angel killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in a single night, it is nearly impossible to imagine the level of carnage which 72,000 angry angels would have wreaked. This is also why when Jesus asked the disciples who He **really** was and Peter answered that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, Jesus specifically told them not to tell anyone. He was on a **covert** mission to planet earth. Everything He did here, including suffering and dieing on a cross, had to be accomplished **as a man.**

After His resurrection, it was another story altogether. **Prior** to His conception in Mary's womb, He had been **fully divine** as the Word of God. **After** His conception, up to his death and burial, He was **fully human.** But **after His resurrection, He was both fully God and fully man,** with a resurrection body constructed of the material from His universe, not ours. He will continue in that dual capacity for all eternity, **as will we** when we receive **our** resurrection bodies, carbon copies of His own glorious, eternal, indestructible form.

This is why, in Hebrews 5:9, it says that He **became** fully perfected and **became** the author of salvation. Now, **having fulfilled all the conditions required to offer up His precious blood in the Tabernacle not made with hands in heaven, he became a High Priest, after the Order of Melchizedek.** And lest we think that these are just a few scattered references and that this topic is not important, Hebrews continues to drill the same concept into us, again and again.

*"¹⁹ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and **which enters the Presence behind the veil,** ²⁰ where **the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.**" – Hebrews 6:19-20*

Here again we have a reference to the fact that **only the High Priest** was permitted behind the veil, into the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant was, containing both the **Laws of God** and the all-important **Mercy Seat.** Both are indispensable. Without the laws of God, we would not know what sin is and is not. In our current culture, we have totally cast off those laws and rejected them. Because of this, there will be no mercy shown to us. We knew what to do, and we chose not to do it. On the other hand, if, while trying to obey God, we still fall short and fail Him, we can come to that Mercy Seat to find help and strength in time of need. But mercy is not for those who will not try at all, it is for those who have tried and failed. Attitude is everything in the Kingdom of God. No Levitical Priest could ever be pure enough, holy enough or clean enough to enter into the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle which sits in the Temple of God in the 3rd Heaven. Since God knew that the Levitical

priesthood would be insufficient for the ultimate act of redemption, He established an **alternate** priesthood into which **only one man could enter, the man Jesus Christ**. Having established that critical fact, the writer of Hebrews takes the gloves off in Chapter Seven and unfolds a mystery hidden since the day that Abraham accepted the bread and the wine from the hands of the mysterious Melchizedek.

¹ For this Melchizedek, **king of Salem, priest of the Most High God**, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² 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**', ³ **without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually**. ⁴ Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. ⁵ And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; ⁶ but **he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises**. ⁷ Now beyond all contradiction **the lesser is blessed by the better**. ⁸ Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. ⁹ Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, ¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him." – Hebrews 7:1-10

In order to understand the magnitude of what Hebrews is saying, we once again have to resort to making a list, this time of all the credentials which the mighty Melchizedek holds. In short order we discover that:

1. He is the **King of Salem**.
2. He is also **High Priest of God Most High** (*El Elyon*).
3. He **received tithes** from Abraham.
4. His name means "*King of Zadok*" or "**King of Righteousness**".
5. Since the name Salem means "*peace*", that also makes Him "**King of Peace**" as well.
6. He is **without a father**.
7. He is **without a mother**.
8. He has **no genealogy**.
9. He has **no beginning of days**.
10. He has **no end of life**.
11. He is **made like the Son of God** (an exact copy, express image, facsimile).
12. He remains a **priest continually** (forever, eternally).

Now, to be the King of Salem back in those days was really no big deal in and of itself. Granted, Salem, or **Shalom**, as it is more correctly rendered, will eventually become **Yerushalayim**, or, as we know it today, Jerusalem. Yerushalayim in Hebrew means "**legacy of peace**" — a combination of **yerusha** (*legacy*) and **shalom** (*peace*). But if we take the phrase "King of Peace" or "Prince of Peace" and do a word search through the Bible, we end up with an interesting match in the prophet Isaiah.

*"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**."*

-- Isaiah 9:6

If those words sound vaguely familiar, it is because they are part of Handel's great work, *Messiah*, parts of which have become woven into our very culture. I can say that as a young man I and my father had the privilege of being part of the baritone section of a regional choir as we presented the entire work. It was a difficult task, but an awesome experience. I can still hear the melody line for the passage above skipping through my mind. This passage is universally considered to be another one of those **Messianic** texts that foreshadow Christ. That being true, then it isn't much of a stretch to connect **King of Peace** to **Prince of Peace**. And if that is true, then could Hebrews 7:2 be referring to Jesus? Hmmmm...

In addition to being a king, He is also a High Priest of **God Most High**, or **The Most High God**. The best way to understand this phrase would be to say, "*The God who is higher than all the other Gods*". Remember that most folks back in those days believed in multiple gods. Each deity had his or her own turf; a land where they were dominant and certain tasks that they specialized in. But the God referred to here is the **ultimate deity, the God above all other gods**. Not only is Melchizedek referred to by the Bible as the **ultimate God's High Priest** (think about that for a second), but Abraham (or Abram, if you prefer) refers to the Lord using the exact same phrase. In fact, the same name or some variant of it is found in Numbers, when Balaam refers to God, the Psalms in 8 separate cases, Daniel in 5 passages, and even Mark, Luke and the Book of Acts in the New Testament. Clearly, **El Elyon** was no reference to any sort of pagan deity, but a direct reference to the **Lord Himself, the King of Kings**.

As I pointed out earlier in this article, it is fascinating that Abram gave 10% of everything he had captured to Melchizedek. As Hebrews skillfully points out, tithes are always given by the **inferior** to the **superior**, and from the **layman** to the **man of God**. In giving tithes to Melchizedek, Abram acknowledged that he was superior to him spiritually, a man of God and a legitimate representative of the God Whom he knew, loved and served.

All of these things we already knew from the Genesis account. But the next seven facts which Hebrews is about to unfold are nowhere to be found in the progressive revelation given to man by God until the very moment when the Holy Spirit's anointing caused the words to be spilled out on parchment. Unfortunately, we have run out of time today, and we will need to let those revelations wait till tomorrow when we get to meet **The Man from Eternity**. Until then, worship Him who is Prince of Peace, King of Righteousness, King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Amen and Amen!

Day 9 – The Man from Eternity



“³ Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the son of God, remains a priest continually (forever)” – Hebrews 7: 3

In yesterday’s article, we began to systematically analyze all of the Scriptures dealing with the mysterious figure Melchizedek. In the process of doing so, we made a list, like we always do, outlining all the things that the Book of Hebrews says about Him. We discovered that:

1. He is the **King of Salem**.
2. He is also **High Priest of God Most High** (*El Elyon*).
3. He **received tithes** from Abraham.
4. His name means “*King of Zadok*” or “**King of Righteousness**”.
5. Since the name Salem means “*peace*”, that also makes Him “**King of Peace**” as well.
6. He is **without a father**.
7. He is **without a mother**.
8. He has **no genealogy**.
9. He has **no beginning of days**.
10. He has **no end of life**.
11. He is **made like the Son of God** (an exact copy, express image, facsimile).
12. He remains a **priest continually** (forever, eternally).

Yesterday we analyzed the first five items on our list. Today, we will take a good look at the rest, and in doing so, will venture once again into new ground, stretching your imagination and your understanding of the deep things of God.

Actually, items 6, 7 and 8 all belong together, so let’s look at them as a single statement. The writer of the Book of Hebrews, after making several historically verifiable statements, suddenly zooms into the stratosphere and tells us things that appear nowhere else in the Word of God. He calmly says that Melchizedek had no **father**, no **mother**, and no **genealogy**. How could that possible be? Ever since Adam, every human being has had a biological father and a biological mother. Recent genetic advances are beginning to blur some of the traditional boundaries, but even if a woman has herself implanted or impregnated in a lab, there is still the presence of the father’s sperm and the mother’s egg. Someone has to father the child, and someone has to give birth to it and raise it. Some people may argue that by saying that Melchizedek was **without a father** and **without a mother**, it means that He was **orphaned**. But when Hebrews adds that He has **no genealogy**, it weakens that argument substantially.

What, exactly, **is** a genealogy? Let me use my own family as an example. My father was Laurence James Young, born in Edelmans, PA. My mother was Beatrice Eileen Rundle, also born in Edelmans. My paternal grandfather was Floyd W. Young, my paternal grandmother Emily Young. On my mother’s side of the family, her father was Walter Rundle and his wife was named Mary. Beyond that, details are kind of blurry for me. I know there was a James Young, also known as “Boom”, for reasons we won’t go into here. For experts in the field, it is not uncommon for them to trace family bloodlines back dozens of generations, and I am told that there are **griots**, or tribal generational experts, in Africa who can verbally recite family lineages back for **hundreds** of generations. Both the Gospel of Matthew and

the Gospel of Luke contain extensive genealogies tracing the lineage of Christ up to his step-father, Joseph. Reconciling them has posed quite a headache for Bible scholars.

In the case of Melchizedek, however, Hebrews says that He has no genealogy. None whatsoever. So how can that be? In order to explain how this could be so, we have to go back to the tomb originally planned for occupancy by one Joseph of Arimathea. It was he who donated his tomb among the rich for Christ to be entombed in. What happened in that tomb defies modern science to explain it. As usual, there is another secret hidden in the Old Testament about what took place behind that stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. We have to go to the prophet Hosea to discover it.

*"¹ Come, and let us return to the LORD; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. ² After **two days** He will **revive us**; on the **third day** He will **raise us up**, that we may live in His sight."* – Hosea 6:1-2

Virtually all Bible scholars agree that this is another Messianic passage, and they catch the fact that Hosea is prophesying that Christ will be **raised up on the 3rd day**. What they fail to see is that although Jesus was in the heart of the earth for three days just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days (Matthew 12:40), it does not say that He was **dead** for all of those three days. Based on my research, here is what I think actually happened:

On that fateful Friday, the Pharisees were in a hurry to get Jesus crucified, dead and buried before the Sabbath. That way they wouldn't have to work, thus breaking the Law of Moses. How sad. Christ was taken down from the cross, wrapped in standard burial cloths, placed in the tomb, and the stone was rolled in front of the entrance. During the first day His body was dead, Jesus had quite a few errands to run. He had a promise to a thief crucified next to Him to fulfill. He had to go down to Hades, to preach to the captives there and give them a chance to be justified by faith in Him. Doubtless there were other things He had to do. Day One was busy from a spiritual standpoint, but nothing happened from a physical standpoint. Hosea says, however, that sometime during the 2nd Day, His body was **revived**. What does that mean? If a man is swimming and drowns, he is brought out of the water dead. If a person at the scene knows CPR and administers it, bringing him back to life, we say that he has been revived. During the Second Day, the first phase of the project was completed. Jesus had said that He was laying down His life willingly, and that He could and would just as easily pick it back up again (John 10:17-18). So during the Second Day, the Spirit of Christ re-entered his dead but not decaying body. David had prophesied that the Father would not let His Holy One see corruption (Psalm 16:10). Since all death, decay and corruption is based on sin, Jesus' body would be totally exempt from all corruption, since there was no sin in Him at all. He had successfully led the first totally sinless life in the history of the world, thus redeeming the contract for this planet from Satan. However, His body was battered and disfigured beyond recognition. First, the life force had to be restored to the body. Then, massive amounts of cellular repair had to be made, re-growing the portions of His beard that had been torn out by the Roman soldiers (Isaiah 50:6), healing all the cuts and bruises on His face and generating huge numbers of new cells to replace the chunks of flesh that had been torn out of his back. In addition, the wounds in His hands, His feet and in His side had to be sealed, but not removed. They would stay there for all eternity to forever remind us what type of price He paid to secure our salvation. During this process, if you could have been inside the tomb to witness what was happening, I suspect that you would have seen Jesus' earthly body **suspended in mid-air directly above the stone slab on which it had been laid**. Why do I say that? Because scientists have been continuously running tests for decades on portions of the Shroud of Turin, the only legitimate relic that the Catholic Church has. It is truly the burial cloth of Jesus Christ. I know one of the men who were on the original Shroud Research Team, Dr. Daniel Sciacovelli. Despite all the rhetorical nonsense surrounding the Shroud, there has never been one legitimate test run on the cloth that has ever disproved its authenticity. On the other hand, untold hundreds, perhaps thousands, of tests have been run all clearly marking the garment as legitimate. Recent tests using 3D imaging have provided results which defy the known laws of physics. Based on the three dimensional image burned into the Shroud by the incredible energies which poured into and out of His body, researchers found that places on his body which should have been depressed and slightly flattened by the weight of lying on the cold stone are in fact not depressed at all. The only way this could happen would be if His body was

actually suspended in mid-air, with half of the Shroud still laying on the flat rock surface, and the other half of the Shroud laying on top of His body while it hovered in mid-air.

Restoring life to the battered body and performing the extensive cellular and organ repair was only half the battle. Even if every single instance of damage had been repaired, Jesus would still have had a **mortal, human body**. If He had been resurrected in that condition, He would have aged and eventually died, just like any other human. But He had conquered the grave, sin and death. Therefore, it was necessary to not only **revive** and **restore** the body, but also to **regenerate** the body **from scratch**. Once the second phase of the project was done, there would not be **one single human cell left in His body**. Granted, it would **look** exactly like His mortal flesh, including the places where the nails had been driven through His hands and feet and the place where the spear of the soldier had pierced His side. But, at least in this case, looks would be deceiving. The body that Jesus would walk out of the tomb with on the 3rd Day would be unlike any body that had ever existed in the history of this universe. The atomic structure would be completely different than our own. Where atoms, neutrons, electrons, protons and the like had existed, a completely different set of rules would be applied. The matter comprising this new body would be **utterly indestructible, absolutely eternal** and **totally capable of housing His full glory** which He had possessed with the Father before He had emptied Himself in order to become human. Most Biblical scholars would not argue any of this, except perhaps for the distinction between the 2nd and 3rd Days. But they do not understand how this brand new body confirmed everything that the writer of Hebrews had to say. If His **new** body did not contain any human DNA or any cellular or atomic structures from **this** universe, then it would be totally fair to say that not only had He **resurrected Himself from the dead**, just as He had said He would, but that this new body of His had **no earthly human father, mother or genealogy**. None of the DNA of Mary was now contained in this new body. It was unlike anything ever imagined or conceived. No human father or mother could have possibly brought about the new container for His Spirit and His soul. This new prototype would be the model from which our very own resurrection bodies would be shaped. Eventually, even the creation itself, groaning in travail and awaiting its own deliverance, would be reshaped into the atomic structure of the New Heavens and the New Earth (Romans 8:16-23, Revelation 21:1). In fact, since all of the matter of this universe is now infected with the Law of Sin and Death, also known as the Law of Entropy, it is necessary to de-resolve all the matter and all the atomic structures in this universe back into pure energy (II Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 20:11). A totally new atomic structure, perhaps mirroring the universe from which the Trinity came, will be established, replacing the old one. **Nothing will be brought forward from the old universe except for our spirits, souls and the consequences and results of our actions done for Christ, also called our works**. Can you now understand how puny and insignificant all of our human accomplishments are in light of what will eventually take place? We labor futilely over all sorts of projects, none of which will have any permanence. Only that which is done for Christ will last. And it will last eternally. Moth and rust will not be able to corrupt it. Thieves will not be able to break in and steal it. There will be no pain or suffering in it. Ever again. Eternally.

All that in one sentence? Wow! But we are not done yet. Our friend also told us some other things about our Lord and Savior. He also said that Melchizedek had **no beginning of days** and no **end of life**. By now, I am sure you have figured it out: **Jesus is Melchizedek**. Only Jesus the Christ could fulfill all the things attributed to Melchizedek, and we're not nearly done yet! Since Jesus as the Word **pre-dates the creation of this universe**, you can safely say that **He had no beginning of days**. Since He now dwells in an **eternal, indestructible body**, you can also safely say that **He has no end of life**. Friend, it can't be any other way. No other person could ever come close to fulfilling everything in the list.

We come now to the final two points in the list, the fact that He was **made like the Son of God** and the fact that He is a **Priest continually**. At first glance, it appears that all of our detective work has been undone. Skeptics could argue that Hebrews merely says that Melchizedek is **like** the Son of God, but is **not actually Him**. My response to that would be first to ask the question, "*Then who else could it possibly be? No other human being who has ever lived has fulfilled all the qualifications listed in Hebrews!*" I dare say that there is no legitimate answer they could give. In addition, I went back to the original **Koine Greek** in which the entire New Testament is written and did a little additional

research of my own. The word that Hebrews uses for **like** is the Greek word **aphomoioō**. It has several meanings. They are:

1. To cause a model to pass off into an image or shape like it.
2. To express itself in it, to copy.
3. To produce a facsimile.
4. To be made like, render similar.

As I struggled with this seeming contradiction, the truth suddenly hit me, even as I was writing this article. **That's exactly what Jesus' resurrection body is: a copy, model or facsimile made similar to his original earthly body but not the same as the original.** Suddenly the contradiction was resolved. Jesus as Melchizedek fits the bill perfectly. If Christ had indeed traveled repeatedly through time, as I will show you He has, then He would have appeared in the past with the body that He picked up in AD 33. This time travel body would be **like** the body that He used while He was in His earthly ministry, **but it would not be the same. It would be a supernatural, superhuman copy.**

Finally, on the last point, I found a minor mistranslation. The Greek phrase which is translated **continually** in Hebrews 7:3 is translated as **forever** in Hebrews 6:20, 7:17, 7:21, 7:24 and 7:28. This makes a lot more sense, at least to me. Continually doesn't capture what He has done. He is a High Priest **eternally, forever.**

There's one more thing I'd like to point out regarding Melchizedek before we jump into the time travel paradoxes involved in all of this. We need to go to one more passage in Hebrews:

*"¹⁵ And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest ¹⁶ who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but **according to the power of an endless life.**" – Hebrews 7:15-16*

Now, the Greek word used for the translation of **endless** is **akatalytos**. This is another situation where I wonder what the translators were smoking when they did the translation. According to Strong's the correct translation for the word is **indissoluble, not subject to destruction**. In short, **indestructible, just like Superman, only without the weakness of Kryptonite**. So the **correct** translation of Verse 16 would read, *"...according to or based on the power of an **indestructible** life".* Now I realize that an endless life would have to be by definition also indestructible. But the correct translation is so much more powerful. And it also let me have a little fun with a misguided Mormon many years ago. He was a friend of mine, and we had many theological discussions, some of them fairly heated. In one of our more heated exchanges, he decided to play what he thought was his trump card on me. *"My religion is superior to yours!", he boasted. "After all, I am a High Priest according to the Order of Melchizedek!"* Mormons have taken this wonderful doctrine and the mysteries behind it and have twisted it almost beyond recognition. He thought he had just ended the conversation with a victory. He couldn't have been more wrong, because I had studied Melchizedek in great depth (as you now can clearly see). I knew what he was driving at, so I decided to play my **King** against his **Joker**. *"You are a High Priest based on the Order of Melchizedek?"* I responded excitedly. *"Then please, stay put! Don't go anywhere! I need to run home and get something and then I'll be right back and we can confirm the fact that your priesthood is based on the Order of Melchizedek!"* He looked at me quizzically. *"I don't understand", he said. "What could you possibly have at home that would confirm what I am saying?" "Simple!"* I replied. *"I am going to go home **and get my shotgun!**"* A look of fear passed across his face. I knew I had him hooked. *"Why would you need a shotgun?"* He asked shakily. *"Well, according to the Book of Hebrews"* I replied, *"Jesus has His High Priesthood according to the Order of Melchizedek **by the power of an indestructible life!** I'm going to get my shotgun and **try to blow your head off!** If you survive, then I will know that you possess an indestructible life just like Jesus and I'll believe every word you say to me from then on!"* I made sure that there was a reasonable amount of craziness in my eyes and my voice, so that he couldn't be sure if I was kidding or really serious. From that point on, he never, ever brought the topic up again. I had called his bluff. **Only Jesus** is a High Priest according to the Order of Melchizedek. Only **He** has an indestructible, endless life. At least, **right now**. But **in the resurrection, we** will have indestructible bodies **just like His**. The Bible says, *"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what*

we shall be, **but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**" (I John 3:2). Now, if we possess the same kind of **body** that He now **exclusively possesses**, doesn't it follow that we will walk in the same kind of **power** and possess the same kind of **ministry**? In fact, during the Millennial Reign, we will rule and reign with Him, and Paul tells us that we shall **judge angels!** (I Corinthians 6:3) How incredible! The only thing wrong with my misguided friend was that he was trying to appropriate in the **here and now** what can only be possessed by us in the **there and then**. But possess it we shall! Halleluia!

Finally, after laying the foundation for almost four articles, we are ready to do some time traveling. We will begin our journey in AD 33 (give or take a few years). We will be traveling with Jesus on this journey and we will have to assume that we also possess bodies like His, or the energies involved in time travel would shred our bodies into so much molecular confetti. Jesus had taken care of His promise to the thief on the cross. He had preached to the captives in Hell. He had been transmuted into something totally unique in this universe, immortal and indestructible. He had then risen from the dead, spent 40 days with the disciples, been seen by over 500 people in his resurrection body, and then ascended into heaven with the disciples watching in wide-eyed amazement. He would shortly thereafter sit down at the right hand of His Father, waiting to rule and reign on the throne of His earthly ancestor David. But before He sat down, having obtained a more excellent ministry based on the power of an indestructible life, and now the sole possessor of the High Priesthood of the Order of Melchizedek, He would **gather all of His precious shed blood** and **offer it before the altar** that exists in the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony in Heaven. That shed blood, **having been applied in eternity**, would then **eternally** be the source of salvation and forgiveness for all those who would call upon His wonderful Name. Here's how Hebrews puts it:

"²⁴ *But He, **because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.*** ²⁵ *Therefore He is also able to **save to the uttermost** those who come to God through Him, **since He always lives to make intercession for them.*** ²⁶ *For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;* ²⁷ *who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, **for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.*** ²⁸ *For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son **who has been perfected forever.***" – Hebrews 7:24-28

I don't know about you, but I sure do feel like shouting! Friends, **nothing** can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus! Nothing! Halleluia! Glory! Brother or sister, I feel positively Pentecostal right now!

Can you imagine the scene when He entered into Holy of Holies in heaven? Not an angel was speaking, so holy and precious was this moment, when **all humanity** would be given the chance to receive redemption **through the shed blood of Jesus Christ**. I know I promised you time travel, but take a few more moments with me while we witness this incredible event.

"¹¹ *But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, **with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands**, that is, not of this creation.* ¹² *Not with the blood of goats and calves, but **with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all**, having obtained **eternal redemption.*** ¹³ *For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,* ¹⁴ ***how much more shall the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?***" – Hebrews 9:11-14

And then, finally, this wonderful passage, also in Hebrews:

"²³ *Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.* ²⁴ *For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but **into heaven itself**, now to appear in the presence of God for us;* ²⁵ *not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—* ²⁶ *He then would have had to suffer often since*

the foundation of the world; but **now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.** ²⁷ And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, ²⁸ so **Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.**" – Hebrews 9:23-28

How can **anyone** turn down or neglect such a great salvation? And what a price was paid for it! Could **you** have endured what He endured to save your own children? Yet He did it for strangers who hated Him. I cannot comprehend the boundless love of God. I can only be grateful for it.

With this most important of all tasks complete, it was time for Him to do a little zigzagging through time. Taking the indestructible resurrection body which He now possessed, He summoned forces and energies that we cannot even begin to understand. With those energies, He opened up a stable wormhole from Heaven and linked it back into our past. He would make several such links, from one location in space/time to another. He would travel back to ancient Babylon to stand in the midst of a fiery furnace and protect three Hebrew boys who were about to be French-fried. The king would see Him and be astonished, correctly identifying Him as the Son of God. He would travel back to the Jordan twice, once to wrestle with a troubled Jacob, then again to stand before Joshua as the Commander-In-Chief of the Lord's armies. He would travel, along with two angels, toward Sodom and Gomorrah, making a brief stop at the tent of His friend, Abram. He would make some interesting predictions there, and have a little fun with both Abram and Sarai, teasing them about their unbelieving laughter. Having allowed Abram to **see Him face to face**, He would then relocate Himself at a city called Salem, where He would take the name of **Melchizedek, or King of Righteousness**. After the slaughter of the kings, He would travel out of the city to meet His dear friend again. Abram would **recognize Him as Who He really is, and quickly offer tithes to Him and Him only!**

He would also do something in return for Abram, a seemingly simple act with eternal overtones: **He would offer Abram bread and wine**. If you will remember, in a previous article I mentioned that fact and hinted that it contained something totally awesome. Perhaps you have already guessed what it is. If not, here's what **actually** happened on that wonderful and historic day. To give you the proper Biblical perspective, I need to move forward to the Gospel of Matthew and take you into the Upper Room to a scene that is very familiar to most Christians.

" ²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took **bread**, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "**Take, eat; this is My body.**" ²⁷ Then He took **the cup**, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "**Drink from it, all of you.**" ²⁸ For this is **My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.** ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." – Matthew 26:26-29

Now, with the text directly in front of you, let me ask you a few simple questions. What did Jesus offer to His disciples? That's right, **bread and wine, exactly** what He offered Abram so many thousands of years before. Why did He choose to do that? The answer is very simple. Abraham is referred to by Paul as the father of faith and he dedicates the entirety of Romans Chapter 4 to the subject. Since Abraham was justified by **faith** (although James points out that his faith had to be accompanied by **works** in James 2:14-26), it really means that he was actually part of the **New Covenant**, which is based on **faith** and **grace** rather than the **Old Covenant** based on **law** and **works**. As such, it was very important and highly appropriate that Abraham should be included in **everything** that pertains to the New Covenant, including **Communion!** In offering Abram bread and wine, Jesus as Melchizedek was **duplicating** the actions which He had performed **previously** in the **future** (if you follow my non-linear logic!) **later** in the **past**. I know, I know! Time travel produces so many Arrow-of-Time paradoxes that it isn't funny! It's actually shades of *Back to the Future*, the hilarious Sci-Fi comedy movie series starring Michael J. Fox and Christopher Lloyd. In one classic scene, Marty McFly of the future is trying to crawl through a series of theater curtains to avoid being seen by Marty McFly of the past. Could two of the same person actually exist at the same time in the same physical universe? A number of Sci-Fi TV series have done an absolutely wonderful job of probing these questions. *Stargate SG-1* has, in my opinion, created the finest single episode regarding parallel universes in the multiverse with an episode entitled *Ripple Effect*, in which a supposedly accidental power surge in the Stargate causes the gate to become a locus for multiple alternate universe SG-1 teams to return to. Their

second best effort involves a two-part mini-series entitled *Moebius* and *Moebius Part II*. In these episodes, the team travels back to Ancient Egypt to steal a badly-needed power supply unit from an ancient alien who was responsible for building the pyramids, but manages to get stuck there, with no way to return. Trapped in the past, they cleverly leave a video camcorder buried in one of the dig areas around Giza, thus forcing the altered timeline team to go back and rescue them and restore the timeline, which had been badly damaged by their failure. The Star Trek *Voyager* series also does a commendable job of experimenting with time travel. In *Time and Again*, *Voyager* stumbles across a devastated planet. During their investigation, some of the crew members are accidentally drawn back in time to slightly before the disaster, and almost become the cause of the disaster itself, before realizing what had happened and stopping the chain of events, thus also saving the planet from being destroyed. In fact, *Voyager* probably explored the time travel stream more than any other Science Fiction series I have ever watched. I have to confess that I learned a great deal from watching those shows, and began to think about time travel and time paradoxes for the first time due to my love for Science Fiction. The redoubtable Captain Janeway and her crew struggled with time travel issues and problems in *Before and After*, *Year of Hell*, parts one and two, *Timeless*, *Relativity*, *Blink of an Eye*, *One Small Step* and the dramatic conclusion to the series, *Endgame Part I* and *Endgame Part II*, in which a now-Admiral Janeway goes back in time to work hand in hand with the temporal Captain Janeway to help destroy the Borg, a deadly half-organic, half-bionic race who have become the most deadly threat to all life in the galaxy, and to bring Captain Janeway and her crew home safely and much earlier in the time stream. I'm sure that up until now you had figured out that I liked Sci-Fi, but I am sure that you had no idea it was **this** bad!

Dealing with non-linear time and closed time loops makes most of our heads hurt and creates non-resolvable paradoxes which our rules of time and space can't resolve. For example, let's consider Melchizedek and Jesus for just a second. Based on a linear timeline, Melchizedek must exist **first, before** there can be a Priesthood according to the **Order of Melchizedek**, right? Jesus will not enter the timeline as Himself until around 6-7 BC, based on current archeological findings, and will exit around 26-27 AD, although we use 33 AD as a point of reference, assuming that His birth had actually takes place in 0 AD. Jesus will not **leave** the timeline with His resurrection body until around 26 AD. At some point **after** that, He will travel **back in time** to the time of Abram, visit his tent on the way to Sodom and Gomorrah and take up residence in Salem as Priest and King of the Most High God (His Father). At some point after that, He would meet Abram again as he returned from the slaughter of the kings, receive tithes from him and share communion with him, blending the Father of Faith into the Covenant of Faith **after** that Covenant was established, but **before it actually happened!** Head hurt yet? Don't worry. You know I love to challenge you and force you to expand your thinking and vision beyond the mundane and ordinary. If the truth be known, I am only touching the very tip of the iceberg regarding this subject. It would take another entire article just to discuss the nature of time as it exists in the universe from which the Trinity came. It's kind of like the old poem entitled *I'm My Own Grandpa*, only in the humorous poem, you can actually trace the logic. With non-linear time, sometimes **effect** occurs before **cause**. He has already done a great deal, but there is more yet to come!

Taking that same resurrection body, He would then travel **back before time itself**, suspended inside the empty universe that existed before the Big Bang of Creation. And then, with all the angels watching, He would open up a singularity in His universe, allowing all of that energy to come pouring into our empty void, and starting the incredible 6 God-Days of Creation, spanning 6,000 of our years.

All of this is good, but the best is the last. Moving **forward in time**, He would kneel by a giant river coming out of the mountains in eastern Turkey, take some of the red clay soil there, and carefully shape a human form that looked **just like Him**. Just as His **resurrection body** was a **copy** of His **human body**, so now **this human body** would be a **copy** of His **resurrection body**, thus completing the cycle and forming the ultimate closed time loop. Halleluia! Glory to God! His precious and holy Word is inviolate, and just as immutable as His own precious body! And we will be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is! Glory!

Last but not least, the ultimate paradox, the ultimate closed time loop. For **Jesus** has His High Priesthood according to the Order of Melchizedek, yet **He Himself is Melchizedek!** That means that

He is the prototype of His Own Priesthood! He had to do it this way, for there was no one but Him who would have been qualified to create such a High Priesthood.

And just as Adam opened his eyes and looked into the loving face of His Creator, let us look unto Jesus, the author, perfecter and finisher our faith, our Alpha and Omega, our First and Last, our Beginning and our End! Nothing can compare to Him. Saints of God, give Him all the glory, for He and He alone is worthy of our praise! Amen and Amen!

Day 10 – Who Is Worthy?



“¹ 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. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?’ ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. ⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll or to look at it”

– Revelation 5:1-4

Who is worthy? Man, what a tough question! We spend a lot of time “strutting our stuff” about how good and worthy and cool and righteous we are, when deep down inside we know that we really aren’t. As a pastor for 30 years, I find that most people spend the vast amount of their time, both personal and professional, trying to do damage control on their perceived image. Frankly, I love it when I find somebody who is relatively bullet-proof. No matter what you say to them, you can’t hurt their feelings. But, man! Are they hard to find! I’m not immune in that respect, either. We all have things about us that we don’t like, and that we would rather not have people know about or discuss. Let me give you an illustration. Our pastor is a runner. He’s about our age, slender and in excellent shape. Not so for yours truly. Even though I ran the 440 yard dash in high school, it was more like Shamu the Whale on roller skates. I was slow out of the blocks, but when I got up to full speed, oh baby! When I came rolling around that final turn, grown men would faint and women would hide their small children! Here comes da great white whale! Seriously, I was very fast **for a lineman**. And that, dear friends, was what I was built to be: a lineman. My whole body is build like a cube of granite. My hands are as wide as they are long, I wear a 12 or 13 size ring and my feet are a size 11 EEE. If they were webbed, I could probably walk on water if I had a running start. I am 5’ 10” and have weighed anywhere from 200 to 300 pounds during my life, with the running average at about 250. I love football and baseball. I despise basketball, volleyball, and anything that requires tall, slender people. What am I saying? That I feel **inferior, not worthy**, when it comes to my body. When I went swimming, I always wore a T-shirt, to cover up my upper body, which was more flab than slab. A few months ago, one of my front teeth was chipped. I simply would not smile or show my teeth for months afterwards until the tooth was repaired. During that period of time, I felt like Jim Carey in *Dumb and Dumber*. I was horribly embarrassed and I felt **inferior, not worthy**. Some of us feel not worthy because of our grades or our intelligence or our insane parents (had one of those, too!) or the neighborhood that we grew up in or the crowd we run with or an infinite number of things about us that we perceive as **not being superior**. For most fragile human psyches, if **any one** of an infinite number of aspects of our personality is less than perfect, we see ourselves as vulnerable to criticism or ridicule, with a chink in our armor and a hole in our fortress wall. And no matter how many positive, good things there are about us, most of us obsess about the one tiny flaw that we think others can see. My wife is a beautiful woman. I thank God daily that I get to look at her first thing in the morning, rather than being in her shoes and having the utter trauma of having to stare me in the face, Mr. Goofy Grape, with my hair sticking straight up in the air. See how I use humor to blunt the potential pain about how I feel about my appearance? Now, you might stop reading for just a second, and turn to the back of this book and stare at my picture long and hard. You might say, as I do on a **really** good day, “*Not too bad. Not really bad!*” Or, you might quiver in utter horror, and quickly close the book, shaking badly. Or your reaction might fall somewhere in between. Or you might start laughing uncontrollably. That, too, is possible.

Most so-called egomaniacs who bluster and control and try to dictate the terms of every engagement are really terribly insecure, and put up a wall of sound and fury around them to make sure that no one can get close enough to see their flaws. That is a terrible thing. We want more than anything in the world to feel calm, safe, secure and loved. We want to know that the people who surround us have good in mind for us and not evil. Unfortunately, in many corporate and political environments, we may well be surrounded by people who pretend to be our friends while all the while they are carefully plotting our demise. The more ungodly our country becomes, the more this kind of environment begins to flourish. Years ago I was the Systems Administrator for a county government in Southern Indiana. My job was to coordinate, install, train, troubleshoot and in some cases handle purchasing for all the computer equipment in the courthouse and some satellite offices in the surrounding area. It was like being the Ringmaster in a 25-ring circus. Each officeholder, and there were 25 of them, had total autonomy from all the other offices. Although the County Commissioners, for whom I officially worked, were supposed to oversee all the officeholders, they were relatively powerless and had to resort to placation and negotiation to get anything done. It was a classic example of dirty, small-town, small-minded politics. Now, to be fair, many of the office holders were generally decent, hard-working, conscientious individuals who tried very hard to earn and keep the voters trust and support. But there were a few who were not. Those few were either incompetent fools, immoral monsters or both. I can guarantee you that working with them trying to maintain the **common** good was not a way to increase your level of security and sense of self-worth. One of them was, as far as I am concerned, the Anti-Christ himself, Satan incarnate. I have never met a greater hypocrite in my life, nor have I ever met a more dangerous or consummately evil man. When I first began my tenure as Systems Administrator, I had no idea what I was getting into. When I moved into my office, I noticed that the phone in my office rang very, very softly, so softly that I could barely hear it. The phone in the outer office didn't ring at all. So I called the Ma Bell tech rep that handled support for the courthouse and asked him to make some repairs. After a few moments of looking at my phone, he began to chuckle, then pulled something out of the ear portion of the phone. "Look!" he said, "Kleenex!" I stared at the phone, dumbfounded. Sure enough, the previous Systems Administrator had taken his phones apart. He had taken the ringer out of the phone in the outer office altogether, and stuffed as much Kleenex as he possibly could into the other. Then, as I found out later, he put the phone in a drawer of his desk, so that he could "honestly" say that he hadn't heard the phone ringing! That should have been my first warning signal. I also knew that he had simply melted down one day and walked off the job, never to return. That should have been my second warning signal.

Despite all of those negative signs, I was full of enthusiasm, hope and good will. I worked long, hard and cheerfully. I made sure that all the officeholders got equal, fair amounts of time. I began to address long-standing issues that showed a disrespect for those who weren't instantly computer literate. In short, I used my pastoral skills and began to **minister** to the people of the courthouse. I am proud to say that a good number of the employees of the county courthouse turned their lives around because of my influence, and one young backslidden Pentecostal Assistant D.A. came under conviction, began dressing modestly, changed everything about her life and went back to church and back to Christ. So thorough was her conversion that she resigned her job because she felt that she could not retain her purity surrounded by the intense carnality in that particular court office. I can tell you in good conscience that that judge and his staff were as corrupt as the people that they were bringing to trial. The only difference was that they just hadn't been caught yet. They were more skillful thieves. And that man is running for re-election again this year. It wasn't very long before I was greatly loved by many people in the courthouse, who saw that I was there for their benefit and good and that my plans for them were for good and not evil. I steadfastly refused to form alliances or cliques, one group against another. My office required strict neutrality and even-handedness. Unfortunately, the Devil in the (*&)*&)#@\$ Office didn't see it that way. At first, he smothered me with favors and tried to buy my allegiance. When it became obvious that his plan wasn't working, he determined to do what he always did to others who didn't crawl into political bed with him. He determined to destroy me. He was always uniformly warm and friendly in public situations. But he could turn as wicked and as nasty as any human being I had ever met in my life (Gosh, I **think** he was human! Maybe **that** explains it!). The moment the door closed, the cursing began. The evil would rise in his eyes. In fact, I think I was dealing the even-more-evil twin of Senator Pallapatine of Star Wars, who was actually a Sith Lord in disguise, and had mastered the dark side of the force. Yup! That was Dick! (Omygosh! Did I actually say his first name? Well! I'd better not say his last name, or he'll sue

me for libel!) He began to plot and scheme against me, speaking against me and complaining about me to the Commissioners. I would be sitting in a council meeting, and this animal would come and sit directly behind me, lean forward and then begin whispering into my ear so that **only I could hear** every foul curse word and evil intention of his heart toward me. It became a torment. I did not know then what I know now. But I was afraid of losing my job, and instead of going to the Commissioners and confronting him, I tried to avoid him. I knew that he was slick enough to not leave any evidence of his evil-doing. He was good, **very** good! I was developing ulcers as a result of his constant harassment. Then, one day, two of the Commissioners and the City Attorney, who had **no** business at all interfering in county government, walked into my office and informed me that I was being terminated on the spot, because I "couldn't get along with people" (One – Dick!). The county attorney was there ostensibly because Dick had somehow convinced them that because I was a Spirit-filled Christian, I was volatile, mentally unstable, and potentially dangerous. I sat there stunned for a few moments. Then I asked if I could gather up my personal belongings. I did so, and rode the elevator down to the first floor. As I walked out, I knew that I had just experienced a kind of crucifixion of my own, and it didn't do anything to help me to feel safe, secure, and worthy. Ironically, everything worked out perfectly. I was given a full three months of severance pay. Not bad for an emotionally unstable employee! The courthouse employees were stunned and angry. It turns out that the two employees I had convinced the courthouse to hire to help out were vying for my position behind my back. And it took **three** people to replace me when I left. Just as my severance pay was about to run out, the job with Hospice came up at **twice** the salary, **half** the hours, and a strong Christian environment, the most peaceful, rewarding job I had ever held. All things truly do work together for the good of them that love the Lord and are called according to His purposes! What about Dick? I have no idea. I do know this. Unless he repents for what he did, and I know I was not an isolated case, he will burn in the Lake of Fire. And frankly, it doesn't bother me one tiny bit that he may end up there. People make choices about their lives. In the final analysis, it's **always** up to **you**. When Dick and I both stand before the Great White Throne Bema Seat Judgment, we will both have to account for our sins and we will both watch our works held out over the Lake of Fire to see what will burn up and what will not. I **know** that my faith in Jesus Christ will stand the test, and I also **hope** that much of what I have done for Christ has been gold, silver and precious jewels. I know that **nothing** that man has done has **ever** been for the good of anybody but him. He already has his reward. I do not envy him or his fate. I suspect that I won't have to worry about running into him in the Eternal City. The thought doesn't bother me a bit.

Because of people like Dick, and because sometimes we act like someone like Dick, we carry with us a constant and frankly well-deserved sense of being **not worthy**. **And we are right in our assessment**. Only those individuals with an exaggerated sense of self-worth or an incredible capacity for self-deception think they are worthy. There is one sure way to find out if **you** are worthy or not. Let's take a look at the standard that you are judging yourself by. I am 5' 10". I used to be 5' 11" until they put me in the washer and I shrank. I still remember a newspaper article in Evansville about the new "Pennsylvania Strongboy", an incoming freshman on the football team who weighed in at a rock solid 230 pounds and was 6' 3" tall. It took two paragraphs of reading to find out that they were talking about **me!** I showed up for fall practice at 5' 11" and 205. I don't know who was more surprised, the coach or me! Now, at a slightly reduced 5' 10", I am **tall** only in comparison to someone who is shorter than I am. Bev is 5' 4" tall, and so I am her big, burly, manly protector. But compared to someone who is 6' 7" tall and weighs in at about 315, I am a small drop of water. It all depends on the standard. Anyone can be a macho hero and slam dunk a basketball if the rim sits about 6 feet off the floor. But if its 10 feet up, and you're one of those legendary white men who can't jump... I'm sure you get the picture. I clearly remember a classic example of lowering the bar that occurred when I was still in education. I taught for 18 years as a tenured faculty member at a university level, teaching computer science and business courses. I remember clearly that each year, the incoming students were a little dumber; a little less prepared and a little less committed. The 18-year-old gum poppers were the worst. They slumped dully in their wooden seats and **defied** you to teach them anything. Fortunately, I taught at a local junior college where many of our students were in their late 20's and early 30's. They had made mistakes earlier in their lives, and were now toiling in jobs that were beneath their abilities but not their credentials. They had determined that they were going to do whatever it took to change that situation. Those students I absolutely loved! They were highly motivated, studied, participated and generally made teaching a joy and made it possible to ignore the

do-nothing, care-for-nothing gum poppers. Even with the older students, the quality of the new, younger incoming students kept slipping year after year. Finally, about half way through my teaching career, the national board that administered the SAT's decided to "re-center" them. I hadn't paid much attention to what they were doing until I read an article about the process. When I did, I was outraged! What they meant by "re-center" was to **cheat and lower the height of the basket**. What had once been a 650 now magically became a 700! A 450 automatically became a 500! It was wonderful! Why, the very next year, the SAT's of students all over the US jumped dramatically! Right! That's like lowering the rim of the basket from 10 feet to 8 feet and then raving about the dramatic increase in the jumping ability of our basketball players. But heaven help them if they have to play against a group of players who are still practicing and playing at a 10 foot level! That's exactly what happened with "higher education" in the US during the period of time from the 1970's through the 1990's, when I finally exited with great relief from the educational system. It turned out that the miraculous "jump" in SAT scores only lasted one year. The following year scores started plummeting again, despite fudging the standard and lowering the bar. Now, we methodically get our you-know-what's kicked by students from India and the Far East for one simple reason. They never lowered the bar. Their basket is still set at 10 feet, as it should be. Indian students have **one** month of summer recess. We have **three**. All Indian students spend at least **three hours a night studying**. What about **your** little darling? You know, the one pulling straight D's in math and science but hoping for an "A" in ipod or *Wii*. We have become fearfully lazy. America lives to be entertained. I recently heard estimates that we watch an average of **six hours a day of TV**. Even now, as I am working on this article, we are visiting Bev's daughter and her family and most of them are stretched out on the sofa watching the Boob Tube. Ruth and Raj and the kids in India don't even **have** a TV, thank God!

When we start to compare ourselves with one another, it's relatively easy to find something about me that is superior to something about you. It doesn't even have to be the same thing. We may both be drunks, but at least I don't beat my wife and kids when I get drunk. I just run around on the old bag. But that's not as bad as hitting someone, is it? Pastor Ray? Why are you looking at me that way? I see this all the time in counseling people. In fact, the more flaws a person has, the more likely they are to be a dyed-in-the-wool Pharisee, equipped with surgically implanted microscopes on their eyeballs for the examining the lives of others, but with blinders over their eyes when it comes to their own sins. Jesus made an awesome statement about these kinds of people. It involved eyes and planks and all kinds of weird stuff. Here 'tis:

"¹ Judge not, that you be not judged. ² For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. ³ And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? ⁵ Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." -- Matthew 7:1-5

Quite an interesting comment, isn't it? Jesus makes some compelling points, points that we should consider carefully before we land with both feet on the back of someone who isn't living up to our expectations of them.

1. **If you don't judge, you won't be judged.** Wow. So, in other words, every time we stand there and begin to criticize another person for **their** failures, we set ourselves up for judgment by another person or authority for **our** failures, and every time we refrain from so doing, we minimize the possibility that we ourselves will be called into question for our actions and attitudes. Sounds like a good idea to me! There is a catch, however, to this topic, and Paul addresses it in I Corinthians 5:9-13. He points out that while we are not called to judge those **outside** the church, we nonetheless have to make value judgments about those **inside** the church. I have generally been very lenient and patient as a pastor with people who were struggling with personal sin and moral failures, because I know what I went through in my own life before I started to fly straight. But I have also thrown a few people out of our church for repeated moral failure when they showed no indication or inclination to repent. I have also had to make value judgments about who would or would not make good leaders. Sometimes I was right, sometimes I was wrong. In retrospect, I should have pitched a few more out, and appointed a few less. Managers in business have to make

judgments all the time about who is worthy of raises, promotions and the like. That kind of judging has to go on all the time. In fact, Paul had to counsel the church at Corinth to pitch a guy out of the church that was sleeping with his step-mom! (I Corinthians 5:1-5). Only after being given the heave-ho did the guy finally come to his senses and repent. Then, Paul was called on to make another judgment about whether to let him back into fellowship again. Mercifully, Paul counseled them to give the guy a second chance and let him back into fellowship (II Corinthians 2:1-11). Secular judges sitting on the bench have to make literally hundreds of judgments each and every day. That's not the kind of judging we are talking about. I have had far too many rebellious so-called saints pull this passage out of context and try to use it on me in the past. They were never interested in repentance. They were only interested in trying to use grace to justify them continuing in something that they knew was sin and open rebellion to what the Word of God said. When they would do that, I would calmly quote I Corinthians 5 to them. I wasn't interested in pointing fingers at them and condemning them. I was, however, as a Pastor, very concerned about their own eternal future and the continuing influence that they were having on other struggling believers in the fellowship. As such, I was forced to make decisions all the time about whether or not they could continue to fellowship with us. Those decisions were not always easy.

2. The measure or standard that **you** use in judging **others** will be used on **you**. That is a somewhat disconcerting statement, if you think about it long enough. We all want perfection from everyone around us and infinite grace and mercy when it comes to us. Keeping this thought in mind might make you want to ease up a little bit when you come down hard on someone. After all, it's nothing more than a logical extension of another universal Scriptural rule: **you reap whatever you sow**. Or, in non-Biblical terms, **what goes round comes round**. Yes, dear friends, even the world understands that what you do unto others will most certainly be done unto you sooner or later. If you do good to those around you, eventually others will do good to you. Now, this does not prevent the devil from doing his level best to make life miserable for you in the meantime, but it will happen. It just so happens that there is a **time delay** in the process. Every farmer understands that from the time that the corn (or any other crop) is planted in the spring, there is going to be an extended period of time before that crop is ready to harvest in the fall. This universal principle doesn't just apply to crops; it applies to **everything** that we do. What you put in is what you get out, sooner or later. Some crops come up quickly, others take a while to come to maturity, but, regardless of the time frame involved, **the crop always comes up**.
3. **Uncorrected errors in your life** will keep you from **properly addressing errors in the lives of others**. That's what that speck and plank thing is all about. There is nothing more pathetic than the incompetent manager who huffs about the office trying to correct everyone else. In fact, the person with the plank or beam is not only incompetent regarding their own job, but also incompetent in assessing the work of those around them. They become the butt of all the office jokes, a pompous, foolish figure who destroys their own credibility by failing to deal with their own problems. In fact, according to the long-famous Peter Principle, managers and workers in any organization continue to rise according to their competence until they reach their level of **incompetence**. It is at this level that they stall, unable to rise any further in the corporate structure because of a lack of skill, training or desire for self-correction. The frightening result of this process is that a healthy percentage of most middle management and even upper management are often incompetent in doing what they are supposed to do. Frankly, I find that I have enough things wrong with **me** that require my constant attention. I don't have time to devote to worrying about what is wrong with **you**, except, of course, to pray for your stubborn soul. I have also found, in more than 30 years of ministry, that there are three classes of people, in this order:
 - a. **First Class people talk about ideas, goals and visions.** They devote themselves to achieving goals, directing people and resources and planning for the future. I like being around this kind of people. They always elevate everyone around them. They set high standards for themselves and encourage others around them to rise up to those standards. Those who walk in the presence of the wise will themselves become wise, said Solomon. These are the kind of people you want at the very top of your organization, providing vision so that the people underneath them will not perish. They are as a whole very other-directed, and derive a great deal of their own personal sense of worth by ensuring that the organization, the church, the team or the ministry is

successful. These people are, unfortunately, often very hard to find. They tend to be **selfless**, not **selfish**. Because of this characteristic, they make great leaders and workers, but they also tend to become over-involved and burn out. Yet without these people, **nothing positive** would ever happen on this planet. Without them, we would still be squatting in caves, shivering in the cold and fearful of the dark. Over the last 40 years or so I have developed what I call the **90-10 Rule**. **10%** of the people in this world do **90% of the good**. Conversely, **10%** of the people in this world do **90% of the evil**. Ironically, the same personality types make up both groups. Some are totally turned toward good. Some are totally turned toward evil. The remaining 80% are just along for the ride, blowing to and fro with every breeze that comes along, achieving nothing, accomplishing nothing and dreaming nothing. Paul was such a man. Before his conversion, he was the greatest single threat to the young church in the whole Roman Empire. God had to convert him just to shut him down. After his conversion, he became the greatest single threat to polytheistic Rome. That's why, according to church tradition, they eventually chopped his head off. You could kill him, but you couldn't stop him or shut him up. He was either totally driven to do evil or totally driven to do good.

b. Second Class people talk about things, objects and events. This category of people is obsessed with the physical world around them. They place great value in the things that they possess, and define success as the obsession they have about their possessions. Unfortunately, the Great American Dream of the well-watered, suburban home with a two-car garage, three (or maybe even four!) bedrooms, a family room, a wet bar, a pool, etc. which is the envy of all the neighborhood is based totally on this class of people. The vast majority of all people fall into this category. They have limited vision, limited planning skills and tend to be highly competitive, even in meaningless things like 12-year-old Little League games. I could write a whole book on that subject all by itself, having been a parent for several athletically inclined children, a coach and an umpire. This class of people also tends to project their own previous failures onto their children, living vicariously through the success of the child and dying a little each time the child experiences failure. They tend to be very materialistic, and only marginally spiritual. They also comprise the vast majority of the individuals in the American church today. Small wonder, then, that there is no revival in the land!

c. Third Class people talk about people. There are no additional items to add to their list. They spend their whole life talking about everybody else, what is wrong with all of those other people and why everything that is wrong is the result of those other people. They are the most destructive form of life on this planet. They are perfectly content to tear down everything that anyone else has built by criticism, slander, innuendo and gossip, all to justify the glaring fact that their own lives are in total discord, disarray and defeat. They are totally blind to their own failings. In fact, focusing on the perceived failures of others helps them to ignore their own sins and weaknesses. That's why Jesus called them blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel (Matthew 23:24). I have found that these individuals have a strong tendency to try to micro-manage a particular area of their life or a particular doctrine. They will achieve what they believe to be perfection in this one tiny area, and then become ultra-critical of all others who do not conform or live up to their micro-standard. My son-in-law is a wonderful man, hardworking and kind. But there was a time in his life that he went from being a backslidden "good Catholic", drunk most of the time, to an ultra-legalistic 7th Day Adventist. Every time we got together, he would start to pound on me with their "Sabbath Law" doctrine. I put up with it patiently for a long time. Then, one day when he was on yet another harangue, I suddenly got up and went to the organ we have in our formal dining room. He followed me, with a puzzled look on his face. I turned the organ on, sat on the bench, turned the volume **all the way up**, and started to hit the same note, over and over and over again. It quickly became almost unbearable, and he put his hands up to his ears. I then stopped hitting the note and looked at him. **"This is what you sound like!"** I told him. *"There may be some validity to what you are saying, but your constantly bringing it up is driving us all to the point of putting our hands on our ears. Until you learn some balance in your life and in your doctrine, no one is going to listen to you!"* I then began to play some of the great hymns of the faith on the organ, moving from one chord to another, varying keyboarding styles as I did. *"This is what the Gospel is meant to sound like,"* I continued. *"Every part of the Word is taught in **balance**, making a beautiful melody for the soul."*

Fortunately for all of us, he finally got the point. He and his family now consider themselves to be Messianic Christians, and observe the Sabbath, Passover and other Jewish holy days while still embracing Jesus as their Lord and Savior. In fact, we gladly celebrated Passover with them this year and helped them to prepare the food, the programs for the Seder meal and a special PowerPoint presentation which I created using the materials that Kathy had put into her booklet. It was a beautiful, spiritually significant service. There was none of the old legalistic condemnation and harassment that had existed before. Unfortunately, many individuals in these kinds of groups never make the transition into balanced, mature Christianity. Instead, they drill down on a particular doctrine (straining out gnats) while allowing the rest of their personal life to continue in absolute chaos (swallowing camels). When individuals like this gain influence and control inside a church, absolute disaster follows. Their hateful, judgmental attitudes separate, divide and eventually conquer the work of the Gospel. I have seen these slanderers and gossipers ruin one church after another. Small wonder, then, that Jesus said what He had to say about them. They always tear down, and never build up. These are the witch-burners of Salem, the inquisitors of Medieval Spain, the gossip columnists who make their living leeching off of the rich and famous, and, last but not least, the paparazzi who were responsible for the death of Princess Diana. Third Class people live to destroy First Class people.

As a corollary to all of this, I also made several additional key discoveries, and found them to be absolute and universal in all my dealings with people. I found that these principles, more than skill, brilliance or preparation, were responsible for the success or failure of individuals who worked within people-based organizational structures. A lone wolf or solitary entrepreneur can survive without these skills, as long as he or she shuns direct contact and interaction with others. All the rest of us live and die by them.

a. Whatever good you say about others is quickly forgotten by those who hear it. If you want to say something kind about someone, make very sure that you say it **directly to the person themselves**. Entrusting others to transmit kindness is a fool's errand. Perhaps the most infrequently used but most powerful phrases in all the world are "*Thank you!*", "*Please!*", "*I'm sorry!*", "*You're right!*" and "*I'm wrong!*". Transmit powerful, positive statements **directly** to the person for whom they are intended, with no intermediates in between.

b. Whatever bad thing you have to say about a person will always reach their ears, no matter how "trusted" your confidant is. Many years ago, there was a great children's movie called *The Never-Ending Story*. I enjoyed it immensely, so much so that when a sequel came out, I purchased it as well. It wasn't nearly as good as the original movie, as is often the case, but there was one quote from it that has stayed with me to this day. When the wicked queen wanted to get to the desired location faster than the young hero, she instructed her carriage to **go underground and travel that way**, for, as she said, "***The speed of darkness is greater than the speed of light***". If you say something bad about a person, even if it is the truth, that **negative comment** will flash through the Good Ole Boy network faster than you can say "*Jack Rabbit!*" People seem to live for this kind of thing, and it tends to produce a feeding frenzy when a particularly nasty statement has been made. It is always transmitted under a kind of cloaked hypocrisy. The person spreading the vicious rumor, lie or criticism will say something like this: "***Now, I'm not one to bear tales, and I'm just telling you this so you can pray for them, but...***" Having begun with two bald-faced lies, the individual then proceeds to transmit whatever evil verbiage they have received from the mouths of others. In one church I pastored, I completely shut down the "Prayer Chain" because it had degenerated into a "Gossip Chain", composed mostly of women. They would call one another, and then spend 45 minutes "*discussing*" the individual in question "*so that they knew better how to pray*" before spending perhaps a minute or so "*praying*" for them. It was hypocrisy at its finest, and I decided I had tolerated it far too long. If these kinds of unholy networks are allowed to grow, before long, the network starts to **loop back into itself**, which leads to the third rule.

c. All tales grow in the telling, and grow in unpredictable directions. There's a fun children's game called *Humor Rumor*. The leader begins by whispering a short sentence to the first person in the chain. He can repeat it **only once**, which is part of the key to the whole thing. That

person must in turn repeat the phrase in a whispered voice to the second person in the chain. Again, only one try is permitted. No repeating is allowed. The second person then transmits the sentence to the third person, and so on. I have found that within three persons, the original message is already in the process of distorting. By the time it reaches the last person in line, it hardly ever remotely resembles the original message. So it is with transmitting "information" about others. Not only does the information **distort** in the transmission, but it also tends to **expand** as well. If a prominent politician or pastor was seen hugging a certain female friend at a birthday party for their children, it doesn't take too long for the tale being told to turn into an on-going, 15-year sordid affair in Monte Carlo. On the flip side of this rule, and one of the things that constantly amazes me about the Bible is its repeated **understatement of the facts** and its **absolute faithfulness to the text**. After Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness without food, the Bible calmly says that He was hungry. No kidding? The Bible makes no attempt to white-wash its heroes, and no attempt to add to what God has already said. No book in the history of the world has ever been as faithfully and accurately transmitted as the Bible. We owe that to a dedicated group of individuals called the *Masorettes*. Their name means *counter*, since they actually counted each and every letter in each and every line, assigned each Hebrew letter a numeric value, added up the sum total of all the values in each line and then compared the sum to a known check sum. If the line was in error, no overstrikes or corrections were permitted. The **entire book** they were working on had to be discarded! I would have never been able to be a Masorete. My typing skills are only slightly better than marginal. Without the backspace and delete keys, I would be in a heap of trouble! In Jesus' day they were known as the Scribes. The word for Scribe in Hebrew, *caphtar*, literally means "to count". Because of their obsessive-compulsive nature and their extreme faithfulness, we can rest assured that the Holy Scriptures were not subject to *Humor Rumor*, no matter what the critics say.

d. You can talk to people about God. The Bible tells us in Revelation that we overcame that old adversary, the dragon, by the Blood of the Lamb, already provided by Christ, and **by the word of our testimony**. It's hard to go wrong telling people about the good things that God has done for you, or helping to explain Scripture to them when they ask questions. It is **not** OK to beat them over the head in condemnation or judgment using the Word, unless you happen to be a true prophet. And even then, you'd better to be willing to be held over the same fire that you are holding them over. If you can't stand the heat...

e. You can talk to God about people. If you need to gripe to somebody about someone else, make darned sure that it's the Lord, and that nobody else is listening in. Not even your spouse is safe. Micah 7:5 says, "*Do not trust in a friend; Do not put your confidence in a companion; Guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom.*" C'mon! It's time for a little honesty here! Wives, don't you talk about your husband to your girlfriends or mother or sister when he's not around? And husbands, I know you can't tell me you never talk about your beloved when she is not in your presence. It happens all the time. Shucks, I've been know to slip myself every now and then! Only the Almighty, Who is totally pure and totally righteous, can be totally trusted with the contents of your heart. All of this leads to the Final Ultimate Rule:

f. YOU CAN NEVER TALK TO PEOPLE ABOUT PEOPLE! Of all the things that I have learned in the ministry, it is certain that whenever I obey this rule, things go well. When I disobey this rule, things don't. You can break a heart, alienate a friend or destroy a trust by what comes out of your mouth. That's why James spends so much time talking about the tongue and how it is a **restless evil setting everything around it on fire and set on fire by Hell itself** (James 3:6). As James also says, "...let every man be **swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.**" (James 1:19).

4. Last, but certainly not least, once you fix the messes in your own life, you will be able to see clearly enough to fix the messes in others. After carrying on for several pages about the faults of **others**, it is time to address the chief failing of most **pastors**, me being the chiefest among sinners! I spent years trying to fix the families of my congregants while my own family was in chaos and disarray. Folks, it just doesn't work! For this very reason, most of the efforts that I put in unraveled as soon as I turned my back. Unfortunately, a lot of the things that I did early in my

ministry turned out to be wood, hay and stubble. It will be my own personal heartache to watch them burn up as they are held out over the Lake of Fire on the Day of the Judgment of All Men (I Corinthians 3:12-15, Revelation 20:11-12). Hopefully, most of what I have done since then will prove to be gold, silver and precious jewels, endure the flames and turn out to be my Eternal Reward.

When all the smoke has cleared, what have we learned? That **no one, no, no one at all, ever, will be worthy to open the Scroll except the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!** That's why John wept. He **knew** that no one would be found to fill the huge shoes of the Master. Aren't you glad that there is one who **is** worthy? Unless the Scroll had opened, and it opened in the early 1900's as we will document later on in this Episode, we could never come to the End of Days. And unless we come to the End of Days, we can never come to a New Heaven and a New Earth, where righteousness dwells. Be glad, saints of God, that Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, has been found worthy to open the Scroll. The end draweth nigh. The time is near. Prepare your hearts. Purify yourself from everything that defiles you, and, above all else, remove the things **inside of you, blocking your heart and your vision, that keep you from being found worth to participate in the resurrection.** No, dear friend, neither you nor I will **ever** be found worthy enough to open the Scroll. But there is a worthiness that we **can** achieve:

*"¹⁰ ...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, **by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.**"*
-- Philippians 3:10-11

If I can only be found worthy of the **1st Resurrection**, over which the 2nd Death, the Lake of Fire, has no power (Revelation 20:6), then I am more than content to merely be found worthy to **understand** the opening and unrolling of the Scroll (Oh, wait! That's what this series of seven books is all about, isn't it?). It is my earnest hope and prayer that, when all is said and done and all truth has been revealed, that the words that I have written in hopes of explaining to you the Words that have already been written so long ago will be found full of truth, grace and mercy. It is my earnest prayer that, after having read **these** words written on **this** scroll, you will be drawn to read the Words written on **that** Scroll, that they may convict, convince and convert you and those you love and care for, and bring you and all of them safely into the Fair Haven of Rest, the Eternal City. We love you with all of our heart and we pray that your heart might burn with a holy fire and a steadfast love for **Him who truly is worthy**, from the very foundation of the world. Amen and Amen!

Day 11 ~ The Scroll



“¹ 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. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?’” – Revelation 5:1-2

Today, we are actually going to back up a few verses in order to cover one of the most important topics in the entire Revelation of Jesus Christ. Yeah, yeah. I know. They’re **all** important, right? Well, yeah, kinda. Unlike many other books of the Bible, Revelation is a super-massive Scriptural **matrix** of symbols and phrases that link to a million different places all through the rest of the Bible. Although all the books of the Bible do this to some extent, none of them can hold a candle to the very last book in the Bible. The more I study it, the more subtle, almost hidden links I find to other Scriptures in the Bible, which in turn link to **other** passages in other books! In some cases, I have stumbled upon a huge revelation, like where the survivors of Israel will be hidden by the United States Air Force during the Anti-Christ’s rise to power. Didn’t know about that one? Ain’t gonna tell ya! At least, not in this article. I’ve already documented it in *Episode Five – the Time of the Beast*. You’ll just have to purchase that episode to find out the how and why of the rescue. Sometimes the revelation about Revelation is hidden at the very first level of linkage, i.e., the first Scripture that the Revelation symbol or phrase refers to. Sometimes, you have to move to the **next** linked passage to find the mystery key, but, sooner or later, it will appear. Of all the symbols in the Book of Revelation, there is perhaps none more important than the Scroll. To understand why, you have to understand the general structure of the book, and it is the most rigorously structured book in the entire Bible.

Chapter 1 is basically an introduction, in at least two ways. First, it introduces the reader to the Apostle John, and he provides a little personal background to help the reader identify with him and understand his situation. John, of course, was exiled on the Island of Patmos, stuck there by badly rattled Roman authorities who had tried to cook John in oil for 24 hours and had failed miserably, according to church tradition. John had been happily worshipping away, praying in tongues on the Lord’s Day, probably a Sabbath, since he was a Jew first before he became a follower of Christ. The vision which ensued took him totally by surprise. The second introduction is, of course, the presentation by Christ of His credentials. He wanted to make sure that the reader knew Who was speaking and why they should pay close attention to Him and what He said.

Chapters 2 and 3 fall into the category of **things that are** (Revelation 1:19); seven letters to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor. John was the Bishop of Asia Minor. This is why Paul was turned away and redirected into Macedonia when he attempted to go and minister there (Acts 16:6-10). He would have been marketing in someone else’s territory. But John, even though he was in charge of the churches of Asia Minor, was not able to go and visit them so that he could monitor their progress and allow the Holy Spirit to uncover things that were out of order in each congregation. Pastors generally have the best of intentions, but they tend to be more nurturing than confrontational. Prophets are confrontational, kind of like the principal at school, but the apostle is like the father figure of the church. It’s kind of like the unruly children who are bedeviling their mother all day long. Finally, in frustration, she declares, “*Just wait till your father gets home!*” The prophet on occasions and in particular the apostle serves in that role, acting as both investigator and enforcer of divine authority and judgment. Witness what Peter did with Ananias and Sapphira in the Jerusalem church (Acts 5:1-11). Believe me, it would only take a couple of dead bodies in one church in a particular region to keep the rest of the “saints” in order. A healthy fear of the Lord is missing from the church today because

we have so few if any genuine apostles. There are many who claim to be apostles, but unless they can perform the basis tasks of a true apostle (Signs, wonders and miracles, transfer the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, power over life and death, water and fire based miracles), they are just pretenders and wannabes. Sorry if I just stepped on somebody's toes. If the shoe fits, wear it. And if it does, then stop calling yourself something that you're really not until you really are.

With John in the "slammer" on Patmos, unruly behavior became the rule in several of the seven churches. Because of this, the very first thing that Jesus did after He established His own credentials in Chapter One was to dictate letters to each of the seven churches, uncovering all of their dirty laundry as He did so. Imagine the shock and awe in each church as their particular letter was read the following Sabbath! There were probably a good many unrepentant "saints" diving through the windows, fearful of immediate divine retribution and punishment.

Having dealt with current events in Chapters 2 and 3, John was then caught up in the Spirit, pulled out of his body and through the Door in Heaven found in Revelation 4:1. From that point on, John would no longer be dealing with "*things that are*", or present tense issues, but rather with "*things that shall be*", or future tense events. The remainder of Chapter 4 is devoted to describing the awesome scene in the Throneroom of Heaven. Having done that, Jesus gets right down to business, and in Chapter 5 the very first thing we encounter is the Scroll with Seven Seals.

What the Scroll is and what it represents has been the topic of a great deal of conjecture, most of it highly unscriptural and misleading. To understand what is going on, we first have to ask ourselves what a scroll represented to people **in that day**. We can't overlay **our** values on a message that was originally given to **them**. It is unfair and very bad hermeneutics (the principles used to understand Biblical texts). Let me explain why. In America, if I say the word "*lift*", I am probably referring to a verb describing the **picking up of some object**, usually large or heavy. In England, if I say the same word, I am describing an **elevator**. I find that when I teach over the internet to my Indian pastor friends, I have to be careful not to use what we call "colloquial expressions". Phrase that we commonly use and take for granted in America make absolutely no sense to folks from other cultures and countries. The same is true for their proverbs and sayings. Ruth and I have had some interesting discussions about this subject. Even though the words of the Bible are inerrant and divinely inspired in the original language, they nonetheless reflect the mindset, personality, culture and times of the speaker. God doesn't mind if, when He speaks through us, we "colorize" it a little bit. If you study each of the Old Testament prophets, you will find that their individual personalities come through and flavor or color the style of the writing. Often, the Lord will give me a Word of Knowledge to deliver to someone. Although the **content** of what I am about to say to them is not up for interpretation or revision on my part, the choice of words that I will use is often up to me. If I have been taught, as many have, that God only speaks Elizabethan English, then my prophecy will include several "*thees*" and "*thous*", a few "*inasmuches*", several mandatory "*yeas*" and a "*withersoever*" or two. Now, please don't get me wrong. I'm not making fun of these folks. I'm just pointing out that in choosing the words that they will use to deliver what may well be a letter-perfect prophecy, they will subconsciously choose those words that **they** think are most appropriate to deliver the message. When I first began to move in the prophetic office in the early 70's, most Charismatics seemed to feel that the language of the KJV was the only way to speak God's Words. Most of us eventually outgrew that insular mindset and began to realize how much bigger our God was than our little preconceived notions of Him were. I received quite a jolt in my own ministry when I encountered a remarkable healing evangelist named Dale Begley from Atoka, Oklahoma. Dale had been killed by a car when he was about 12, and spent 8 hours toe-tag dead on a mortuary slab before the Lord resurrected him and called him into the ministry. It's quite a story, and I have told it elsewhere in this series of books. Dale also had interesting manifestations like gold dust, gold, silver and even diamond fillings in teeth during his meeting long before it became fashionable in Toronto and other places. But what intrigued me most about Dale was the way that he prophesied. When the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he began to speak, he would prophecy in **rhyme!** Not only did his messages rhyme, but it was pretty good poetry, to boot! My teeny Charismatic brain nearly went tilt the first time I heard him do it that way. And he didn't use Elizabethan English, either! Shame on him! But then I began to think about what I knew about the **Psalms**. There are 150 of them, and the vast majority of them have one or more clearly prophetic statements in them, some spanning thousands of years before their fulfillment. Now,

in English they don't rhyme, and they shouldn't. But in **ancient Hebrew**, many of them **do!** The 119th Psalm is a world-class example of highly structured poetry. I teach both Old and New Testament in our Bible College, and I have an entire 3-hour segment on the Psalms, with a detailed analysis of the 119th Psalm included. The first section of the Psalm, verses 1-8, begins with the Hebrew letter **aleph**, the equivalent of our letter **A**. Verses 9-16 begin with the letter **beth**, the equivalent of our letter **B**. Verses 17-24 begin with the letter **gimel**, the equivalent of our letter **C**. It turns out that Psalm 119, in addition to being divinely inspired, is also an **acrostic poem**, covering in order each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew Alphabet. Psalm 145 is the same way, as is the entire Book of Lamentations, written by Jeremiah. In addition, it would appear that the names of the Patriarchs themselves form an acrostic. Starting with Adam, and running through Terah, Abraham's father, the first letter of each of their names forms an amazing acrostic which reads as follows: **"I will forgive My enemies, having compassion, forgiving those of dust a second time"**. Wow! In case you're interested, I have a copy of the actual Hebrew names and letters, showing in a grid how the acrostic is formed. I guess if speaking poetically is OK with God, it also needs to be OK with me!

Instead of being **Thessalonican** in my attitudes toward new things of God, I was a **Berean** and **searched the Scriptures myself** to see if what was being presented to me was Biblical (Acts 17:1-14). When it turned out to be true, it set me free prophetically in a way that I would have never imagined. I've been very musical all my life and became the first person in the history of our high school to make both All-State Band and All-State Choir in the same year. I was a baritone vocally, and played the Baritone Saxophone as well (I was the only guy big enough to lug it around!) Anyway, once I knew that it was OK to **prophesy in rhyme**, suddenly full prophecies began to come out of me in the form of **song lyrics!** Much to the delight and amazement of my Black Christian musician friends, I became the Biblical version of a White Christian Prophetic Rapper! The only difference was that the words coming out lyrically were also letter perfect accurate prophecies as well! I have never felt more of a pure, free release in the Spirit than when I am prophesying in this manner. In one service where the glory of God fell, we worshipped non-stop for three hours, and when the Spirit came on me, I prophesied lyrically for 45 minutes without stopping! Halleluia! In that same service, I took the walker away from an elderly woman and instructed her to walk first **with** me, and then **to** me. When she realized that she was walking without pain for the first time in years, she stopped reaching for her "crutch" and took off a-runnin' and a-shoutin'!

Once we are delivered from our misconceptions and preconceptions, we are also free to see and understand things we would never have seen or realized previously. In the case of the Scroll, once I got the "Bible" blinders off of my mind and asked myself what John and his contemporaries would have seen a scroll as, it suddenly hit me like a bolt of lightning. Yes, the Sacred Scriptures were bound in scrolls, but **so were all legally binding documents, judgments in courts of law, and all other documents of record, measure and decision!** As an example, the famous Library of Alexandria was supposed to have contained around **one million** scrolls at its peak! When Caesar sacked Alexandria in 48 BC, somewhere between 40,000 and 70,000 scrolls were destroyed in the fire that ensued. All throughout the history of the civilized world, governmental centers have also been record-keeping centers, and many of those records involved the transcription of legal proceedings and decisions. About the same time I began my intensive 15-year study of Revelation, I was also working as the Systems Administrator for Clark County, IN. In the courthouse for the county, each and every office holder was also required to retain vast amounts of historical records. One of the reasons that the Lord brought me to that job was so that I could begin to understand the **inner workings of the legal system in America**. It was a real revelation in many ways. Not only did I see the seamy side of the legal system, I also got to understand **how the mechanism works**. Then, one day as I was studying Chapter 5 of Revelation, it hit me. In a flash, I understood **exactly** what the Scroll was and what it represented. It was a **Divine, legally binding judgment, actually, two legally binding judgments, against mankind as a whole!** The fact that it was written on both sides was also very instrumental in helping me find out **what those judgments were!** By comparing **Scripture to Scripture** and letting **Scripture interpret Scripture**, two of my most cherished hermeneutical principles, I discovered other passages in the Old Testament that filled in and explained the writing on both sides and what was written there. Remember how I've said that **if a symbol isn't explained** in the passage in which it is presented in the Bible, it means that the passage **has already been introduced and explained earlier in the Bible?** It turns out that there are **two critical parallel**

passages related to Chapter 5 in the Old Testament. Once you add the information encoded in those two passages to the Revelation passage, you suddenly find yourself in possession of all the information you need to interpret the passage correctly. Let's see what the first link in the matrix has to say to us:

"⁹ Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, **a scroll of a book was in it.** ¹⁰ Then He spread it before me; and there was writing **on the inside and on the outside**, and written on it were **lamentations and mourning and woe.**" – Ezekiel 2:9-10

Lo and behold! Look at what we just found! We found ourselves a **scroll written on both sides**, just like the one in Revelation! Because we use a totally different technology to record information today, most modern Christians skim right over the reference to a scroll written on **both** sides without a second thought. What a mistake! In today's modern world, we print books with either a hard or soft cover on the front and the back in order to protect the material contained therein. With that in mind, we can print on both sides of each page. Not so in the days of Christ. All recorded data was placed on cuneiform tablets, the skins of animals or papyrus scrolls. What does a scroll look like? I'm sure you've seen a picture of one at sometime or another. A scroll is basically a long piece of paper, rolled up from both sides until the two rolled ends come together in the middle. The writing on the scroll can be done in one of two ways, either horizontally or vertically. If the writing was **horizontal**, then the scroll would be unrolled going to the **right** and to the **left**. Passages would be found in blocks of text, one next to the other. To find a particular passage, you would unroll the scroll going to the left or to the right, and re-roll the other side of the scroll as you did, so that you wouldn't have the scroll spread out all over the place. The alternate means of unrolling a scroll would be if the text was written **vertically**, and the scroll would be unrolled going either **up** or **down**. During the time of Christ, most scrolls were written in the Hebrew tradition of unrolling to the right and to the left. If you attend any service at a Jewish synagogue, you will see beautiful, ornate examples of what I am talking about. Everything in the synagogue centers around the Word of God or the Torah, as they call it. The Gentile world eventually went in the opposite direction in writing on their scrolls. During the Middle Ages, many scrolls were written vertically, so unrolling went from top to bottom.

Once a scroll had been transcribed, let to dry and rolled up, it had to be bound together or **sealed** in order to keep it from unrolling and damaging the writing inside of the scroll. Scrolls hardly ever had writing on both sides for a fairly obvious reason: the writing on the outside would be subjected to the elements, dirt, oil from human hands, sunlight and other factors that would quickly blur or erase the contents. A typical scroll like the one that Jesus picked up in the synagogue at Nazareth would have been written on the inside only, transcribed horizontally and rolled up and bound by twine or some kind of clasp. In the case of materials that were very important, intended for certain eyes only or royal edicts, the scroll would be sealed with **melted wax**. The document would be rolled tightly together, and then held, perhaps with twine, while sealing wax was dripped down on the place where the two sides of the document joined together. The king or individual of importance and authority would then take the **signet ring** which he or she wore on their finger, and press the top of the signet ring into the wax, leaving a clear impression of the symbol or image on the ring when the wax cooled and hardened. That is why today when someone signs a document to make it legal we call that signing their **signature**. The word **signature** is a derivative of the word **signet**. I cannot be held to the terms of an agreement unless I have affixed my signature to that document. In America, we often refer to someone's signature as their *John Hancock*. The reason for that is that when the founders of our country all signed the Declaration of Independence, John Hancock made sure his signature was much larger than all the others. When questioned about his motives, Hancock stated that he wanted to make sure that King George of England or "*Old Georgie*", as he called him, could read his name without his spectacles on.

From the point that the wax was poured on and the signature affixed by pressing the signet ring into the wax, no one without a **matching signet ring** with the matching royal symbol was allowed to break open the seal and open the document, often under penalty of death. That's why John and everyone else mourned when the Scroll was presented in Revelation. Not only was the document sealed, it was sealed with **seven seals**. Those seven seals represented **seven different legal judgments or punishments**. Later on, as Christ would open each seal, one at a time, different kinds of events would

take place. The unrolling of the scroll of Revelation Chapter 5 and the contents of each seal is actually the entire scope of the remainder of this book.

If you will remember I said earlier that it was very unusual for a scroll to be written on both sides. But in the case of the scroll of Ezekiel, God made an exception. Clearly, the writing found on both sides was not good news under any set of circumstances, for Ezekiel says that they were words of **lamentations and mourning and woe.**

The passage of Ezekiel is helpful, but not conclusive. In order to tie down **exactly** what the scroll of Revelation is all about, we have to go to one of the most amazing parallel passages found in the entirety of the Bible. Remember that the Scroll appears in Revelation Chapter 5? Well, it just so happens that the passage which completely explains that passage and totally decodes it is found in **Zechariah Chapter 5!** Now, when the Bible was written, chapter and verse designations were not included. They were added much later. New Testament chapter and verse references were not added until the Middle Ages, long after the original documents had been created. As a result, we can't attribute the same level of divine inspiration to the actual chapter and verse designations as we can for the text which they attempt to define and boundary. In fact, there are numerous instances such as I Corinthians Chapters 13 and 14 where the chapter clearly ends one sentence too soon, thus making it harder to understand what Paul is saying. Having said all of that, however, there are also some very interesting matchups between Scripture passages and Revelation Chapter 5 and Zechariah Chapter 5 is one of them. Revelation makes reference to the Scroll, and Zechariah completely explains it.

" ¹ Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a **flying scroll.** ² And he said to me, 'What do you see?' So I answered, 'I see a flying scroll. Its **length is twenty cubits** and its **width ten cubits.**' ³ Then he said to me, '**This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth:** 'Every **thief** shall be expelled,' according to **this side of the scroll**; and, 'Every **perjurer** shall be expelled,' according to **that side of it.**' ⁴ 'I will send out the curse,' says the LORD of hosts; 'It shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. It shall remain in the midst of his house and consume it, with its timber and stones.' " – Zechariah 5:1-4

This passage is a little hard to read and understand, so let's take it apart and look at it one piece at a time. The very first thing that Zechariah sees is a **flying scroll!** That would be startling enough, but wait, there's more! This scroll is really, really big. Given that a cubit is normally 18" or 1½ feet long, that means that by our standards of measurement the flying scroll is **30 feet long** and **15 feet wide.** That's a pretty hefty document, if you ask me! Having defined all that, the angel who is speaking to Zechariah explains what the scroll is and tells him that it is **the curse that goes out over all the face of the whole earth.** Coupled with Ezekiel's description of **lamentations, mourning and woe,** we can only say that this dual legal indictment is very, very bad news.

The angel also solves the final mystery about the scroll and explains to us why in the world it is written on both sides. At this point in the narrative, we must read slowly and carefully. First of all, he says that every **thief** will be expelled or cast out based on the writing on **one side** of the Scroll. Then, he adds that every **perjurer** will be expelled or cast out based on the writing on the **other side** of the Scroll. So **one side** of the Scroll is a legal indictment against everyone who **steals,** and the **other side** of the Scroll is a legal indictment against everyone who **lies.** Perjury is the worst kind of lying because you are lying in a court of law after having sworn an oath to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. If you stop and think about what has just been said, you come to realize that mankind is in a whole lot of trouble because of these two indictments. List me a sinful act that doesn't involve either lying or stealing or a combination of the two. There aren't a whole lot of items on the list, are there? When we return to Revelation, we can now see clearly what is going on. The Scroll is a legal indictment against mankind, with one indictment for lying on one side of the Scroll and another indictment for stealing on the other side of the Scroll. No one in humanity is going to escape this dual indictment, since everyone has lied or stolen or both at some time in their life. Tell me, are you still so sure that you want God to judge you based on what you have done in your life? Forgotten all those dirty little acts of sinfulness? Memory fading on you? We always remember the story the way **we** want it to have taken place. Just a few moments ago, my wife called me into the family room to show me something on the DVR. She had been watching *Mama's House*, starring Vickie Lawrence and Carol

Burnett. In the episode she was watching, Mama had been knocked out accidentally by being hit in the head by a big pot. All three other women in the kitchen at the time had wildly differing versions of what had happened, and each of them painted themselves as the sweet, innocent victim of circumstances while the other two were wicked, mean and evil. Think a little lying and gross exaggeration weren't involved? All three of them were major *spin-meisters*. That's how all humanity conducts itself. Without the mercy and grace of God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we would all be destined for the Lake of Fire. I am constantly amazed at the number of fraudulent email scams that I get each and every day. They always involve some huge sum of money and some poor victim of circumstances who just happens to live in Nigeria or some neighboring country. Interestingly enough, Nigeria, where major revival is supposed to be taking place right now, also counts 40% of its Gross National Product as being from various scam and sting operations. Another scam that is very common is that you have magically "won" some drawing or lotto which you never even entered. Yet another one, slightly newer, is that a major company in a foreign country has decided that you, of all the possible candidates in the world, just happen to be the perfect match for their sole, highly lucrative sales representative position. I should know about this kind of thing. When I was younger and much more innocent and naïve, I got burned by one. Yeah, me! The big, holy prophet guy got burned by a sting operation! A friend and I ended up driving to Toronto, Canada in one of the worst snow storms ever to hit that area. We were ushered into a deserted building and shown some of the money. I guess we looked too poor and too stupid to rob and kill. No one would have ever been the wiser. It is true that God protects drunks, children and fools. I clearly qualified for the final category during that period of my life. I guess I shouldn't be too hard on myself, though. These guys were good, **very** good. In fact, they were so good that a bank which shall forever remain nameless was fooled by the letter perfect but totally fraudulent check they received for \$250,000.00! The only thing that stopped the scammers was that the company whose check they forged is a major financial clearing house in Canada who reconciles their outstanding checks not monthly as most individuals and companies do, but **daily**. They spotted the fraudulent check almost immediately, and notified the FBI, who in turn notified the Federal Reserve who in turn notified our bank who in turn notified me. We all thought that the check was real. I went from the happiest man in the world to the most crushed, destroyed, despairing and depressed man in the world in the span of one minute, as I listened on the phone to our banker telling me what had happened. I wanted to die. The repercussions at the bank were very severe, and some people who I thought very highly of ended up having to leave their positions. The entire incident was hushed up so as to avoid public humiliation for the bank. I hurt people that I loved and respected dearly. Don't think for one moment that I didn't want to take a gun and kill all the scammers. There had to have been about six of them involved, and at least one of them worked for the clearing house in Canada, making it an inside job. Why would I confess such a horribly embarrassing thing to you? Because if they were good enough to fool both me and my bank, rest assured they can fool you as well. Beloved, test every spirit, for **not every spirit is of God**. Will those scammers, liars and thieves that they are, roast in the Lake of Fire? Unless they repent, absolutely! Would I be disturbed by that fact? Not at all. They chose their fate. They will be judged according to their works, and the Scroll will indict them all on one count of perjury and one count of theft! Either count is sufficient for eternal punishment, since the place for all liars is in the Lake of Fire. Sometimes the number of scams I receive in my email on a daily basis is overwhelming, and so I just ignore them. But sometimes, like this morning, I reply to their email, warning them of their eternal fate if they don't repent. Hopefully, someday one of them will listen to me and surrender their live to Christ, repent, and begin to live a holy and righteous life.

So when Jesus, the precious Lamb of God, takes the Scroll from the Father, He is setting the stage for the complete and final punishment of all mankind for all their evil and wicked ways. Yet there is no sorrow in heaven over the fact. There had been sorrow because no one was found who was worthy to open the Scroll and break the seals. But the Lamb is worthy. He and He alone is worthy.

"⁸ Now **when He had taken the scroll**, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and **golden bowls full of incense**, which are the **prayers of the saints**.⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: '**You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation**,¹⁰ And have made us **kings and priests** to our God; and we shall **reign on the earth**.'" – Revelation 5:8-10

Why is He worthy? Because He paid the price for our sins with His precious blood. That's why. No other religious leader in the history of the world has ever loved his followers so much that he would allow himself to be sacrificed for the sake of those whom he loved. And no other religious figure has ever **risen from the dead**. Through His death and resurrection, we have **been redeemed** from the lying and stealing and sinfulness of the world and the devil who owns and controls them. But when Christ returns, and sits on the throne of His father David, we will **rule and reign with Him!** Halleluiah!

What an incredible contrast! And what a testimony to the love, grace and mercy of the Father through the shed blood of His Only Begotten Son Jesus the Christ! To think that sinners such as us could be redeemed from the terrible Wrath That Is to Come and be supernaturally converted into beings capable of being priests and kings unto the Lord our God! I cannot fathom His grace or His mercy. I only know that I will be eternally grateful to have survived the opening of the Scroll. Amen and Amen!

Day 12 ~ The Four Horsemen



“¹ Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’² And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer” – Revelation 6:1-2

As we move from Chapter Five and the opening of the Scroll into Chapter 6, we finally come to the actual contents of the Scroll. Having opened the divine equivalent of Pandora’s Box, war, plague and misery will come pouring out all the way until Revelation Chapter 17 or 19, depending on whether you include the Judgment of the Great Whore of Babylon as part of the 7th Bowl or as a separate act in and of itself. Either way, that’s a heck of a long way for the whole process to go! Of the 22 chapters in the Book, at least 11 of those chapters are totally devoted to breaking each of the seals open to see what will emerge after the seal is broken.

The first four seals are broken quite quickly, but before we deal with each of the seals individually, I want to discuss them as a group. All down through history, these first four seals have been known as the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Innumerable books have been written about them and an equal number of movies have been made referring to them. Most have absolutely no clue about what each of the horsemen are all about because they fail to analyze the text in context and connect **Revelation 6:1-8** with its twin passage in **Zechariah 6:1-8**. Remember yesterday how I said that from time to time certain Scripture chapter and verse passages will link up with almost identical references elsewhere in the Bible? Not only does Revelation 5 link up with Zechariah 5, Revelation 6 links up with Zechariah 6! These back-to-back “coincidences” are too close together to ignore. Clearly, these connections are divinely inspired!

In order to understand the connection, we have to compare Scripture to Scripture. Even though our foundation Scripture above only quoted the first two verses, we must actually see all eight verses as a group to understand what is going on.

“¹ Now I saw when the Lamb opened **one of the seals**; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’² And I looked, and behold, a **white horse**. He who sat on it had a **bow**; and a **crown** was given to him, and he went out **conquering and to conquer**.³ When He opened the **second seal**, I heard the second living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’⁴ Another horse, **fiery red**, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to **take peace from the earth**, and that **people should kill one another**; and there was given to him a **great sword**.⁵ When He opened the **third seal**, I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ So I looked, and behold, a **black horse**, and he who sat on it had a **pair of scales in his hand**.⁶ And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, ‘A **quart of wheat for a denarius**, and **three quarts of barley for a denarius**; and **do not harm the oil and the wine**.’⁷ When He opened the **fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’⁸ So I looked, and behold, a **pale horse**. And the name of him who sat on it was **Death**, and **Hades** followed with him. And power was given to them over **a fourth of the earth**, to **kill with sword**, with **hunger**, with **death**, and by **the beasts of the earth**.” – Revelation 6:1-8

Whew! That’s a lot of ground to cover! The only way that all of this is going to make sense is if we make one of our famous lists, outlining each Seal and what key words and phrases are connected with that Seal.

1. First Seal – White Horse

- a. Bow
- b. Crown
- c. Conquering and to Conquer

2. Second Seal – Red Horse

- a. Take peace from the earth
- b. People should kill one another
- c. A Great Sword

3. Third Seal – Black Horse

- a. Carry a Pair of Scales
- b. One quart of wheat for a denarius
- c. Three quarts of barley for a denarius
- d. Do not hurt the oil or the wine

4. Fourth Seal – Pale or Dappled Horse

- a. Death
- b. Hades
- c. Power given to them over 1/4th of the earth
- d. Sword
- e. Hunger
- f. Death
- g. The beasts of the earth

Well, folks, there it is! There are the phrases and symbols that we need to decode! Actually, when you take the passage and turn it into an outline, suddenly it's not so confusing, is it? This is true of the entire Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is a massive, super-complex outline, nested eight levels deep. I have created a complete outline of Revelation and included it at the end of this Episode and every other Episode to help you to place events into their proper position in the timeline.

Let's begin our analysis of this Fearsome Foursome by determining what each of the associated symbols meant to John's readers in their day. After we've done that, we'll look at the twin passage in Zechariah. Interesting enough, Revelation will tell us **what** each of the riders is going to do, while Zechariah will tell us **where** on this earth they will be doing it. When we are done with that, we will create an amazing grid that gathers the information contained in the two passages and interfaces it. You will be astounded by how accurately that grid mirrors our world at this very moment in time. Always remember, the **sum** of Thy Word is truth (Psalm 119:160). To fully understand **any** topic in Scripture, you have to research **all** the individual passages that deal with it. That may become a little tiresome at times, but I guarantee you that it will keep you from getting into serious doctrinal error. Virtually every bad doctrine ever hatched came from an incorrect or incomplete interpretation of a passage or topic in Scripture. That's why I am so very confident of what I teach. When it comes to doctrine, I won't teach something unless I have at least two and preferably three Scripture passages that back it up, **in context**.

When the **1st Seal** is opened, John sees a rider on a **white** horse. The color of the horse provides the key to connecting this passage to Zechariah. Some writers claim that this rider is the Anti-Christ. That can't possibly be true, since all four horses are coming from heaven, as we will learn by examining the Zechariah passage. Other writers have said that the rider on the white horse is Christ coming in the Rapture. That works great only if you spin about half a dozen other passages out of context, including Revelation 4:1 and Revelation 7:9 and 13-14. We already know from having decoded what Revelation and Zechariah say about the Scroll itself that **all seven Seals, including the Four Horsemen, are judgments of God upon the earth for the sins of mankind**. As long as you keep that fundamental fact in mind, it will help to dispel mindless speculation not based in a Scriptural context. What kind of judgment is it, then? Let's look at the symbols to find out.

The first thing that we notice about the Rider on the White Horse is that he is carrying a **bow**, as in bow and arrow. Historically, a bow and arrow have only ever been used to do two things, hunt for food or **wage war**. I clearly vote for the latter, and the next two symbols will confirm it. The second symbol is a **crown**. Now, Crowns are only worn by **kings**. Kings rule over **nations or empires**. And when nations or empires go out to do battle with one another, **conquering and to conquer**, that activity is called **WAR**. If we look at the three symbols together, there can be no doubt. We are talking about war, and specifically war across a major portion of the entire world, or **world war**. I will devote an entire Day to this topic, so just assume that I know what I am talking about for a few days, and you will see how it all completely links together. Our conclusion about the Rider on the White Horse? **WORLD WAR**.

When the **2nd Seal** is opened, John sees a rider on a **red** horse. Its rider has three tasks: first, he is to **take peace from the earth**. Now you can argue that this is what war does, and I would have to agree with you. But there is more than one way to take peace from the earth. In the case of the **2nd Seal**, the means by which this is done is by creating a situation in which **people kill one another**. When nations are involved in the taking of human life, we call that war. But when individuals or groups of individuals begin to massacre one another, we call that **ETHNIC GENOCIDE**. There's an old Tom Lehrer ditty which says, in part, "*Oh, the Irish hate the Spanish and the Spanish hate the Dutch, and I don't like anybody very much!*" That has long been the case. Mankind's history is not very kind when we examine the fact that we willfully whack anyone who isn't exactly like us. In recent years, ethnic genocide has been pushed to a new level of insanity, driven by the followers of Islam. We'll deal with **that** issue at great length in the article dedicated to the **2nd Seal**. And, instead of carrying a bow, this rider is carrying a **sword**. That will become very significant as well.

When the **3rd Seal** is opened, John sees a rider on a **black** horse. The first two riders were carrying instruments of violence and destruction. This rider is carrying, of all things, a pair of **scales**. To be very honest, this symbol stumped me for a while. To the modern mind, we might think of a pair of bathroom scales or an industrial scale used to weigh things. Another image that might come to mind would be a court of justice, since justice is traditionally represented by a woman wearing a blindfold (hence the phrase "justice is blind") and carrying a scale. But neither of those meanings is what John is thinking about. The meaning of this symbol is that of **commerce**. Why do I say that? Consider the following facts: when devout Jews went to Jerusalem to worship at the temple, they almost always had to make a trip to the **moneychanger's table**. If the Jew was living outside of Judea, he would naturally be carrying coinage from that nation or region, and so it had to be **changed** from one currency into another. Then lambs, turtledoves and the like could be purchased for sacrificing. The Bible speaks repeatedly of having a just scale or balance. Often, a full set of weights would be used to determine the worth of various items, just like the assayer's scale for determining how much a gold nugget weighed during the American Gold Rush. However, often the moneychanger would be dishonest and would trim off or add on to the weight of the various balances he used. Further proof of the fact that the scales represent commerce is provided in the next three sentences. In the first statement, we find **a quart of wheat selling for a denarius**. I have asked innumerable ladies about that quart of wheat to try and determine exactly how many **loaves of bread** a quart jar full of wheat would produce. Their estimates range consistently between one and two loaves. OK. I'll buy that. Or maybe not, when you see what **price** you're going to have to pay for that loaf of bread. The passage also says that that quart of wheat will cost you a denarius, or **one day's wages**, which is what the term originally meant. How much is a day's wages? Let's assume, for sake of argument, that you make \$10.00 an hour and work 8 hours a day. That would make the math pretty easy. A day's wages would be around \$80.00. So, even in a best-case scenario, let's say that **two loaves of bread would cost \$80.00. That's \$40.00 a loaf!** As of the writing of this article on May 14, 2008, my wife informs me that a loaf of bread costs around \$1.18. That's not the good kind of bread, but rather the pasty white kind that even rats won't eat. Imagine the kind of economic chaos that would be produced by a failure of the wheat crop so severe that bread prices would soar to that level. Barley isn't much better at that time, since you can buy **three** loaves of barley for the same wonderful price! The passage says nothing about rice, the main staple of the Orient, but it does add **not to harm the oil and the wine**. I had someone try to read the oil reference as if it were petroleum-based types of oil. Again, stay within the context of the passage. We are talking, not about fuel oil, but about food stuffs, so the oil mentioned in this passage must by definition be **olive oil**. When coupled with the reference

to **wine**, we find that we are looking at the principle crops that come from the Mediterranean region. I'll let you think about that one until the appropriate article. Our conclusion regarding the 3rd Seal: **MASSIVE CROP FAILURE OF WHEAT AND BARLEY CROPS**. Just wait till you find out **where it is happening RIGHT NOW!**

When the 4th Seal is opened, John sees a rider on a **pale or dappled** horse. For those of you who were not raised in a farming environment, you probably have no idea what in the world a pale or dappled horse is. It is a horse with a slightly graying coat, and it is mottled, spotted or dappled. That's what the word dappled means. In my PowerPoint presentations on this subject I show a picture of a dappled horse. It's much easier to explain that way. Who is the rider of the pale horse? Not someone you want to meet anytime soon! His name is **Death**, and he has a buddy riding with him named **Hell**. Not exactly a Dynamic Duo, if you know what I mean! These two bad boys are going to be given **power over 25% of the earth**. That's not good. They will have **four weapons or assistants** to help bring people down into the grave and into the fiery bowels of the underworld. Those four assistants are **the sword** (more ethnic genocide? Perhaps.), **Hunger**, **Death itself** (I guess people are just gonna drop over dead for no particular reason) and, scary as it may seem, **the beasts of the earth**. Wow! What's **that** all about? Actually, it's fairly simple. It's sort of a chain reaction. Consider:

- (1) World war and war between nations causes serious internal problems for the nations that are defeated. This allows...
- (2) The various ethnic groups in those nations to start whacking and hacking on one another. Consider what happened when the former U.S.S.R. fell apart in 1991. All of the various ethnic groups that had been held in check by a strong Soviet army suddenly were free to begin shooting at each other, like the Bosnians and the Serbs. While your neighbors are busy shooting at you and trying to blow you up, it's deucedly hard to put out a crop, and after a few years you suffer a...
- (3) Crop failure in the key grains that feed your society. If those crop failures go on long enough, they then produce...
- (4) Plague, famine, death, and the predatory animals coming after defenseless and weakened humanity as the new white meat (chilling thought!).

See how one event logically leads to another, and how each Seal logically leads to the next Seal? Here's another interesting thought before we move on. We blame the Devil for so many of our problems. But who is really responsible for the 1st Seal? Who is responsible for war, ultimately? Exactly. It is a crime **by** humanity **against** humanity. What about ethnic genocide? The same. Mankind, not God is responsible for these things. God is merely **releasing mankind against himself as the restraining power of the Holy Spirit is slowly but surely removed from this planet**. What about crop failure? If it's the result of trying to blow one another up, you can't blame the Lord for this one, either. And if **PLAGUE AND FAMINE** (that's how we're going to label this one for right now) occur as a result of that crop failure, whose fault is it? Hmmm??? Still wanna blame God for all the problems in this world? Let me ask you a question or two? How many alcohol-related deaths would there be if there were no sin in this world? What about rapes? Murders? Thefts? How many people get sick and die simply because of their own sins or the related sins of others? Hmmm??? The simple truth is that the first four Seals are the results of **man's inhumanity to man**.

OK. What do we have so far in our decoding sequence? So far, we have discovered that:

The White Horse of the 1st Seal is WAR.
The Red Horse of the 2nd Seal is ETHNIC GENOCIDE.
The Black Horse of the 3rd Seal is WHEAT AND BARLEY CROP FAILURE.
The Pale Horse of the 4th Seal is PLAGUE AND FAMINE.

Although the 4th Seal is a little vaguer than that, it is nonetheless a good way to remember what the primary characteristics of the 4th Seal are. Now we come to the twin passage in Zechariah Chapter 6:1-8, and, as Paul Harvey was famous for saying, "The REST of the story!"

" ¹ Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, **four chariots** were coming from between **two mountains**, and the mountains were **mountains of bronze**. ² With the first chariot were **red horses**, with the second chariot **black horses**, ³ with the third chariot **white horses**, and with the fourth chariot **dappled horses**—strong steeds. ⁴ Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these, my lord?' ⁵ And the angel answered and said to me, '**These are four spirits of heaven**, who go out **from their station before the Lord of all the earth**. ⁶ The one with the **black** horses is going to the **north** country, the **white** are **going after them**, and the **dappled** are going toward the **south** country.' ⁷ Then the strong steeds went out, eager to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth. And He said, 'Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth.' So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. ⁸ And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, 'See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country.' – Zechariah 6:1-8

We needed to make a list to understand our first key Scripture. It won't hurt to do the same here. Zechariah is shown **four chariots** coming out from between **two mountains**. Those mountains are **not** normal mountains, nor are they of this earth, because they are made of **bronze**. Later on in Verse 5 we will learn that all four chariots represent **four spirits of heaven going out from their station before the Lord of all the earth**. That clearly blows up the theory that the rider on the White Horse is the Anti-Christ. I am very sure that the Anti-Christ is **not** going to be coming from Heaven, aren't you?

Each chariot is pulled by horses of a different color. And, guess what? The colors of the horses match **exactly** the colors of the horses in Revelation. I know that they don't come out in the same order, but that is not a big deal. Remember way, way back that we established that Revelation would be considered the Master Timeline for studying the End Times? You have to do it that way, or trying to interpret Scripture will drive you totally crazy. I won't get into it right now, but the simple fact is that the sequence of events listed in the Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24-25 is not the same as the sequence of events in Revelation as the Scroll unrolls. In Matthew, Jesus was speaking extemporaneously and answering three specific questions with three specific answers. In Revelation, Jesus was given permission by the Father to reveal the exact timeline. The same holds true for Zechariah. He was operating on limited revelation, just as the doctrine of Progressive Revelation states. Jesus, in Revelation, was operating on unlimited revelation. As such, all other prophetic statements are always synchronized with Revelation by using whatever the common link is; in this case, the color of the horses, not the order in which they appear.

What is highly relevant and enormously revealing is **where** those horses are going. Zechariah begins by saying that the **black** horses are headed to the **north**, the **white** horses are going after them, i.e., to the **north** as well and the **dappled** horses are going to the **south**. Remember that we explained earlier in this article that gray and dappled mean the same thing. That leaves one color out, doesn't it? Where are the **red** horses going? Well, if we assume that the horses are entering the earth's atmosphere directly above Jerusalem, then it would be fair to say that all of them entered at the **center** of the earth, and then traveled to their destined point of activity. If there is no indication of the red horse going either north or south, then it would also be safe to assume that it is staying at the **center** of the planet, in what we call the 10/40 window. With all of this in mind, it is time for us to make another little list, and we'll list the horses in the same order that Revelation does.

1. **1st Seal – White Horse – Northern Hemisphere**
2. **2nd Seal – Red Horse – 10/40 Window – Center of Planet**
3. **3rd Seal – Black Horse – Northern Hemisphere**
4. **4th Seal – Pale or Dappled Horse – Southern Hemisphere**

Hmmm... Things are starting to get interesting. Let's see what happens when we take the **what** they will be doing in Revelation and combine it with the **where** they will be doing it in Zechariah.

1. **1st Seal – White Horse – World War in the Northern Hemisphere**
2. **2nd Seal – Red Horse – Ethnic Genocide in the 10/40 Window**
3. **3rd Seal – Black Horse – Crop Failure of Wheat and Barley in the Northern Hemisphere**
4. **4th Seal – Pale or Dappled Horse – Plague and Famine in the Southern Hemisphere**

Dear friends, do you realize what we have just done? We have just described the world **as it exists right now!** Tell me, where were World I and World War II fought? What nations were principally involved? Let's see...Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Austria, England, the U.S. and Japan. Omigosh! Every single nation we just listed is found in the **Northern Hemisphere** of our planet. What about Ethnic Genocide? Almost all ethnic genocide is occurring in nations that are controlled by Islam, either in the Middle East, the Far East or Africa. In all three cases, it is going on in the **10/40 Window, the Center of our planet**, just as Zechariah predicts. What about Crop Failure? What most folks don't know, and which I will document thoroughly in an upcoming article, is that the United States has been in a severe drought in the West for the last 10 years. That's why the price of bread has been skyrocketing. What about barley? Well, in this past year, newspapers reported a massive failure in the barley crop in Germany. So, what's the big deal about that? Ask yourself this question: **what do they use barley to make?** That's right! **Beer!** Take beer away from a Kraut (*Und Ich bin ein Deutschmann! Ich habe zwei jahre im Hoch Schule und zwei jahre im Üniversitat!*), and what do you get? A very unhappy German. And what do unhappy Germans do? They start world wars! Both world wars had Austria and Germany at the very heart of the misdoings. By the way, did you understand what I said *auf Deutchsh?* I said, "*And I am a German! I have two years of German in High School and two years of German in College!*" Up until three generations ago, our family name was spelling **Jung**, just like the famous psychiatrist and psychologist Carl Jung. It wasn't Anglicized until my grandfather was born. I can still remember a German Bible that my grandparents had with the names **Karl und Anna Jung** inscribed on it. I don't know whatever happened to it. I would dearly love to have it in my collection of Bibles.

Anyway, with a failure in the barley crop in Europe, it has caused the price of beer and beer-related products to skyrocket, thus creating a great deal of social unrest in Germany. We are actually in the midst of wheat and barley failures in the Northern Hemisphere right now. Double hmmm...

What about Plague and Famine in the Southern Hemisphere? Do we even have to ask? Africa is on the way to becoming a corpse continent, with aids, starvation, political violence and a million other diseases ravaging the continent from Ethiopia and Chad in the north all the way to South Africa at the southern tip. Food shortages and disease ravage South America constantly. And even as I write, the poor bedeviled nation of Myanmar, or Burma, is being ravaged and devastated by one cyclone after another, with massive disease and famine following in its wake, aided and abetted by an unconscionable military junta that doesn't give a you-know-what about their own people's well-being as long as their slimy fake constitutional referendum passes. There is going to be a terrible judgment for them. Just wait and see. How tragic that what was once the site of the greatest civilization of its day, Angkor Wat, would be reduced to such poverty and degradation.

If we put all of this together, what does it say to us? Brace yourself. I don't think you're going to like the logical conclusion that we are forced to come to. People ask me all the time, "*Pastor Ray, when will the Seals start to open?*" My response is, "*Bad news, folks! They're already open! They've been open for quite some time now. In fact, they've been open since the early 1900's!*" Am I kidding you? Nope! I will document that fact when we begin to analyze the 1st Seal in our very next article. Let me say it again. **The Scroll is opening. The first Four Seals are already broken and open. And we are beginning to enter into the 5th Seal at this moment in time.** What is the 5th Seal? All in due season, dear friends, all in due season. Let's get through the first four, shall we? Let the troubles of the day be sufficient thereof. I believe a very Wise Man, the ultimate Wise Man, once said something like that.

There are a few more thoughts that I want to leave you with before we close out this Day. Let's take another quick look at those Seals, shall we? One of the things that most folks don't realize is that each seal is **not global, but rather restricted to a particular part of the world, either the 10/40 Window, the Northern Hemisphere or the Southern Hemisphere.** There will not be a global crop

failure. Only in wheat and barley, and only in the Northern Hemisphere. Notice neither Revelation nor Zechariah say anything about **rice**, the food staple of India and the Far East. That's because there will be no rice shortage. That part of the world will remain untouched during the 3rd Seal. Most so-called experts try to globalize the scope of the Seals, whereas Zechariah clearly places geographic boundaries on them. I'll go with what the Bible says, OK? The other thing that most people don't realize about the Seals is that they are **concurrent with one another**. What does that mean? Let me illustrate it to you.

1. The 1st Seal opens, and we begin to experience **World Wars in the Northern Hemisphere**.
2. The 2nd Seal opens, and we begin to experience **World Wars in the Northern Hemisphere and Ethnic Genocide in the 10/40 Window**.
3. The 3rd Seal opens, and we begin to experience **World Wars in the Northern Hemisphere and Ethnic Genocide in the 10/40 Window and Crop Failures in Wheat and Barley in the Northern Hemisphere**.
4. The 4th Seal opens, and we begin to experience **World Wars in the Northern Hemisphere and Ethnic Genocide in the 10/40 Window and Crop Failures in Wheat and Barley in the Northern Hemisphere and Plague and Famine in the Southern Hemisphere!**

Can you see how things keep getting progressively worse and worse? Can you see how the level of global stress keeps increasing geometrically each time a new Seal opens? Can you also see how, if this continues at its current rate, it will soon reach the point where a major explosion will occur on this planet, since men can only stand so much before they become desperate and violent.

Based on a simple little Excel spreadsheet, and using Biblical and traditional data on what the earth was like before the flood, I have estimated that the world population just prior to the flood was somewhere between 8 and 10 billion. I will share that spreadsheet with you in a subsequent article. As of this moment, one of the invaluable World Population clocks on the web shows our global population at **6,667,833,888!** I find the **666** part of that figure a little disturbing. But even more disturbing is the fact that even the most conservative population growth estimates put us at **over 8 billion** before the year 2050. Any time human or even animal populations for any given species get too large, something drastic happens to reduce that population to a controllable, livable level. Witness what happens when there are too many lemmings. You are familiar with their story, aren't you? When the number of lemmings, tiny, furry little rodent-like creatures, gets too large, they are suddenly filled with an overwhelming desire to run pell-mell to various cliffs, where they race blindly over the edge and to their death on the rocks below. The few survivors heal, recover and begin reproducing again, only to have this vicious cycle repeat itself over and over again. Mankind seems to be no wiser. When too many humans were on this planet before, men's hearts devoted themselves to nothing but the active pursuit of evil. Look what is happening today. Is it not true that we appear doomed to repeat history, having learned nothing from it? I must warn you that this Episode, along with Episodes Four and Five, are largely going to be bad news. If you are looking for something warm and fuzzy, you'd better put this Episode down and rush out and buy **Episode Seven – All Things New**, where I talk about the Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ and the New Heavens and the New Earth. But even there we must bring some bad news as well, for in the midst of all that good news is the Great White Throne Bema Seat Judgment, and not everything that flows from that event can be classified as good news, for untold billions of souls with brand new resurrection bodies will be hurled into the Lake of Fire for the purposes of eternal punishment. On the other hand, if you are stable and mature in your faith and you want to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me, God, then this is the place to be. Stick around. The truth may be a bitter pill to swallow, **but it will also help to save your life!** This concludes our general analysis of the Four Horsemen. Stay tuned tomorrow for **The White Horse of War**. Until then, may God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him! Amen and Amen!

Day 13 – The White Horse of War



“¹ Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’² And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer” – Revelation 6:1-2

In yesterday’s article, we looked at the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse as a collective group, matching **what** they were going to do from Revelation 6:1-8 with **where** they were going to do it from Zechariah 6:1-8. In the next four days, we will look at each of the Horsemen individually, and do a much more detailed analysis of what I said in summary yesterday. Let’s borrow a little information from that article to give us a running start. If you will remember, when we analyzed the **what** portion of Revelation 6:1-2, here’s what we got:

1. First Seal – White Horse

- a. Bow
- b. Crown
- c. Conquering and to Conquer

When the **1st Seal** is opened, John sees a rider on a **white** horse. The color of the horse provides the key to connecting this passage to Zechariah. Some writers claim that this rider is the Anti-Christ. That can’t possibly be true, since all four horses are coming from heaven, as we will learn by examining the Zechariah passage. Other writers have said that the rider on the white horse is Christ coming in the Rapture. That works great only if you spin about half a dozen other passages out of context, including Revelation 4:1 and Revelation 7:9 and 13-14. We already know from having decoded what Revelation and Zechariah say about the Scroll itself that **all seven Seals, including the Four Horsemen, are judgments of God upon the earth for the sins of mankind**. As long as you keep that fundamental fact in mind, it will help to dispel mindless speculation not based in a Scriptural context. What kind of judgment is it, then? Let’s look at the symbols to find out.

The first thing that we notice about the Rider on the White Horse is that he is carrying a **bow**, as in bow and arrow. Historically, a bow and arrow have only ever been used to do two things, hunt for food or **wage war**. I clearly vote for the latter, and the next two symbols will confirm it. The second symbol is a **crown**. Now, Crowns are only worn by **kings**. Kings rule over **nations or empires**. And when nations or empires go out to do battle with one another, **conquering and to conquer**, that activity is called **WAR**. If we look at the three symbols together, there can be no doubt. We are talking about war, and specifically war across a major portion of the entire world, or **world war**. I will devote an entire Day to this topic, so just assume that I know what I am talking about for a few days, and you will see how it all completely links together. Our conclusion about the Rider on the White Horse? **WORLD WAR**.

Now, let’s borrow some more from yesterday regarding Zechariah.

What is highly relevant and enormously revealing is **where** those horses are going. Zechariah begins by saying that the **black** horses are headed to the **north**, the **white** horses are going after them, i.e., to the **north** as well and the **dappled** horses are going to the **south**. Remember that we explained in yesterday’s article that gray and dappled mean the same thing. That leaves one color out, doesn’t it? Where are the **red** horses going? Well, if we assume that the horses are entering the earth’s atmosphere directly above Jerusalem, then it would be fair to say that all of them entered at the

center of the earth, and then traveled to their destined point of activity. If there is no indication of the red horse going either north or south, then it would also be safe to assume that it is staying at the **center** of the planet, in what we call the 10/40 window. With all of this in mind, it is time for us to make another little list, and we'll list the horses in the same order that Revelation does.

1. **1st Seal – White Horse – Northern Hemisphere**
2. **2nd Seal – Red Horse – 10/40 Window – Center of Planet**
3. **3rd Seal – Black Horse – Northern Hemisphere**
4. **4th Seal – Pale or Dappled Horse – Southern Hemisphere**

Hmmm... Things are starting to get interesting. Let's see what happens when we take the **what** they will be doing in Revelation and combine it with the **where** they will be doing it in Zechariah.

1. **1st Seal – White Horse – World War originating in the Northern Hemisphere**
2. **2nd Seal – Red Horse – Ethnic Genocide in the 10/40 Window**
3. **3rd Seal – Black Horse – Crop Failure of Wheat and Barley in the Northern Hemisphere**
4. **4th Seal – Pale or Dappled Horse – Plague and Famine in the Southern Hemisphere**

Now we have successfully carried yesterday's framework into today's discussion. But it is just that: a framework or outline. We need some more meat on these bones, so let's get to it!

The very first thing we need to do is to compare this 1st Seal of Revelation to what Jesus had to say about the End Times in His famous Olivet Discourse. Ironically, most pictures of this event show all the disciples dutifully crowded around the feet of the Master eagerly awaiting His eternal, prophetic Words. Unfortunately, that is a scene that could only occur in a movie production, because the actual events were far more humble.

*"¹ Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ² And Jesus said to them, '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.'³ **Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?'**"*

– Matthew 24:1-3

If you only take Matthew's version of the story into account, it sounds like I was wrong and all the disciples really were there. But, as Paul Harvey used to say, let's hear "...*the REST of the story!*"

*"³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, **Peter, James, John, and Andrew** asked Him **privately**, ⁴ 'Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?'"* – Mark 13:3-4

Wow. That certainly cuts the crowd down a lot, doesn't it? We always picture Jesus as ministering to thousands, with waves of healing pouring from his hands, or giving the Sermon on the Mount to masses of people, but much of Jesus' work was done privately, one on one and in small groups. We are fortunate enough to have had people like John Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, to help us with these small but very important details. Here are the facts of the matter: The famous Olivet Discourse, carried in one form or another in three of the four Gospels, was a **private conversation** between Jesus and only **four** of his disciples. Actually, Andrew was a Johnny-come-lately in regard to private conversations with the Lord. Typically, Jesus would tell a parable to the crowd. Everyone would go, "Wow, that was deep, man!" and wait eagerly for the bread and miracles. They wanted to have the **results** of Jesus' teaching, but they were not interested in learning the **methods** required to perform such miracles themselves. After a brief period of time in His early ministry, Jesus grew weary of people who wanted, like the story of the Little Red Hen, to **eat** the bread without ever having to participate in the planting, weeding, harvesting, milling and baking of the bread. So He began to teach using parables, which most of the crowd didn't understand. Often the Pharisees understood, but their understanding of what He had said only made them madder than before, because often those parables were aimed directly at them. On other occasions, Jesus would tell a parable in which was hidden a

deep truth of the Kingdom of God, and then He would sit back and wait to see if anyone would come to Him to see what He **really** meant when He had given the parable. Typically, Peter, James and John were the only three out of the twelve to actually be interested in learning the mechanisms of the Kingdom. This was a similar case. Only this time, Jesus wasn't trying to hide anything. He had been so mad when He walked out of the Temple that day that He could have spit nails. And when the disciples, who **should** have been in the Temple soaking up His teaching but were actually **sight-seeing** outside the Temple, encountered Him in His divine fury as He strode out of the Temple, all they got from Him was the thunderous prediction that not one of all of those pretty stones they were looking at would be left, one on top of another. At that point, they all knew better than to ask Him what He meant. Instead, they followed Him meekly back to the Mount of Olives, to the Garden of Gethsemane where they were staying at night. Once they knew that Jesus had cooled down sufficiently, four of them came to Him to ask Him what He had meant by what He had said earlier in the day. Now that Jesus was calm and had re-gathered Himself, He then used their three key questions to provide three answers which provide us with our first full narrative of what will come to pass in the future.

" ⁵ And Jesus, answering them, began to say: 'Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁶ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and will deceive many. ⁷ But when you hear of **wars** and **rumors of wars**, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, **but the end is not yet.** ⁸ For **nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.** And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are **the beginnings of sorrows.**' "

– Mark 13:5-8

Well, there's the **nation against nation** and **kingdom against kingdom** stuff that seems to support the 1st Seal of World War. But it isn't quite as simple as that. Unfortunately, the translators have done us a disservice here. To fully understand what is going on, we have to look at the **Koine Greek** meanings for the words **nation** and **kingdom**.

The Greek word translated as **nation** is actually the word **ethnos**, the same root word from which we get our word **ethnic**. Now, an ethnic group is certainly not a nation, it is a smaller group of people, not physically diverse like the population of a nation. Any ethnic group is typically physically similar in several if not many ways. If we look in *Strong's Concordance*, here are the definitions we find:

- (1) A **multitude** (whether of men or of beasts) **associated or living together**
 - (a) A **company, troop, swarm**
- (2) A **multitude of individuals of the same nature or genus**
 - (a) The human family
- (3) A **tribe, nation, people group**
- (4) In the OT, foreign nations not worshipping the true God, pagans, Gentiles
- (5) Paul uses the term for Gentile Christians

If we were to go to with what is called in law the **preponderance of evidence**, we would have to say that the word **ethnos** is more appropriate to an ethnic group than it is a nation

The matter becomes even clearer when we examine the Greek word translated as **kingdom**. It is the word **basileia**. If we run over to Strong's again, here's what we find:

- (1) **Royal power, kingship, dominion, rule**
 - (a) Not to be confused with an actual kingdom but rather the right or authority to rule over a kingdom
 - (b) Of the royal power of Jesus as the triumphant Messiah
 - (c) Of the royal power and dignity conferred on Christians in the Messiah's kingdom
- (2) A **kingdom, the territory subject to the rule of a king**
- (3) Used in the N.T. to refer to the reign of the Messiah

See what I mean? Again, the preponderance of evidence says that the word the KJV translates as **kingdom** would better be translated as **nation** in modern language. There are fewer and fewer kings and kingdoms around any more. Even though England has a queen, she certainly doesn't rule her country anymore. So, if we were retranslating this part of the Olivet Discourse, it might better read something like this:

*"...For **ethnic group** will rise against **ethnic group**, and **nation** against **nation**."*

Either way you cut the translation, you still get nations going to war against other nations. What is very interesting, however, is that you also get the 2nd Seal, with ethnic group going against ethnic group using this alternate translation. I think I can make this and several other retranslations stand against any group of scholars, and it certainly begins to explain a lot of things. It does, however, create a small problem. If you try to match up the sequence of events in the Olivet Discourse, regardless of whether it is Matthew, Mark or Luke's account, with the sequence of the Seals in Revelation, you will run into big trouble. I've done the match-up in another Episode, so I won't repeat it here, but I do want to make a comment for those of you who are interested in End-Times theology.

About a decade ago there was a dear man of God who I greatly respected named Robert Van Kampen. Robert went to be with the Lord several years ago, but he was instrumental in helping me find my way early on when I thought I was the only person on the planet who believed that the Rapture would occur at the end of the 6th Seal. I've already told the story in great detail in Episode One, so I won't repeat it here, but I will share this much with you. After I had been challenged by the Lord to begin teaching from Revelation and I had begun my research and my outline of the first dozen chapters or so, it became overwhelmingly obvious to me that I had been handed a bill of goods, which I had swallowed hook, line and sinker. Both Revelation and the Olivet Discourse, all three versions, put the Rapture of the Bride at the far end of the sequence. Interestingly enough, Matthew stops at the Rapture and doesn't get into Gog, Magog and all of those other related matters too deeply, if at all. Anyway, I had come to the inescapable conclusion that the Rapture would occur at the end of the 6th Seal. It was non-negotiable. There could be no other rational interpretation of the Scriptures. But nobody would agree with me. Most Christians wouldn't even listen to me. The minute I said I no longer supported a Pre-Trib Rapture, their ears closed and their eyes shut. I was really struggling with this rejection when suddenly one day without warning I received a large, thick book in the mail entitled *The Sign*, written by Brother Robert. In it, he came to the very same conclusion I had. I was amazed and thrilled. Finally, I had some confirmation and vindication! And from someone who had written and successfully published a book and had a whole support organization that traveled all over the world teaching what God had shown him. You have no idea the relief I felt.

Unfortunately, there is always a fly in the ointment. And in Van Kampen's case, it was his determination to link the Olivet Discourse to the Seals of Revelation **chronologically**, not **symbolically**. As a result, his attempt to synchronize the two segments of Scripture was a disaster. Nothing linked to anything that made logical sense. Wars came out OK, but everything else was totally out of sync. The reason you can't do this is three-fold:

- (1) In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus is speaking **extemporaneously**, in a private conversation between Him and four of His closest friends. It is both irrational and illogical for anyone, even our Lord and Savior, to have a **structured** conversation in an **informal**, casual setting.
- (2) Jesus said what He said in response to **three questions**. As a result, He provided **three answers** to those three questions, although not in chronological order. I've discussed this at great depth in another Episode as well.
- (3) Last, and probably most importantly, Jesus was speaking as the **Son of Man**, as a being who was at that time **fully human**. As such, He willingly acknowledged that He didn't know everything. In fact, His now famous quote about the time of His return being known only by the Father is sufficient evidence of that. He didn't know. The angels in heaven didn't even know, for crying out loud! This is yet another reason why the Doctrine of Progressive Revelation is absolutely indispensable to understanding the Bible. Jesus as the Son of Man simply did not have the information available to Him that Jesus as Son of God did in the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Now, contrast that situation to the **formal, structured, final statement issued by Him as Son of God in the Revelation of Jesus Christ**. I would not expect His answer in the Gospels to be as complete, as thorough, as detailed and as structured as His response in Revelation.

Unfortunately, Van Kampen didn't realize that. As a result, his attempt to glue the two narratives together results in an irrational crazy quilt that simply doesn't make sense scripturally or logically. Having said all that, I have to readily admit that when I meet him in Heaven, I am going to hug his neck and tell him how eternally grateful I am to him for confirming to me that I wasn't crazy regarding my understanding of the timing of the Rapture. I take my hat off to you, my brother. I am sure that those who come behind me will find equal fault with my work regarding the details of my interpretation. I only hope and pray that my foundations are correct and that they guide as many to the Truth as you did for me.

Yesterday, I said that not only was the Scroll being opened and the Seals being broken, but that the Scroll had started to open all the way back in the early 1900's, with the advent of World War I. It's time to document that statement by taking a close look at both World War I and World War II. Remember that we said that based on what Revelation and Zechariah said that the definition of the 1st Seal was **World War originating in the Northern Hemisphere**.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, Europe disintegrated into a series of squabbling fiefdoms, kingdoms and nation-states who jockeyed back and forth for power of the continent without much success. Granted, there was the Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne, but it was a pale shadow of its predecessor. Later on Napoleon would build a very fragile and temporarily unified Europe which did not even last as long as he did. At the heart of every European, however, is the remembrance that they once collectively ruled the world, and the fact that some pathetic little island off the coast of Northern Europe called England could ever rise to ascendancy in the world galls them to no end. That is one of the major reasons for the ongoing distrust and dislike which the French and the English have for one another. It seems as if every nation on the continent took its turn at trying to replace Rome. Spain made huge strides in the Western Hemisphere, only to mismanage them and eventually default on all of them. The English and later their spiritual child, America, would gradually move across the face of the Western Hemisphere, first dominating North America by possession and then dominating Central and South America by force of political influence. Let's face it, how many countries would allow another country to come in and dig a giant ditch clear across their country from the Atlantic to the Pacific? Such was the case in Panama. The French succeeded in Canada to an extent, but enjoyed more success in southern climes. Portugal had its moment in the sun, as did the Dutch. But other than England, who successfully forged a global empire in which the sun never set upon British Empire, no single country was able to establish dominance and recreate Rome in its former glory, and no one has been able to reunify Europe since then. As the 20th Century began to dawn, however, forces were at work in Austria that would attempt to force a violent unification upon Europe.

The trigger for World War I occurred when a Bosnian Serb (boy, does this sound familiar, or what???) shot Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The Archduke was heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, which included what we know as Germany today. Austria-Hungary demanded reparations from Serbia for the crime, and when those were not forthcoming, they declared war on them. Soon, all the other nations of Europe were busily engaged in taking sides. Eventually, the line had been drawn in the sand and the **Central Powers**, consisting of Austria-Hungary, Germany and the Ottoman Empire, based in Turkey and controlling the Middle East, waged war against the **Triple Entente**, consisting of France, Russia, England and later Italy and the United States. This was to be the "*War to End All Wars*" and lasted from 1914 to 1917. Early on, things did not go well for the Triple Entente. Only after entrance of the US into the fray did the tide begin to turn. It is ironic that in this World War and World War II, the United States was **isolationist**, refusing to enter the war until forced to by circumstances, yet in both wars, it was the involvement of the United States which eventually swung the tide of war to the side of the eventual victors.

Does this war meet the qualifications of the 1st Seal? Yes, I believe it does. In fact, if I wanted to push the envelope, I could even argue that the 1st Seal started even before World War I, because war had been going on in the Northern Hemisphere for quite some time. But that's not completely fair, because

wars have been going on all over the world all through history. So the 1st Seal must be something a little different than all of the little internecine squabbles that have dotted the globe from time immemorial. It is for that reason that I, perhaps arbitrarily, designate World War I as the opening of the 1st Seal. Yet World War I was so different, so comprehensive and so deadly to all of its participants that it marked a significant change in the scope and nature of war. Gone were the rules of chivalry and gentlemanliness that had governed previous conflicts. Now weapons of mass destruction were brought to play unlike anything that the world had ever seen before. Tanks, submarines, dreadnoughts, fragmentation bombs and aerial conflict were all added to the art of making war. Over 40 million men, women and children lost their lives in the conflict. World War I was off the scale in contrast to any war that had been fought in the Northern Hemisphere since the very fall of Rome itself. And if World War I had been the only indication of the opening of the 1st Seal, it might very well have stood under its own power. But it was not alone in its qualification. It would soon give birth to an even more evil child than itself.

At the end of World War I, despite the urging of the United States for some reasonable degree of clemency and mercy toward the defeated Central Powers, an onerous, unbearable and un-repayable debt load was placed on the losers. Austria-Hungary was broken up into four nations, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. And although Germany had not started the war, she was blamed for the war, and greater financial burdens were placed on her than on anyone else. In May, 1921 England demanded reparations in gold to be paid in **annual installments of 2 trillion gold marks plus 26 percent of the value of Germany's exports!** This staggering debt load forced Germany off the gold standard for her Mark and into hyperinflation as a result. Soon the German economy began to careen wildly out of control. In 1920, one US dollar was equal to 64.80 German Marks. By 1923, in just three short years and only two years after England had effectively destroyed the stability of Germany's economy, one US dollar was equal to **4 trillion, 200 billion** German Marks! As a result, the Mark became totally worthless. I have pictures that show children using blocks of bound Marks perhaps three inches thick as building blocks for their toy castles. A wheelbarrow full of *Millionen-Marken* notes (the German equivalent of million dollar bills) would buy a single loaf of bread! Notice that I did not say a wheelbarrow containing **one million dollars** would buy a loaf of bread. I said that a wheelbarrow **full of million-dollar bills** would buy a loaf of bread. Now, try to imagine, if you will, what this kind of blistering, uncontrollable inflation would do to both the economic and political stability of the United States. How long would we survive as a nation under such chaotic conditions? By 1923, prices in Germany were doubling every 49 hours. German workers began demanding that they be paid daily instead of weekly because of the rapid devaluation of their wages. But even that was not enough. Eventually, workers demanded that they be paid **twice a day**, once at noon and again at the end of the work day. That way, they could rush out and purchase food for the evening meal and other basic necessities before the inflationary rate cut their wages in half by the end of the day!

In January of 1923, French and Belgian troops occupied the industrial region of Germany in the Ruhr valley to insure that the reparations were paid by goods, such as coal from the Ruhr, because the Mark was practically worthless. This military invasion of an already bankrupt country produced enormous resentment against Germany's bankers and speculators, many of which were Jewish, whom the government and press blamed for the inflation. Once forced off the gold standard for its currency, Germany was soon stripped of all its gold and precious jewels and metals. Later on, this disenfranchisement of Germany's economy would result in the obsession of the Nazis about gathering gold, even tooth fillings, from Holocaust victims and conquered countries. We will talk a great deal more about the economic issues that undergirded the war when we discuss the 3rd Seal in a few days. If the Triple Entente powers had been willing to let the war be over and show some grace and mercy, World War II might never have occurred. Instead, World War II was hastened and made inevitable by the merciless treatment by the Triple Entente of the conquered Central Powers. For all intents and purposes, World War II was nothing more than "World War I – The Sequel".

When World War II finally, inevitably arrived, it was bigger and "badder" than its predecessor. 40 million had died in World War I. **70 million** died in World War II. In essence, Europe and America lost **two successive generations of sons** to the futility of war. Over 100 million people were conscripted into the armies of the two competing camps. This time, it was the **Axis** Powers of Germany, Italy and

Japan against England, the US and Russia. Germany's *Blitzkrieg* warfare had so successfully overrun its previous continental foes that it took France and Belgium totally out of the war picture. Again, the United States hung back from direct involvement until 1941, when the treacherous attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese occurred. The cost of human lives was horrible, but the economic cost of the war exceeded **one trillion dollars!** With the involvement of Japan and China, it expanded the scope of war out of Europe and brought about the first truly **global** world war. World War I, despite its name, was largely restricted to the continent of Europe. Not so with World War II. Only the Western Hemisphere was kept unharmed and intact, and even that was only through divine intervention. Germany had plans to surface a U-boat with a primitive nuclear device strapped to its hull in New York harbor on a suicide run, and Japan had plans laid out to invade the West Coast of the United States. We have no idea how fortunate and blessed we have been as a nation. By saying we were and actually trying to live as **one nation under the protection of God, trusting in God**, our nation has mercifully been spared much of the horror of war. Yes, we have spent untold billions of dollars to fight in these last two World Wars, and have lost untold native sons in the process, but the horror of war has not paid a visit to our own doorsteps. Not so with the rest of the world. During the 50 year period from 1900 through 1950, everything about this planet changed, changed drastically, changed violently and changed permanently. For this reason, and because the events of that 50-year period totally fulfill the qualification of the 1st Seal, I firmly believe that it was during that period of time that the 1st Seal was opened. No other period of time in the history of our planet even begins to match it.

Before we leave this 1st Seal and move into the 2nd Seal, I want you to pay close attention to something else. Please note that it took **50 years** to open the 1st Seal. Most prophecy "experts" have lulled you into thinking that all of the events of Revelation will somehow magically be done and over with in a fictitious 7-year Tribulation. Nothing could be further from the truth. As we examine each of the successive Seals, we will discover that God is not in a hurry to bring all of this about. Just as with all other aspects of history, things unfold slowly, far more slowly than we would like them to. It is realistic to think of each of the Seals as taking several **decades** to unfold. Even if they overlay, as I believe they do, this creates a much more extended timeline for the unfolding of all seven Seals that previous taught. We may well be looking at a period of 100 years or so for all seven of them to completely run their course. This is a far cry from a fictitious seven year span. Remember, He spent 1,000 years just fiddling with the details regarding how to make light work. Think He's in a hurry to do anything else? Folks, He even made Abraham wait 25 years for one single child! There is a great quote from Hebrews concerning faith and endurance that very few people know. Almost everyone knows Hebrews 11:1, which is considered by most scholars to be the Biblical definition of faith. But faith alone is insufficient. Anyone can have faith for a moment or two. But God requires more of us than that. He requires that we extend our faith **over a period of time**, just as He did when He created the universe. Here's what the writer of Hebrews had to say about the matter:

*"³⁵ Therefore **do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.** ³⁶ For you have need of **endurance**, so that **after you have done the will of God**, you may **receive the promise:** ³⁷ 'For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. ³⁸ Now the **just shall live by faith;** but if anyone **draws back**, My soul has no pleasure in him.' ³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but **of those who believe to the saving of the soul.**" -- Hebrews 10:35-39*

Dear friends, faith isn't faith until it has been **stretched, tested and battle-hardened**. This kind of faith is called **overcoming faith**, and it is the foundation out of which **delivering faith** comes. The children of Israel had to wait 430 painful, difficult years under the whips of their Egyptian slave masters until the Lord finally intervened on their behalf. What makes you think He's in a hurry for little ole you???

Do not throw away your **confidence**. It carries within itself a **great reward**. But you've got to develop a little **endurance**, so that you can **run the race** set before you all the way to the **finish line**. Then, **after** you have done the **will of God** and finished the race, you will **receive the promises** given to you by God. That's how it works, folks. No instant mashed potatoes. No *Sonic* drivethrough. You have to learn to be as patient, steady and confident in Him as He is in Himself. After all, the purpose of this little walk through the park of life is designed to do one thing and one thing only, **produce other beings just like Him**, so that we can truly be Sons of the Most High, and true adopted

brothers and sisters of Christ. We do not yet know what we shall be like, but we know that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. But before we become like Him on the **outside**, we have to become like Him on the **inside**.

May God build your confidence and spiritual stamina, so that you can run the race all the way to victory! Stay tuned for tomorrow's topic, as we examine ***The Red Horse of Ethnic Genocide***.

Day 14 – The Red Horse of Ethnic Genocide



“³When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’⁴ Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.” ~ Revelation 6:3-4

Today we tackle the second of the four fearsome horses. Yesterday, we borrowed a little starter kit from Day 12, and we will continue to do that on Days 15 and 16 as well. If we take a close look at this 2nd Seal, three things other than the fact that the horse is red stand out:

- (1) He is given permission to **take peace from the earth**.
- (2) It will be accomplished by **people killing one another**.
- (3) The most frequently used weapon to do so will be a **great sword**.

We can then add a fourth characteristic to this Seal, based on the information found in Zechariah.

- (4) It will occur at the **center of the planet**, in the **10/40 Window**.

Some Bible commentators try to make this second Seal into war, just the same as the first, but a careful reading of the description of the rider and horse quickly dispel that notion. The fact that he is given permission to take peace from the earth is not exactly a dead giveaway, since all manner of man-made and natural disasters can take peace from the earth. But when we come to the fact that this will be accomplished by **people killing one another**, we have a clear indication of **why** this will happen. There’s an old Tom Lehrer ditty which says, in part, “*The Irish hate the Spanish, and the Spanish hate the Dutch, and I don’t like anybody very much!*” Despite all of the platitudes which we keep hearing from the liberal contingent in our country about how we should sit down and talk reasonably with *Hamas* and the lunatics who are in charge in Iran and how we are all just going to evolve into this wonderful, peaceable world, the harsh reality of this planet is somewhat different. I can clearly remember when I was in college in the 60’s and 70’s (yes, I’m **that old**, and I was there **that long!**) how we would chant “*Make Love and not War!*”, sit around and smoke dope (yeah, I did some of that, too!) and listen to George Harrison imagine how there would be no religion, no war, no rules, no nuthin’! I fear that many of the individuals now running our country never quite got over that period of time and still labor under those cherished illusions. Perhaps it is the cumulative effect of too many “peace pipes” down through the years. I still remember a young lady who was a friend of mine in college. I had gotten involved in the fringes of the drug culture, even though I was supposed to be training to be a minister in the Methodist Church. A friend of mine named Willie Alexander and I had written a religious rock opera entitled “*This Child*”, based on a contemporary setting for the birth of Christ for our project in a music appreciation class. Shockingly, it turned out to be quite good, so good, in fact, that we were asked to produce it at Shanklin Theater, the beautiful drama department center. We cast a fellow named Bill as *Jose*, our modern counterpart to Joseph. His girlfriend, Joyce, was cast as *Maria*, the counterpart of Mary. What most folks didn’t know was that Joyce was a major crackhead. She would go around campus singing, “*Things go better with cocaine, things go better with coke. Life is much more fun when you’re obsessed, and coke obsesses you best!*” Yeah, I know. I was pretty much of a mess back then. Anyway, Joyce was calmly walking down the sidewalk in front of Moore Hall, one of the girl’s dorms, when she suddenly experienced a coke-related blackout. She had no idea who she was. Her memory had been somehow reset to the time when she was only three years old, including the inconvenient fact that she wasn’t potty trained. Her companions, realizing what had happened, quickly whisked her away to her dorm room and kept her under lock and key for two full days before she snapped out of it and came back into the real world. The experience scared her so bad

that she swore of coke forever. Unfortunately, a few months later she had another relapse, this time for a full day. The drugs that she had been ingesting had permanently damaged her brain. A disturbingly high percentage of today's leaders come from that world. Witness the fact that Bill Clinton admitted that he had smoked pot, but hadn't inhaled. We should have known that boy would be trouble from that day on. Most of them still labor under the drug-induced delusion that other people in the world are kind and trustworthy and can be believed. From a practical standpoint, that makes them some of the most dangerous individuals in the world. I suspect that they actually believe that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the lunatic leader of Iran, is a kinda nice guy. I still stagger at the stupidity of Columbia University in inviting him to the United States to speak. Despite the fact that he has repeatedly stated that the objective of his country is to wipe Israel off the face of the map and the even more bizarre fact that he claims that the Holocaust never happened while openly planning a brand new Holocaust, they had the audacity to ask him to come to America to lecture. While he was here, he smiled insincerely, studiously avoided answering any questions which referred to his many previous incendiary comments, and spoke glowingly of peace in the Middle East. As soon as he returned to Iran, he spoke to a massive gathering of militant Muslims in Tehran, and once again repeated each and every hate-filled, blood-drenched, wicked statement he has ever made. Despite the fact that there really are an amazing number of good, decent people out there who really want peace, there are far too many militant fanatics from every corner of the globe and with every kind of belief who are eagerly seeking the end of the world or at least the destruction of everyone not like them.

Unfortunately, Christians have not been exempt from this kind of homicidal lunacy. When I was growing up, we were taught about the brave Crusaders of the Middle Ages. What we weren't taught was how these wonderful heroes massacred every Jewish town they came to. The people would be given only two choices: convert or die. When most refused, they would round up everyone and put them in their synagogue and then burn the building down around them while singing glorious hymns praising God. No, I'm not making this up. It's all there in the history books if you've got the courage to read far enough. Muslims got the same treatment. Because of this horribly ungodly conduct today the word "Crusader" is a curse word in the Middle East.

Even more bad conduct came during World War I, which we were talking about just yesterday. During that period of time, the famous Lawrence of Arabia was working with the Arabs, who chafed under the hideous brutality of the Ottoman Turks, trying to obtain sovereignty for them after the war. The "deal" was that if the Arabs would revolt against the Turks, thus helping the Triple Entente and specifically the British, that after the war they would be granted their freedom. But the French ambassador had a different idea. He met secretly with the British Prime Minister and concocted a plan to divide the Middle East between the British and the French after the war. Britain agreed to the betrayal, but never bothered to tell Lawrence or the Arabs. This betrayal became common knowledge among the Arab peoples, and they have never forgotten or forgiven us for it. US manipulation and control of the region have been going on for a very long time. There is a dirty underbelly to US politics of which I am ashamed. If we really knew the terrible, ungodly things that our supposedly Christian nation has done, we would be shocked. We have generated a terrible degree of resentment against us all across the world. Although I didn't see it when I was in India, I have to remember that I was kept isolated from the general culture by my Christian friends. I also went out of my way to be courteous and polite, carefully subscribing to all of the cultural mores of the Indian people. It only took me one day to dispense with my shoes and socks and to switch to sandals. Why? Because Indian people **never** wear their shoes inside. Outside, it is dirty and muddy, with God only knows what kinds of parasites and diseases on the ground and in the streets. But when you come to a place of business or a home, you take off your sandals and leave them at the front door. After one day of untying my shoelaces and taking my regular shoes off every time I went inside, I realized that the better part of valor was to be *"all things to all men, that I might by all means save some"* (I Corinthians 9:22). It produced instant results. As I showed respect to them and their value systems, they immediately returned respect to me. This is exactly what Paul did when he went into Athens. The city was literally filled with idols. But Paul didn't lash out them and call them sinners destined to burn in Hell, nor did he disrespect their search for God, no matter how misguided he may have thought it was. Instead, he stumbled across a shrine to an "unknown god". That was all the entrance he needed. When he began speaking, he immediately **complemented** the Athenians on their religious nature.

"²² Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, 'Men of Athens, **I perceive that in all things you are very religious**;²³ for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, **the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you**:²⁴ God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.²⁵ Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.²⁶ And **He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth**, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, **though He is not far from each one of us**;²⁸ for in Him we live and move and have our being, as **also some of your own poets have said**, 'For we are also His offspring.'²⁹ Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.³⁰ Truly, **these times of ignorance God overlooked**, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all **by raising Him from the dead.**' " -- Acts 17:22-31

How skillful! How adept! Look how graciously Paul acknowledges Athens and her search for the One True God. He even tells them that they have been worshipping Him all along without knowing it! Yes, dear Athenians, you have been right! And that unknown God has brought me here to help you go even further in your search for the Divine.

This is how you win the world to Christ. Not by screaming "turn or burn" at every opportunity. Not by forcing "conversions" at the point of a sword or the barrel of a gun. But by simply showing people who are spiritually hungry how to draw closer to the God they have been seeking all their lives.

Unfortunately, the world simply doesn't understand this. In Kenya, it's the Kikuyu vs. the Kalenjin (political). In the Sudan, it's the Muslims vs. the Christians. In Nigeria it's the Muslims vs. the Christians as well. In Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi it's the Hutus vs. the Tutsis. Africa is essentially suffering a complete cultural, economic and moral breakdown. In Bosnia it's the Bosnians vs. the Serbs (Oh, what a surprise!). In Iraq – it's the Muslim Sunnis vs. the Muslim Shiites vs. the Muslim Kurds. Not only do they not like us, they don't even like each other! In India it's the Hindus vs. the Muslims vs. the Christians. In Germany it's violent Anti-Semitism, growing worse each passing year, building toward the same level of ferocious intensity that existed just before World War II. And of course, in every country controlled or influenced by Islam, there is always the almost uncontrollable desire to exterminate the Jews.

People have asked me, and I have asked myself this question: "What on earth is **wrong** with those people?" It seems that violence, hatred, bitterness and vengeance are all that they know. How on earth did they get that way? Well, the blunt truth is that it all started with a man who had **two wives!** For those of you who don't know, the father of the entire Arab world is the Biblical figure **Ishmael**. How did Ishmael come to be? Well, it all started with a promise from God! When Abram was 75, the Lord appeared to him and promised him that he would have a male heir (Genesis 15:1-6). All that was well and good, but there was a problem. Sarah was infertile for some reason. She couldn't have children. We know it wasn't Abram's fault. After Sarah died, he eventually got remarried to a lady named Keturah. She bore him 6 kids after he was over 100 by a wide margin! (Genesis 25:1-2) Finally after about 13 years of waiting, Sarah had an idea. A really **bad** idea. It was common practice in that era that if a woman could not have children and produce a male heir that she would take a servant girl and give her to her husband as a second-class, substitute wife. I know that sounds a little weird and kinky to us today, but multiple wives are still the case in the United States in some of the renegade Fundamentalist Latter Day Saint's (Mormon) churches. As I write this article, there is a major scandal going on in Texas involving a FLDS church/compound where some men had as many as 26 wives! The real problem, and the one which brought about a raid from the Texas CPS authorities, was the fact that there was evidence that men were "marrying" young girls under the age of 18. Ironically, in the so-called fundamentalist self-righteous world of Islam, it is not uncommon for such marriages to occur. In my research of their "prophet", Mohammed, I discovered that after his first wife died, he decided to marry two women at the same time! I guess the poor boy just couldn't make up

his mind, shades of the old *Loving Spoonful* song. The only hitch in the double marriage was that one of the brides was **nine years old!** Yeah, you heard me right. Nine years old. And they think that they are the moral ones? Please!

To make matters even stranger, in order to legitimize the birth of the child to the surrogate mother, when it was time for the **biological** mother to give birth the **legal** mother would sit in the birthing stool (yeah, they used stools in those days! I did some research on them and was astounded by the pictures. No, you don't wanna know.) as if **she** was going to be the one giving birth. Then, the actual mother would **also** assume the birth position in **front** of her (I'm being as discreet as I can here, folks!) and give birth to the child. I know, I know. It sounds bizarre, doesn't it? I'm sure some of the things that we do in our culture would sound just as weird to them. Trust me, when it involves men, women, sex and kids, there are no boundaries to the extent to which humanity will go to satisfy its lusts and its desire to reproduce.

Finally, after all those shenanigans, they finally had a baby boy. They named him **Ishmael**, which means *God hears*. Before Hagar, Sarai's Egyptian slave and surrogate mother, had given birth, there had been a nasty little tiff between her and her mistress. Hagar had fled into the wilderness, but found herself in dire straits. She was confronted by an angel who told her to return to the camp. But before she did, the angel gave her a very encouraging but also disturbing prophecy.

"¹⁰ Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall **not be counted for multitude**."¹¹ And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name **Ishmael**, because the LORD **has heard your affliction**.¹² He shall be a **wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him**. And he shall dwell **in the presence of all his brethren**." – Genesis 16:10-12

Boy, has **that** prophecy ever come true! Today the descendants of Ishmael fill the 10/40 Window, dominating the center of the planet and causing problems for the other 2/3rds. The angel also told Hagar that her darling little boy would be a **wild man**. Any time you watch a broadcast originating from the Middle East, it is painfully obvious that the prophecy came true. The angel also told her that **his hand would be against every man** and that **every man's hand would be against his**. Do I even need to comment on that one? It seems that in every conflict, every battle, every bombing, every war and every assassination there is a Muslim behind it. Sheesh! Give it a break, already, guys! There was one more component to the prophecy, and here the translation is a little off from the correct meaning of the original text. Where the KJV and the NKJV translate the phrase **in the presence (or midst) of his brethren**, the **correct** translation, and one which perfectly matches our world today, is that the descendents of Ishmael would dwell in the **center or middle of his brethren**. The vast majority of the descendants of Ishmael, both physically and spiritually through Islam are located at the very **center** of our planet, sandwiched **between** the sons of Japheth in the Northern Hemisphere and the sons of Ham in the Southern Hemisphere. I find it fascinating that one of Noah's sons, Shem, from whom comes both the Arabs and the Jews, dominates the Center 1/3rd of the planet. A second son, Japheth, from whom I am descended, dominates the Northern 1/3rd of the planet, and the sons of Ham, from whom come the Blacks and Asiatics, dominate the Southern 1/3rd of the planet.

Given that the prophecy has clearly come true in every respect, that still doesn't answer the question of how in the world it happened. We have to move 13 years up the timeline in order to find out. Remember that for the longest time, around 12 years to be exact, Hagar and Ishmael thought **he** was the chosen one, the child destined to expand his father's progeny like the stars in the heavens and the grains of sand on the seashore. Then three men paid an unexpected visit to his father's tent. There was an eerie power about them, and his father rushed about like a crazy man, killing one of the animals and cooking it to provide them a meal. Before they left, one of the three men talked privately with his father. After that, things weren't quite the same. Suddenly his dad wasn't as interested in spending time with him. Suddenly he wanted to spend time with his other wife, his mother's mistress. Something was clearly afoot. And then, a year later to the very day that the three strange men had visited his father, Sarah (as she called herself now) gave birth to a son of her very own. Everyone was shocked when she began to show. A woman her age pregnant? My Lord, she was in her 90's! She'd never been able to have a child before. What on earth had happened during that strange visit?

Nonetheless, now Ishmael was a second banana, behind **Isaac**, whom Abraham was telling everyone was **the** chosen one, **the** child of promise. Nothing could have hurt more. Ishmael loved his father, but he sure didn't like this new snot-nosed kid who had taken his place in his father's affections. His mother shared in his bitterness, but managed to keep it hidden most of the time. She was, after all, a slave girl, a servant, and as such was not entitled to a public display of her thoughts and emotions. But approximately 4 years later, when Ishmael was around 17, Isaac had his little coming out party after being weaned from his mommy's breast. The whole camp was part of the bash, and everyone had to attend, including him and his mother. All it did was increase the sense of rejection in their hearts. Finally, Hagar had all she could take, and began to mock and make fun of Isaac. That was the final straw between her and Sarah. Tensions had been growing as both Isaac and Ishmael had gotten older, and Sarah, whose idea this all had been, now saw the results of her trying to help God and solve her problem using the world's methods backfire seriously on her. There is a whole sermon here, just waiting to be preached. We don't have time for it today, but it would be well to note that you can **never accomplish the will of God using the ways of the world**. I have met way too many Christian women who have never learned that lesson. They get a word from God about a man who will eventually come to them, and then run straight out to the nearest club to see if he's waiting for her there. Not likely, girl! Not likely. I have counseled many situations like this in my 30+ years in ministry, and the story, although sad, is always the same. Person has need or desire in their life. God gives word of encouragement and tells them to wait a while for the right situation to come up. Person cannot control soulish nature and grabs first ring on the carousel that comes by, which always ends up in personal hurt and disaster. You can chart it on a graph. The rate of failure is near to 100% using this methodology. In those few rare cases where it has worked out, it has always been through tremendous pain, suffering and penalty for the individuals who did so. I know that may sound a little harsh, but the truth is the truth, whether I like it or not.

In Western society, a weaning party is not a big deal, because too many children are taken prematurely off of their mother's milk. Given that the vast percentage of all immunities to disease is passed from the mother to the child in the colostrum contained in her milk, we automatically condemn our children to be less healthy and vital. I also suspect that our strong addiction to cigarettes, something that we suck on with our mouth, may have some origins in this problem as well. Sound strange? Human nature is the strangest thing in the world, and I have come across some real shockers in my time as a pastor.

In India, however, a "Taste Party" is a very, very big thing. When my new spiritual grandson, Joshua Raymond Sarilla, was old enough to be weaned, the whole family had a very big party. A Taste Party is when the child is old enough to taste food for the very first time. The age designated for this is somewhere between 2 and 5 years old, much older than children in our culture. We may think it strange, but there is a very practical aspect to it. Typically, as long as a mother is providing milk, the hormones in her body prevent her from having another child. Only when she **stops nursing** does a hormonal change occur in her body to allow her to once again conceive. So it is to the mother's advantage to nurse the child for as long as possible and in so doing put reasonable time gaps between her children. In our culture, we stack kids one year apart and wonder why parents go slowly insane and the competition and warfare between children is so pronounced.

One final note on Joshua Raymond's Taste Party. As part of an Indian tradition, three things were placed before the child. One item was a Bible. Another was a few gold coins. The final item was a knife. Indian tradition says that if the child chooses the Bible, he will become a preacher. If he chooses the coins, he will become a businessman. But if he chooses the knife, he will become a criminal. I know that's strange, but that's how they do it. What did my spiritual grandson do? He headed straight for the Bible. Can you see my grandfather's smile, the big cheesy one just next to the "My Kid's Great!" button on my shirt?

Meanwhile, back to the only weaning party described in the Bible. Hagar had put up with enough and finally let her emotions show. Frankly, can you blame her? She didn't ask to be a second-hand, second-class wife to a man much older than herself. Actually, if you think about it, she didn't ask to be the servant of some crazy nomad from the desert. I'm sure that she would have been quite content in Egypt. But Pharaoh had given her to Abram during his stay there, and when he pitched all of them out

because of the deception of Pharaoh by Abram regarding Sarai his wife, Hagar had been evicted along with them.

Now, Hagar found herself evicted again, and again because of circumstances which she had no control over. Only this time she wasn't part of a fairly large band of nomads who would fight for and take care of another. Now she and her teenage son were on their own. Only by divine intervention did they survive in the desert. And sure enough, given all the circumstances that Ishmael had been through, he was an angry young man, with enough rejection embedded in his heart to ensure that he would grow up a wild, violent, unstable man. That violence and instability would be transmitted to his children, and they, in turn, would transmit that explosive nature to their children. Add to that the tradition, already imbedded in the family genes, that multiple wives were OK, and it wasn't very long before Ishmael's descendants began to outnumber Isaac's.

So great is this sense of rejection in the sons of Ishmael that when **they** tell the story of Abraham sacrificing Isaac on Mt. Moriah, it is not Isaac who is bound and put on the altar, but **Ishmael**. At the heart of the violence of Islam is the heart of Ishmael. And the heart of Ishmael has never been healed, and so it continues to lash out violently at everyone around it and continuously demand that it be recognized and given dominance. The heart of Ishmael still feels that what was rightfully his was taken from him unjustly. He does not believe that with his younger brother so influential in world politics that it will ever be given back to him in an orderly, reasonable manner. And so he resorts to violence, seizing that which he covets and believes should be his own.

This is that unhealed hurt that drives the Muslim world. It is at the center of most of the ethnic genocide of the 3rd Seal. And it will be at the very core of the terrible 5th Seal, the Tribulation, when a **global** persecution against the "*People of the Book*", the Jews and their spiritual children the Christians, breaks out. But before that can happen, some other things have to take place first.

In Daniel's dream in the 7th Chapter of the Book that bears his name, Daniel has a dream. In that dream, he sees four strange creatures. I hate to keep saying this, but I have discussed the topic at great length in Episode Four when we are dealing with the Tribulation and the causes for it. Suffice it to say that when you get there, what I am about to say will make great sense, so just trust me for a little while. In his dream, Daniel first sees a Lion with Eagles Wings. I am firmly convinced that the Lion is Great Britain, and the Eagles Wings are America. So much for America not being in the Bible. I also firmly believe, for very similar reasons, that the Great Wings of an Eagle that are given to the Woman Clothed With the Sun in Chapter 12 is the United States Air Force providing a way for the remnants of Israel to escape to a safe place in the wilderness when the Anti-Christ attempts to destroy them. After the Lion comes the Bear. There is only one nation in the history of the world that has ever been referred to as a Bear, and that is Russia. That's how I tie it down, connecting symbol to symbol, just as I have taught you to do. It would be bad policy for me to disregard the principles which God has taught me and which I in turn have taught you. Once the Bear was linked correctly to the timeline, identifying the Lion and the Eagle became very easy, since they had to be next to one another and immediately before the Bear in the time stream. It is the 3rd Beast that I am concerned with in this article, however. The 3rd Beast, the one that comes just before the Beast that represents the Anti-Christ and his empire, is a Leopard with 4 Wings. I believe, but cannot prove just yet, that the four-headed leopard represents a four nation Islamic confederacy consisting of Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Syria. The four wings represent the respective air forces of each nation and the four heads represent the four leaders of their respective countries, including the deceitful and deranged Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, president of Iran. You know, the country that is working on having its own private cache of nuclear weapons? The country that denies that the Holocaust ever occurred? The country that is calmly planning its own version of the Holocaust?

Daniel also says that dominion is **given** to this beast. How strange! How bizarre! Why would anyone in the world **give** dominion to group of countries when all through history countries have had to **fight** and **compete** in order to obtain world dominance? The answer is simple, my friends. **O I L !!!** I am old enough to remember the first Arab oil embargo back in 1973. You know, back when gasoline cost an exorbitant **30 cents a gallon**? I also clearly remember all the political rhetoric about our need to free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil. Tell me, did anybody **do** anything about it? No? Why

not, other than the fact that we are pathetically short-sighted people here in the United States? Could it be that a significant percentage of our politicians have been **bought and sold** by Big Oil? I receive *Newsweek* magazine, and for the last few issues, the oil companies, who are reaping **record, landslide, windfall profits** from this insanity, have had the gall to run a full page color ad telling Americans that the Big Oil is really run by **them**, and that **they are reaping the benefits of all these profits**. Are you kidding me? I don't know about you, but I sure haven't seen any oil-based benefits running around my house or bank statement, have you? In my opinion, the oil companies, most of whom originated here in the United States and who benefited immensely from our democratic, free-trade ways, have betrayed the very country that gave them birth by sidling up to the very countries who hate us and them and playing cozy with the very devil himself. Well, maybe not the devil, but certainly the Anti-Christ. Well, maybe not the Anti-Christ, since he will probably come from Austria, but certainly the False Prophet. Why do I say that? Simple. In Revelation 9, a horrible super-demon named *Abbadon* or *Apollyon* comes up out of an **Abyss** or **Bottomless Pit** located somewhere inside the earth itself. As I was researching Islam, I kept running into information about someone called the **Mahdi**. He is the Muslim version of Christ. But instead of **descending** out of **Heaven**, as Jesus will, he **ascends** out of a **well** located somewhere in the Middle East! A **well**. A **bottomless pit**. An **Abyss**. Hello, out there! Can you see the connection? Omigosh! Ishmael is so messed up that he thinks that his savior is going to come out of hell itself! How frightening is that level of self-deception? Ahmadinejad is a devout follower of fundamentalist Islam, and firmly believes all of this stuff. Is that scary enough for you? If you have been kidding yourself about having plenty of time for you or your children or your relatives to get saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, living lives pure and holy, above reproach, then you need to take a good hard look at what I have been telling you and **get right with God!** That's an old, old phrase, but it's never been truer than it is today. This stuff isn't going to happen **later**. Dear friends, it is happening **right now**. It's not going to happen to our descendants some time off in the far future. It is happening to us and our immediate families right now. America and the American church are in complete denial that the imminent collapse of our economic system will never happen, and that all of the horrible, terrible things that have happened to our country in the last few years, including 911 and Katrina are not part of a judgment by God, but merely random, natural events in Katrina's case and the work of a few evil men in the case of 911. You need to come to your senses. For those of you over 50, ask yourself a few simple questions. **Is America as good and decent now as it was 50 years ago?** My parents **never** locked their house. I have no idea if either one of them had a key. I never saw them use it. **Now**, I lock the front door even when I am in the back yard mowing or gardening. Why? Because we did a little check on convicted sexual felons and found **over a dozen** listen on a major US tracking website within **5 miles of our peaceful, town and country suburban home!!!** Here's another question for you. **50 years ago, how many people got divorced?** Now, what is the percentage? **50 years ago, how many babies were born out of wedlock and/or aborted?** Since 1973, when Roe vs. Wade became law, we have **murdered more innocent children in their mother's womb that ever died in all the wars we have ever fought!** Think America's not being judged? That it's all good? Think again. I could go on with statistic after statistic, but I won't. Instead, I will close today with the following relevant story.

I spent 18 years teaching computer science and business classes at a junior college level. In all my classes, I would throw in a few tidbits when it was appropriate about the Depression. "*During the depression*" I would say, "*A strange man could walk up to a farmhouse and say to the housewife, 'Ma'am, I'm cold and hungry and I've got no place to sleep. But I see that you have a pile of firewood that needs to be chopped up and stacked. If I do that for you, would you give me a hot meal to eat, and let me sleep in your barn tonight?' Odds are that the woman would agree, hand the man her ax, and go back into the kitchen about her business without a second thought. And the complete stranger would do exactly as he had said, would work hard chopping all the wood up into kindling, eat his hot meal gratefully, and sleep peacefully in the hay bales that night, then go about his way the next day, thanking the gracious hostess first.*" Then I would ask my students a question that made them all stop and think. "*If we were to have another Depression today, would we be able to do the same thing that woman did back in the 1930's?*" Not **one single student** in all my 18 years of teaching was able to answer that question positively. Every single one of them agreed that the woman would virtually be committing suicide by giving the stranger access to her ax. Such are the times that we live in. America was punished by God during the Great Depression for her sins against Him during the

Roaring Twenties. Ask yourself these two final questions. **How much more wicked are we as a nation now than we were back then?** And, given your **honest** answer to that question, **How much more certain is our judgment by a just, holy and righteous God NOW compared to the judgment that we endured during the 1930's?**

I leave you today, not with a word of encouragement, but with a word of stark warning. Everything is about to fall apart. Yes, the sky really **is** going to fall, or at least be blown away. But that event won't happen until the **6th Seal**, and we're just wrapping up the **3rd**. If you are not ready, if your heart is not prepared, if your life has not been cleansed of its wickedness and evil, you and all those you love will be swept away by the terrible flood of events that **are already taking place**. Is your house built on a solid foundation? If not, I think it's time to sell the life that you are living in, even if you take a terrible financial beating, and buy a new home situated firmly on the **Rock of Jesus Christ**. Only **He** will allow you to weather the storm that is raging about us even as I speak to you. Until tomorrow, may God bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him! Amen and Amen!

Day 15 – The Black Horse of Crop Failure



⁵When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.” – Revelation 6:5-6

Two Seals down, two to go! Over the last few days, we’ve been walking systematically through each of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. In each of the two previous days, we borrowed some starter material from Day 12. We’ll do the same today. When we outlined the Seals in Day 12, here’s what we found out about the 3rd Seal.

3. Third Seal – Black Horse

- a. Carrying a **Pair of Scales**
- b. **One** quart of **wheat** for a denarius
- c. **Three** quarts of **barley** for a denarius
- d. Do not hurt the **oil** or the **wine**

When the 3rd Seal is opened, John sees a rider on a **black** horse. The first two riders were carrying instruments of violence and destruction. This rider is carrying, of all things, a pair of **scales**. To be very honest, this symbol stumped me for a while. To the modern mind, we might think of a pair of bathroom scales or an industrial scale used to weigh things. Another image that might come to mind would be a court of justice, since justice is traditionally represented by a woman wearing a blindfold (hence the phrase “justice is blind”) and carrying a scale. But neither of those meanings is what John is thinking about. The meaning of this symbol is that of **commerce**. Why do I say that? Consider the following facts: when devout Jews went to Jerusalem to worship at the temple, they almost always had to make a trip to the **moneychanger’s table**. If the Jew was living outside of Judea, he would naturally be carrying coinage from that nation or region, and so it had to be **changed** from one currency into another. Then lambs, turtledoves and the like could be purchased for sacrificing. The Bible speaks repeatedly of having a just scale or balance. Often, a full set of weights would be used to determine the worth of various items, just like the assayer’s scale for determining how much a gold nugget weighed during the American Gold Rush. However, often the moneychanger would be dishonest and would trim off or add on to the weight of the various balances he used. Further proof of the fact that the scales represent commerce is provided in the next three sentences. In the first statement, we find **a quart of wheat selling for a denarius**. I have asked innumerable ladies about that quart of wheat to try and determine exactly how many **loaves of bread** a quart jar full of wheat would produce. Their estimates range consistently between one and two loaves. OK. I’ll buy that. Or maybe not, when you see what **price** you’re going to have to pay for that loaf of bread. The passage also says that that quart of wheat will cost you a denarius, or **one day’s wages**, which is what the term originally meant. How much is a day’s wages? Let’s assume, for sake of argument, that you make \$10.00 an hour and work 8 hours a day. That would make the math pretty easy. A day’s wages would be around \$80.00. So, even in a best-case scenario, let’s say that **two loaves of bread would cost \$80.00. That’s \$40.00 a loaf!** As of the writing of this article in May of 2008, my wife informs me that a loaf of bread costs around \$1.18. That’s not the good kind of bread, but rather the pasty white kind that even rats won’t eat. Imagine the kind of economic chaos that would be produced by a failure of the wheat crop so severe that bread prices would soar to that level. Barley isn’t much better at that time, since you can buy **three** loaves of barley for the same wonderful price! The passage says nothing about rice, the main staple of the Orient, but it does add **not to harm the oil and the wine**. I had someone try to read the oil reference as if it were petroleum-based types of oil. Again, stay

within the context of the passage. We are talking, not about fuel oil, but about food stuffs, so the oil mentioned in this passage must by definition be **olive oil**. When coupled with the reference to **wine**, we find that we are looking at the principle crops that come from the Mediterranean region. If you were to examine a map of the olive oil production of the world, you would find it to be a thin line, perhaps only a hundred miles wide at points, encompassing the Mediterranean Sea. The same can be said for much of the wine production of the world, save for the United States own California vineyards and a few isolated other sites scattered across the surface of the globe. If taken in sum, it would be safe to say that 90% or more of the olive oil and wine production of the world centers around that region of the world that used to be the very heart of the Roman Empire. While the key crops supporting America and Northern Europe are failing, the crops that support that region where the Anti-Christ will center his global empire will remain untouched. Our final conclusion regarding the 3rd Seal: **MASSIVE CROP FAILURE OF WHEAT AND BARLEY CROPS WHILE OIL AND WINE HARVESTS REMAIN UNTOUCHED**. We now know **what will happen**. Just wait till you find out **where it is happening RIGHT NOW!**

What most folks don't know is that the United States has been in a severe drought in the West for the last 10 years. That's why the price of bread has been skyrocketing. What about barley? Well, in this past year, newspapers reported a massive failure in the barley crop in Germany. So, what's the big deal about that? Ask yourself this question: **what do they use barley to make?** That's right! **Beer!** Take beer away from a Kraut and what do you get? A very unhappy German. And what do unhappy Germans do? They start world wars! Both world wars had Austria and Germany at the very heart of the misdoings. Lest anyone accuse me of being Anti-Germanic as opposed to being Anti-Semitic, let me say this: *Ich bin ein Deutschman! Ich habe zwei jahre im Hoch Schule und zwei jahre im Universität!* Did you understand what I just said *auf Deutchsh?* I said, "And I am a German! I have two years of German in High School and two years of German in College!" Up until three generations ago, our family name was spelling **Jung**, just like the famous psychiatrist and psychologist Carl Jung. It wasn't Anglicized until my grandfather was born. I can still remember a German Bible that my grandparents had with the names **Karl und Anna Jung** inscribed on it. I don't know whatever happened to it. I would dearly love to have it in my collection of Bibles.

Anyway, with a failure in the barley crop in Europe, it has caused the price of beer and beer-related products to skyrocket, thus creating a great deal of social unrest in Germany. We are actually in the midst of wheat and barley failures in the Northern Hemisphere right now. Double hmmm...

While we are on the subject of Germany and Aryan ancestry peoples, it's time to throw out a very controversial bone to the dogs of war. If you will remember, the color of the Horse in the 1st Seal was white. I mentioned that the color linked us to the Horse in Zechariah, and that is eminently true. But there is another truth contained in the color white, and one that is unsettling at the very least. In order to understand what it means, we must go all the way back to Genesis and the patriarch Noah. I've heard it preached many times that it took Noah 120 years to build the ark. Nothing could be further from the truth. The entire task was accomplished in less than 100 years and was a collective family project involving Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Just for fun, let's take a peek at the Scripture involved here. We will begin with a tiny sliver of Scripture that most people completely overlook.

"³² And Noah was **five hundred years old**, and Noah begot **Shem, Ham, and Japheth**."
-- Genesis 5:32

Fact: Noah was **five hundred years old** when his wife bore him **triplets**. Why do I say that they were triplets? Because of the genealogical rules used by Moses when he wrote Genesis. If you follow the genealogy record, you will find that it takes the following format:

" **(name of patriarch)** lived for **(x number of years)**, and then he begot {wife gave birth to} **(name of first-born son)**. After he gave birth to **(name of first-born son)**, he lived **(x number of additional years)** and had **{other} sons and daughters**. So all the days of **(name of patriarch)** were **(total life span)** and he died."

All throughout Chapter 5, which is the genealogy of Adam, Moses follows this strict formula for recording his historical documentation. The primary exception is Seth, who was actually the **third** son of Adam. But with Abel dead and Cain exiled, Seth was the son who would be the inheritor of his father's estate as the first-born son. It is not without significance that Jesus is not only the **only begotten** son of God but is also the **first-born** among many brethren (brothers and sisters). Even though Adam and Eve had many other sons and daughters, as did all the antediluvian patriarchs, only the first-born son was recorded. According to Hebrew tradition, Adam and Eve actually had over 50 children! Given that they both lived over 900 years, that's no surprise. The average age at which the first-born child came into their world was around 106, if I remember correctly. That means that a woman's child-bearing years stretched from around 100 to about 600. People were far more healthy and vibrant in those days. Remember that Abraham fathered six children by his new wife after the death of Sarah at the age of 127. And that was after the flood had all but destroyed the life span of man! Even if you only had one child every ten years, you would still give birth to at least 50 during a 500 year period of fertility.

Everything in this genealogical pattern goes along just fine until we get to Noah. First of all, he doesn't go right out and have kids at around the age of 100. Instead, he waits till he is 500 to have them, and when he does, all three sons are recorded at the same time. Even though one of them would technically have to be the first-born (pity the poor woman trying to give birth to three sons simultaneously!), nonetheless they would still all be the same age.

Now, remember that all three boys were born to Noah when he was **500**, and that this blessed event took place in **Genesis 5:32**. It isn't until **Genesis 6:13** that God speaks to Noah about building an ark. Why? Because with everyone mocking him to scorn, it would be impossible to get a workforce to build the ark unless that workforce was home-grown! The boys had to get old enough to help him with the project. After all, when you say that water is going to fall from the sky when none ever has up until then, folks are going to think you're just plain nuts! (Genesis 2:5-6) From that point on, construction of the ark began. Only when the ark was complete would God speak to Noah again about putting it to use. Finally, in Chapter 7, the deluge came.

*"⁶ Noah was **six hundred years old** when the floodwaters were on the earth. ⁷ So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. ⁸ Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, ⁹ two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. ¹¹ **In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.** ¹² And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights."* – Genesis 7:6-12

Now the math becomes very simple. The boys were born when Noah was **500**. The Flood came when he was **600**. God spoke to him about building the ark **after** the boys were born. The logic is inescapable. I would suspect that the boys were between 50 and 60 years old, still very young men during that epoch, when construction of the ark began. That would mean that the actual construction of the ark took less than 50 years, perhaps much less. If that is true, then what does this passage mean?

*"³ And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not **strive** with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet **his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.**"* -- Genesis 6:3

The key to understanding this statement centers around yet another mistranslation of the ancient Hebrew, this time of the word the KJV and NKJV call **strive**. The Hebrew word is actually **diyn**, and is translated as **judge** in almost every other passage that it appears in. Only in Genesis 6:3 is it translated **strive**. In one other passage, it is interpreted as **plead**, used in the sense that a lawyer would plead a case before a judge. So the real meaning of the word is **to bring before a court of law for judgment**. What is God saying to Moses? That He is **resetting man's lifespan to 120 years, after which will come judgment**. The New Testament echoes this same sentiment when it says that *"it is appointed unto a man **once to die, and then the judgment**"*. (Hebrews 9:27) At the

point in time when God said this, men were living to be 900 years old. But after the Flood, with the protective water barrier around the planet destroyed, lethal UV radiation could start pouring onto the surface the planet, destroying the viability of all cellular life, including that of men. Man's lifespan went into free fall. Noah's boys only lived to be 600 years old, a drop of over 300 years in one generation. From there, the life span collapsed to around 400 and stayed there for two generations, then went into free fall again. By the time of Joseph, the Bible says that he died at the ripe old age of 110. The Word that God had spoken to Noah had come to pass. It had taken about a dozen generations to accomplish it, a long time by our reckoning, but just a few moments of time to the Eternal One.

Now, I shared all of that with you just for fun, so you would know the truth. What we are **really** interested in are the **names** of Noah's three boys. **Shem** means *dominant, renowned or famous*. After the Flood, Shem's descendants would be so strong that they would out-compete the sons of Ham and Japheth, forcing both boys to seek greener, unpopulated pastures to graze their livestock in. So where did the two other boys go? This is where it gets interesting. **Japheth** means *white, pale or fair*. **Ham** means *burnt or dark*. Remember that these names were not given to the two boys after they migrated north and south, respectively. These names were given to them **at birth**. Why were they given those names? In all probability because Japheth was born with white, fair, pale skin and Ham was born with burnt or dark skin. That way, when Shem's descendants began to make things intolerable for their descendants, it was only logical that **Japheth's** descendants would migrate to the north, where their fair, white skin would not be a disadvantage and **Ham's** descendants would migrate to the south, where their dark skin would protect them from the harshness of the sun. In essence, God had pre-engineered all three boys to disburse across the face of the globe after the flood, because He already knew what men would attempt to do at the Tower of Babel in Genesis Chapter 11. And to make matters final, two generations after this disbursal of humanity across a single giant land mass, in the days of Peleg, (Genesis 10:24, 11:18-19) the **earth itself** would be divided as the super-continent which geologists refer to as *Pangea* would break up into the 7 continents with which we are familiar today.

To this day, all the descendants of **Japheth** are fair skinned, **white folks**, and all the descendants of **Ham** are darker skinned people. It is from the descendants of Japheth that the Aryans come from. It is from the Aryans that the Germanic peoples have descended. And it has been the **Germanic, Aryan, White ethnic groups** which have been responsible for **both World Wars**. Are you seeing the connection? Perhaps the 1st Seal has a **white** horse because it has been the **White Man** who has been **responsible for the wars which make up the Seal**. I know that's controversial, and not at all politically correct. But you can't be a prophet and be politically correct. You can either tell people what they **need** to hear or you can tell them what they **want** to hear. I have chosen the former path. And I say what I say as a White Man, a direct descendant of Welsh and German ancestry. If I choose to open my Bible to Ezekiel 38 and examine the tribal ancestry of all the nations who will come against Israel at the End of Days, that unholy throng is led by such names as *Gog, Magog, Rosh, Tubal, Meshech, and Gomer, all Aryan, Germanic names*. Only *Peras* (Persia, which would be Iran, Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia), *Put* (Libya) and *Cush* (Ethiopia) consist of the descendants of Shem and Ham. All the rest, and all the leaders in particular, are descendants of the child whose name means **pale, fair, white**. Does this information play neatly into the hands of Black extremists? Of course. How could it not? But that's not the question here. The only question that matters is if it is true or not. The Bible cannot lie, and neither will I. If you want an inconvenient truth, there it is. Do with it what you want. The facts will stay the same no matter if you accept it or reject it.

Now, after you have picked this book up again after having hurled it in anger up against the wall, let me make a few more color associations. This stuff certainly isn't *My Little Pony*, is it? Just as the White Horse of War has a color connection beyond Zechariah, so do the other three. The Red Horse of Ethnic Genocide is given its color because of all the innocent blood that has and will be shed. Yes, war is Hell, just as Sherman said it was, but even worse are gangs of various ethnic origins, roaming the countryside, killing everything and everyone that isn't just like them. Such is the case in Africa. We have several friends and contacts over there, and the carnage is beyond our comprehension. In the Sudan, all the children know how to do is to hit, hurt and beat up one another. Why? Because that is what they see all around them, every day, day after day. Nothing but the red blood that courses through the veins of all men being spilled on the ground, still crying out on behalf of Abel against Cain.

Finally we come to the **Black Horse of Crop Failure**. Why black? Perhaps because of the black color of the soil in which most wheat and barley grows. There is a certain kind of soil found in only two places in the world called **Chernozem** soil. According to *Wikipedia*, **Chernozem**, or **Black Earth** (from the Russian чернозём, meaning *black soil*) is a black-colored soil containing a very high percentage of humus — 3% to 15%, and high percentages of phosphoric acids, phosphorus and ammonia. Chernozem is very fertile and produces a high agricultural yield. There are two "Chernozem belts" in the world: from Northeast Ukraine across the Black Earth Region and Southern Russia into Siberia, and in the Canadian Prairies. Similar soil types occur in Texas. It has a large depth, often more than 40 inches and up to 250 inches in the Ukraine. This kind of soil, found only in North America and Russia, is what has produced the record wheat and barley crops which we have seen for the last 50 or so years. But even soil with this level of productivity is still bound by one factor: **rainfall**. And rain has been falling less and less each year in those very areas where wheat and barley are grown. The western United States and Canada have been in a persistent state of drought for 9 full years now. Drought is one of those natural disasters that no one knows is a natural disaster when it starts. When a typhoon roars through Burma, you know it. When a tornado strikes the Gale household in Kansas, Dorothy knows it. But a drought is different. One year of it is uncomfortable. Two years of it are difficult. But when it stretches into three, four, five years or more, each year becomes dramatically more difficult. When Elijah told Ahab that except at his word there would be neither rain nor dew, I suspect that Ahab may have said in his heart, "*Right. Sure. I'll believe it when I see it!*" As the first year wore on, I am sure that Ahab began to gradually be more uneasy about what he had been told, but not uneasy enough to place Elijah in a position of peril. At just about the time that the Cherith Brook ran out of water, Ahab must have begun an aggressive search for Elijah. That's why the Lord ordered Elijah out of the country to the region of Sidon and Tyre, to a largely unknown town called Zarephath and into the house of an even more unknown widow. By the end of the second year of the drought, Elijah was #1 on the Ten Most Wanted List, and would have been subject to immediate arrest if found in Israel and subject to extradition if found elsewhere. Israel's drought/famine only lasted 3½ years. The drought America suffered through during the Dust Bowl era lasted a little longer than that. The drought we are currently in has already lasted **nine** years, with no end in sight. Lake Okeechobee in southern Florida has become so dry it **actually caught fire** during 2007! In fact, there is a growing body of scientific evidence that suggests a movement towards a state of **perpetual drought** by the middle of this century. Listen to what a leading scientist says about what we are experiencing **right now**: "*The 1930s drought lasted less than a decade. This is something that could remain for 100 years*". Who said it? Richard Seager of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), one of the most respected men in his field. The price of wheat and wheat-related products has already doubled in the last year or so. Aiding and abetting this growing drought problem is the staggering increase in the cost of oil. As I write this article, the price of one gallon of 89 grade unleaded is above \$4.00 at our local United Dairy Farmers convenience store. I can clearly remember in 1973 during the first Arab Oil Embargo when we complained about gas costing 30 cents a gallon. What does the cost of oil have to do with the cost of a loaf of bread? Ask yourself this question: what kind of equipment do we use to plant the wheat? To cultivate it? To harvest it? To mill it? To bake it? To transport it? To go and pick it up from the store? See the point? Petroleum and petroleum based products lie at the heart of our entire economic infrastructure. Gasoline and diesel fuels fire the internal combustion engines which run our very civilization. Oil is used to lubricate all the moving parts. Our tractors use it, our combines use it, our trucks use it, everything we use to plant, process and pick up the wheat is inexorably linked to the price of oil. As oil goes up, every single part of the infrastructure also goes up, raising the end price of the final product. Between the two forces, it wouldn't take long for two loaves of wheat bread to cost \$80.00.

There's one more disturbing thought that we have to consider before we leave the wheat and barley alone. 80% of the world's wheat supply is produced in the following nations:

- **China**
- **European Union (France, Germany)**
- **India**
- **Pakistan**
- **Russia**
- Turkey

- **The Ukraine (Chernozem Soil)**
- **The US (Chernozem Soil)**
- Canada (Chernozem Soil)

Why do I have certain countries listed in bold and underlined? Can you guess? Every single one of these nations either has nuclear capabilities or is working on them. In short, **the countries that will experience serious food shortages involving wheat all have the bomb!** Any marginal student of history will tell you that it is impossible to sustain **political** stability unless it rests firmly on **economic** stability. The only way that Adolf Hitler was able to rise to power in Germany prior to World War II was because the German economy collapsed and people, desperate for solutions, reached out to a man who appeared to be a strong leader with simple solutions. The answer, he said, to all their problems was two fold: (1) eliminate the Jews, whom many Germans felt had sold them out and triggered the economic collapse and (2) take back from the rest of Europe what the Germans felt had been unfairly taken from them after the first World War. Without an economic collapse, Hitler's ideas would have fallen on deaf ears. During the 1970's and 80's, the Communists used the same ploy in Africa and South and Central America over and over again. Entering the country covertly, they would bomb, raid and terrorize the countryside. This would effectively disrupt the economy. They would then blame the dictatorial government in power for all the problems, and lead a revolution to overthrow them. Stable economy, stable government. Unstable economy, unstable government. I don't care how many amendments the Bill of Rights has in it, or how many inalienable rights the Constitution guarantees us. The minute our economy starts to go on the blink and people's pocketbooks are negatively impacted, a hue and cry will go up to lynch the current administration, in this case George W. Bush and the Republican party, and a door will open wide to the loyal opposition, which in America would be the Democrats. As I write these words the current date is Friday, May 23rd, 2008. Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama are locked in one of the tightest battles in recent history for the Democratic nomination. Right now Obama looks like he may have a lock on the nomination. Yet some time ago, the Lord gave me a vision that He said would come to pass in 2014, when **President** Hillary Clinton would make a treaty with a visionary leader out of Austria who would turn out to be the Anti-Christ, a wolf in sheep's clothing. The vision was quite clear, and contained a number of other details which have already been confirmed by current events, such as the surgical strike performed by the Israeli air force against a North Korean freighter in Syrian waters. It turns out that the freighter was carrying nuclear weaponry, sold by North Korea to Syria. Israel wanted it to be quite clear that NO Arab state will be permitted to have the bomb. Israel already does. If Obama wins the nomination in 2008, how in the world could Hillary Clinton become president of the United States in 2014? There are several possible scenarios, all of which are unpleasant to consider. In a battle between McCain, the Republican contender, and Obama, it is currently unclear who would win. Because of the terrible mishandling by the Bush administration of so many key issues, the Republican Party is currently *persona non grata* to many people in the United States. After 8 years of Republican rule, the Democrats are willing to try anything to get back into office. An Obama-Clinton ticket is not out the realm of possibility. Hillary, now realizing that she has less and less chance of taking the #1 slot, is making comments that subtly hint that beating the Republicans in November is more important than beating Obama, and that she would consider the Vice Presidential position. Such a ticket would probably run roughshod over McCain, who has some political liabilities of his own. Neither Democrat is decisively strong against McCain by themselves. But together? Probably unbeatable.

Let's assume for just a moment that an Obama-Clinton alliance is made, and that it is victorious in the Presidential election. This would place a Black man in the Oval Office for the first time in the history of our country. I personally think a lot of Obama, and after having done some research on my own, have discounted as scurrilous lies the accusation that he is somehow a covert Muslim. I believe his own personal conversion testimony, and I believe he is a genuine, sincere, highly effective legislator and potential statesman. Frankly, I haven't felt this good about a Democrat since John Fitzgerald Kennedy. It is this linkage that causes me great concern. A few months ago, one of the major news magazines featured Michelle Obama on their front cover. When I looked at her picture, I was stunned and did a double-take. For a brief moment in time, I thought I was looking at Jackie Kennedy, only with one heck of a sun tan. The similarities in general appearance and the way that she carried herself were striking. That started me thinking about the days when I was in high school and Nixon was running against Kennedy. Portions of the Republican Party and right-wing, Fundamentalist Christian groups

were saying terrible things about Kennedy. If he were elected, they said, we would all end up being governed by the Vatican. I remember riding in a car with my father and questioning him about a piece of hate literature I had found. Unfortunately, even though I consider JFK to be one of the finest visionary presidents we have ever had, the radical, bigoted portion of America had other plans for him. I know that a lot has changed in America since then. Certainly no Black man could have ever run for president in the days of my youth. But portions of America are still not ready for a man of color to be the Chief Executive of this country. I fear greatly that Michelle Obama might end up like Jackie Kennedy in more ways than one. If Obama were assassinated by some lunatic with a gun, just like JFK, then that would place Vice President Hillary Clinton in office in 2014. What makes it even more chilling are the controversial comments which Hillary made herself just this month referring to the assassination of Robert Kennedy in California back in 1968. I want to make matters very clear about this subject. The potential assassination of a future President Obama occurred to me long before Hillary stuck her foot in her mouth. That is a terrible scenario, and I don't even want to think about it, but I must. As a prophet of God, I have to look at things that I often don't want to see, in order to warn others of what is coming. Remember, we prophets have to go up in the watchtower to talk with God and to see what is coming on the horizon. The cloud of dust in the distance may just be a sandstorm, or it may be an approaching army which will level the city and kill all the inhabitants. It is my job to find out what that cloud of dust means, and then come warn those on the streets if danger is imminent. Unfortunately, the throngs doing business and caught up in the day-to-day events of life always ignore those men and women who can see into the future. Jesus said that was how it would be when the end came; buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, caught up in the "now" of life so much that they are unable to learn from the past or see what is coming in the future.

This is one additional scenario that would put Hillary Clinton in the Oval Office. Either Obama or McCain could be elected, and then Clinton could be nominated in 2012 and be elected into office. Given McCain's age, I wonder if he might not be a one-term president if elected. The office of the President of the United States takes a terrible toll on the individual who is in office. I have watched person after person age dramatically and visibly during either a four or an eight year term, particularly eight. Bill Clinton appeared to age 20 years during his 8 years in office, although it is obvious that much of the stress was self-imposed by his lack of moral character. The younger Bush has also aged noticeably. What happens if we put a 72-year-old in the hottest pressure cooker in the world for four years?

No matter what turn of events brings these things about, there is one thing that will be certain. Economic disaster will produce political disaster, and the worse things get the more domineering and dictatorial will be the form of government. Some years ago, a well-known political commentator took our very own Bill of Rights, rewrote it slightly and presented it to people on the street as a proposed amendment to the Constitution. The vast majority of Americans thought that many of the items had been proposed by Communist elements in our society, and flatly rejected the "proposal". If we have already drifted this far away from the shore, what will a full-fledged economic and political storm do to our Republic? How long would it take for the Senate of America to become like the Senate of Rome and degenerate into mere lackeys of a Presidential Caesar? America is no more immune from such happenings than Imperial Rome was. And as we have abandoned the Lord in our culture, He has abandoned us. When I share the terrible fact that it is already too late for America, pastors bar me from the pulpit and "positive, affirming message" Christians boo me off the stage. Jeremiah had the same problem. They didn't like what he had to say either. America as a nation has become so blind that it doesn't even know that God has left our nation to its own devices. There is a tragic passage in Ezekiel where the Glory of God leaves the Temple, and the priests are so self-deceived that they don't even know it. They go about business as usual, none the wiser. Their covering and protection had been taken from them, yet they continued to operate as if nothing had changed. I was watching the political commentator Glen Beck the other night and was treated to a classic example of this. Beck had William Shatner of *Star Trek* fame on his show. Beck is a Mormon, but is a godly, devout man who has come a long way in his own personal faith. Shatner is a profane, perverse, wicked, ungodly man. When Beck brought up such events as 9-11 and Hurricane Katrina and suggested that just possibly God might be judging America for her sins, Shatner flatly rejected it out of hand. America is unwilling to admit her sins, much less repent of them. I tell you this with all certainty: **America is in the process of being judged right now.** Her judgment began as early as the 90's, but certainly after the year 2000. She has turned her back on righteousness, and God has turned His back on her. Her covering is

gone, and she is naked, pitiful and wretched, yet she thinks that she is still protected and covered, His little darling. The Father will only take so much abuse before He casts the daughter or wife out. He did it with Israel. What makes America think that she is any better? And, as it has often been said, if God were to spare America, He would first have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.

What, then, shall we say? The opening of the 3rd Seal has unleashed a gradually worsening economic and food crisis on the nations of the Northern Hemisphere. Perhaps the 3rd World War will not only be an "oil" war but also a "bread" war as well. Desperate times produce desperate measures. Now, I want you to think with me for just a second. If we **know** that desperate times are coming, what should we as Christians do? If we cannot change the course of history, how can we respond to it in order to save ourselves and our loved ones? Our situation is much like the tragedy-laced *Titanic*. The builder had boasted that "*not even God could sink the Titanic!*" on her maiden voyage. We all know the end result. The captain was ordered to steam ahead at full speed in order to try and set a Trans-Atlantic crossing record. He had warned the owner that it was very unwise, considering that the North Atlantic was filled with icebergs at that time of year. But arrogance and stupidity caused the decision-makers to become blind to their own shortcomings and weaknesses. Only 1/3rd of the required lifeboats were on board the ship. When her "unsinkable" design proved to be the very thing that doomed her, it quickly became obvious that **not everyone could be saved**. Had the rules of chivalry been followed, all the women and children would have been saved, regardless of their booking classification. Yet many lifeboats were launched with only a few wealthy patrons aboard. The number of senseless deaths was terrible. It could have been avoided, or certainly minimized had the proper precautions been taken. But no such things happened. So it is with America today. She is steaming at full speed in dangerous waters, and with a fatal design flaw in her moral character. When disaster comes, as it inevitably must, the number of senseless deaths will be staggering, far more than the *Titanic*. But if **you** are prepared, you can **save yourself and those around you, if they will listen to you**. Lot would have gladly saved not only his two daughters but also their fiancées, but the young men would not listen to him. Even his wife became a casualty despite the fact that she was not in the city when destruction came. It will not be enough to be outside of the city. **The city must be outside of you**. Your heart, mind, soul and body must be clean, pure and purged of everything connected to the Sodom that America has become. That is not an easy thing to do, considering that we are inundated with wickedness and perversity every single day. Purity has become a thing to joke about in our culture. It will become a necessity when the time of trouble comes. Are you prepared? Are you ready? Is your heart pure before God? Recently a great wave of revival has swept through our church. In two weeks, 47 people were baptized, re-baptized, saved, repented, asked for a clean life or decided to live without any more compromise. God is cleaning up the act at the church we attend. He is preparing the hearts of everyone **who will listen and hear**. When the time comes, they will be ready. **Will you?** I close this Day with the following highly appropriate quote from the Apostle Peter.

*"⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that **any should perish** but that **all should come to repentance**.¹⁰ 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.¹¹ Therefore, **since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness**,¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth **in which righteousness dwells**." – II Peter 3:9-13*

What manner of persons ought we to be? I think you already know the answer to that question. There are two questions, however, which still remain answered at this late hour. **Are you already that kind of person?** And, if not, **when will you make yourself ready for His coming?** Here's what I want you to do right now: put this book down, and ask yourself those two final questions. If you don't like the answers your heart gives you, then sit or kneel right where you are and fully surrender your life to Jesus Christ, holding nothing back from His holy gaze. Father, I pray for this person reading this article, that they might be found **worthy of His coming, and of the resurrection of the righteous! Amen and Amen!**

Day 16 – The Pale Horse of Plague & Famine



“⁷When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’⁸ So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.~ Revelation 6:5-6

When we last left our planet it was reeling in shock. First, war broke out in the Northern Hemisphere on an unprecedented scale. Soon, nations across the globe found themselves embroiled in not one, but two conflagrations that left all the participants scarred and reeling. At the same time, ethnic genocide began to scour the center of the earth, with one group after another rising up in an attempt to wipe their enemies from the face of the earth. Muslim-led fanaticism gradually replaced regionally-based persecution, moving toward the terrible 5th Seal, when an Islamic *Jihad* will erupt globally against both Jews and Christians alike. On top of this, a terrible drought, also in the Northern Hemisphere, had wiped out the wheat and barley crops, throwing the industrialized northern nations into a state of crisis. As a result, previously democratic countries, including perhaps even the United States, have fallen into the hands of ruthless, immoral dictators. Slowly but surely, the stage is being set for that most evil of all men, the Anti-Christ himself.

But although many props are on the stage in anticipation for the final act in this millennia-old play, there are a few items that still need to be put into place. After all, we are only through three of the Seven Seals, ready to break open the 4th Seal of Plague and Famine in the Southern Hemisphere.

Let’s review the details of the description of this rider and his terrible actions:

1. Riding a **pale** horse.
2. Rider is **Death himself**.
3. Accompanied by **Hades** or Hell.
4. Power given to him over **1/4th of the earth**.
5. Some of the death will be by the **sword**.
6. Some of the death will be by **hunger**.
7. Some of the death will be by **death** (I know that doesn’t make sense. We’ll look at it later).
8. Some of the death will be by the **beasts of the earth**.

That’s quite a few items to investigate, but, as with all the other Horsemen, we have to add one more detail in from our study of the parallel passage in Zechariah.

9. All of this will happen in the **Southern Hemisphere**.

What, exactly, is a **pale** horse? The *Koine Greek* word used here is **chloros**. Sound vaguely familiar? It should. It is the same root word from which we get our modern word **chlorophyll**. What does it mean? You have two choices: either **green** or **yellowish pale**, according to Strong’s. Ecch! In Zechariah, the parallel passage which we examined in Day 12 uses the Hebrew word **barod**, which means **spotted or marked**. Today, we would use the word **dappled** to describe such an animal. Unlike recent Kentucky Derby winner Big Brown, a dappled horse is not a single, uniform color, but is rather spotted or marked with a variety of colors. If you will recall from yesterday’s materials, I suggested a fairly controversial theory that states that each of the horses is color-coded, based on the type of task it is to perform or the individuals who are to perform it. This horse is no different. The Hebrew word really doesn’t give us any clear indications of what this horse represents, but the Greek

word does. I have read many translations of the Bible, some better than others. Regardless of the quality of the translation, I have learned something from each one. And in one of those "other" translations, the color of the horse is translated as **pale green**. So why in the world would God need a green horse? It's almost like the famous "*horse of a different color*" scene in *The Wizard of Oz*. In the movie, our intrepid heroes reach the Emerald City and have a frustrating discussion with the Gatekeeper, who also happens to be the Wizard in disguise. When they finally gain entrance, they are placed in a beautiful carriage drawn by a very strange horse. The horse appears in four scenes. In each scene, the horse is a different color. At first, it is white, just like its counterpart in Revelation. Then, in the second shot it is a purplish-red, again, just like Revelation. In the third shot it is a bright orange. Finally, it appears as a yellow horse in the final shot. I discovered that they produced the different colors on the horse using various Jell-O crystals with differing colors. They had to shoot each scene quickly because the horse wanted to lick the tasty Jell-O off of its body. In fact, in one of the scenes, you can see the horse actually licking the Jell-O off of its lips, having a grand old time doing so.

In Revelation, the White Horse makes sense, but for troubling reasons. So does the Red Horse. The Black Horse is a bit of a stretch, and it is entirely possible that I have missed the real reason for the color. But regarding a Pale Green or Dappled Horse, the reason is almost immediately evident. It is the color of **gangrene**, the color of **diseased, rotting flesh**. How gross! And lest you think that I am exaggerating, let's take a look at the name of the Rider on this pale green, gangrenous horse. His name is **Death**, and he has brought his close personal friend **Hades** with him. The Greek word used for Death is **thanatos**, and it implies not only dying, but **dying and going to Hell to suffer eternally**. The Greek word for **Hades** is, well, **Hades**. It's one of many words that have transferred from the original language directly into English. Our native tongue is probably the most *polyglot* (many tongues) language in the history of the world. We have borrowed words from Latin, Spanish, Welsh, German, French, Hebrew, Greek and a myriad of other languages and adapted them straight into our own language. Other languages do the same thing. When I am teaching over the internet and Raj is translating, I will hear certain English words pop out in the middle of his Telegu translation. Why? Because Telugu has no matching word for the English word I used. Most medical, legal, technical and slang words have to be transferred rather than translated. More and more we are becoming a truly global society and culture.

With Death and Hades leading the charge in the 4th and final Seal, we now have to analyze **how** and **where** all of this death will occur. We quickly discover that this Seal will involve **1/4th of the earth**. It is not clear if this means that 1/4th of the world will **die** during this Seal, which is entirely possible, or that 1/4th of the earth will be **affected** by this Seal. We already know from Zechariah that this final Seal will occur in the **Southern Hemisphere**. Based on that, I have revised my thinking on the matter. I used to teach that 1/4th of the entire earth will die. Now, I'm not so sure. I rather suspect that the second interpretation is probably the correct one. These conditions will affect the Southern Hemisphere of our world, notably in Africa, the Far East and possibly South America. Right now, Africa is on its way to becoming a corpse continent before the turn of the next century. Aids, starvation, tribal warfare and a host of famine-related diseases are ravaging virtually every nation there. Previously stable counties are disintegrating. No matter how much aid we ship there, it never is enough.

To make matters even worse, incompetent, corrupt and uncaring administrations actually block humanitarian aid, not only in Africa, but also in other places like Burma, which has recently been decimated by a horrendous cyclone that has caused at least 100,000 people to die. The military junta steadfastly refused to allow help into the country for weeks after the disaster hit. This total lack of concern for the needs of their own people spells certain doom for their regime. If you abuse people long enough, sooner or later they will rise up in rebellion and throw off the chains that have bound them.

This 4th Seal will be implemented first and foremost by the **sword**. That clearly implies violence, one man against another. It is not uncommon in the Sudan, where the Muslims of the North persecute, attack and slaughter the Christians in the South, for the attackers to use their swords to cut off the arms and legs of their victims, particularly men, cauterize the wounds with fire, and leave the person alive, a helpless, hopeless cripple for the rest of their lives. Many tribesmen lack rifles, and so spears

and swords remain the weapon of choice in a world that has at least a 200 times overkill on nuclear weapons. How ironic that while we have the ability to destroy all life on this planet with the power of the atom not once, but 200 times, that most of the death sweeping the globe is by the most primitive means possible. It also tells us that mankind has not come very far collectively from the brutality that shaped the world during Rome and the Empires of China. I am terribly disheartened when I look at our world today. If I did not firmly believe in the soon and coming return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, it would be a bleak and discouraging world at best. Mankind seems incapable of learning to love his brother. The crime of Cain and Abel is reenacted thousands of times each and every day. Nations are not at peace with one another because the individuals who live in and control those nations are not at peace with one another. And those individuals are not at peace with one another because they are not at peace with themselves. Apart from the Price of Peace, there can be no peace on earth, no goodwill towards men. Sadly, I also find this to be true among most Christians. The lack of truly Christlike character is the most glaring failure in the body of Christ today, and always has been. While we may be quick to adhere to obedience to external rules and regulations, we are dreadfully slow and stubborn in allowing Christ to be formed in our hearts. I also find this to be true in Christian leadership. People simply don't understand that just because a person is **anointed** does not mean that they are **godly**. We see King Saul strip himself naked and prophesy in the dust and we ask ourselves, *"Is Saul also among the prophets?"* How can this person who is mean and nasty and treats us dreadfully outside of the church service dance and worship and lay hands on people with power during the service? Just remember, dear friends, that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are just that, **gifts**. Now, a gift always says something about the **giver**. It lets you know that the individual cares for and loves the recipient. But it says absolutely nothing about the character of the **recipient**. Grandma, blinded by her love for her juvenile delinquent grandson Johnny, may buy the little thug a beautiful new car. That says something for the love which she has for her grandson. Now her hope and prayer is that Johnny will take this marvelous vehicle and use it to ferry little old ladies like her back and forth to church three times a week. That would be a good use of the gift. Johnny, on the other hand, has other plans for the car. He plans to run the streets seven nights a week, doing drugs, drinking booze and ravaging young women in the back seat and, oh yes, running over little old ladies on the sidewalks whenever possible. This is too often the case in the church with Christian leadership. They have been given a precious gift from the Lord. That gift is meant to be used to help, uplift and bless the body of Christ, of which they are a part. Instead, these self-same leaders use these gifts to advance themselves, injure and manipulate those around them and tear down the body of Christ instead. Little do they know that, just like Saul, they will someday lay prostrate before the witch of Endor, destined to die the very next day, and that they will someday stand before the Lord of all the Earth and will be judged and held accountable for their use of those gifts which they received. Many of them will try to lean on the use of those gifts during ministry times as a justification for their salvation. Instead, Christ will look them straight in the eye and tell them that He never knew them. I would not want to be in their shoes. Remember, dear friends, the only things that carry into eternity are our **actions** and our **character**. Our **character** is a statement to the Lord of what we did on the **inside** of us with His precious Holy Spirit. Our actions are a statement to the Lord of what we did on the **outside** of us, interacting with others as a testimony of just how much of the **inside** of us is controlled by the Spirit of the Lord. In that day when the Lord judges the secrets of men's hearts through Christ Jesus, our works will be judged, either to our eternal humiliation or our eternal reward. But, I digress. Back to the matter at hand.

After the sword comes another deadly force in our world today, **hunger**. While we know in theory how terrible world hunger is, I suspect strongly that we don't really comprehend how widespread it is. In America, we "struggle" with eating too much. If you go to any grocery store and look at the magazines stationed conveniently at the checkout lanes, you can predict with absolute certainty what the headlines and feature titles will read. Each month, one of the headlines will read, *"How to lose 20 pounds in 20 days!"* Others will say things like *"Wild New Diet Permits You to Eat Anything and Still Lose Weight!"* When I walk through the store or through any US shopping mall, it is absolutely appalling how grossly overweight America is. And I am no exception. When I was a young and strong 19, I played football at 193 pounds. When I stopped playing, I kept right on eating like I was at a training table. I quickly ballooned to 230 pounds. From there, it was a gradual increase, one tiny pound at a time, first to 240, then to 250. A quick jump to 270 followed, and then gradually, inch by inch and pound by pound until I topped out at an astounding 304 pounds! Small wonder, then, that I

found one of the key arteries around my heart with an 80% blockage just a few years ago. The subsequent heart attack on the operating table, followed by the diagnosis of malignant, inoperable cancer just 30 days later, followed by the devastating after effects of radiation and chemotherapy caused me to lose 80 pounds over a period of about four months, dropping me from 304 to an almost skeletal 224. Since then, I have been gradually regaining weight until now I waver between 255 and 261. I don't really think of myself as fat most of the time. I manage, when looking in the mirror, to strike poses which minimize the maximized parts of me. One of the things that I have noticed about really overweight people is that they will generally keep the area surround their head looking very neat and orderly. Women will go to extreme lengths to beautify their face, while neglecting the 90 percent of their body that everyone else sees first. Another thing I have noticed is that really large people tend to purchase little bitty cars, while teeny, tiny people tend to hop out of the largest, most burly SUV or Ford truck possible. We micromanage those things which are often the least important, and totally mismanage the things which are the most important. I apologize in part for this article spending so much time on the shortcomings and frailties of humanity. It's almost impossible not to, given the nature of this particular Seal. And, to make matters worse, we just went through a difficult time with a manipulative and controlling pastor, so my Gripe Meter is running a little high right now. But notice that I find fault with myself as well. I pay great attention to the nose hairs which seem to grow in such abundance that I am tempted to try and transplant them to the top of my head, where nothing but dandruff seems to grow well, yet I simply do not deal properly with that fact that I weight about 60 pounds too much. Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner! Have mercy on all of us in America, fat, overweight, lazy and unconcerned about the needs of others across the world!

Everyone knows that Sodom and Gomorrah got nuked from outer space because of their rampant homosexuality. But most people don't know that there was another, equally great evil that pervaded that culture which was as much responsible for their judgment by God.

"⁴⁸ 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done. ⁴⁹ Look, this was the iniquity of your sister **Sodom**: She and her daughter had **pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.** ⁵⁰ And they were **haughty and committed abomination before Me**; therefore **I took them away as I saw fit.**' " -- Ezekiel 16:48-50

I want to make a suggestion to you. Lay this article down for just a second, and get your Bible out. Turn to Ezekiel, Chapter 16, and read the entire chapter. Then, take a lined tablet and make an outline of the sins of Israel and Judah. Finally, make a check along side of each and every sin listed on your piece of paper that describes **America as it exists today**. As it has been said, "If God does not judge America, He has to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah!" As I write this article, the State of California is preparing to put into effect new legislation that legalizes "gay" marriage. The governor of California has proudly and arrogantly said, "As California goes, so goes the nation!" I hope and pray not. Many states have already enacted legislation defining marriage as something that can only occur between one man and one woman. At the same time, legal battles rage around the polygamous FLDS sect in Texas whose men have as many as 20 or more wives, some of whom are as young as nine years old! America has gone mad, utterly mad. She has cast off all restraint. She has rejected God and His Commandments. Yet she goes on blithely as if nothing will happen to her. America today really is Sodom and Gomorrah, in each and every way possible. And, although there are a dedicated few who extend themselves on behalf of the poor and needy both here and elsewhere in the world, the rest of the US goes blithely on its way, unconcerned about the fact that precious little children all over the world are starving to death. Let me give you a few real examples to help drive the point in.

Some years ago, a talented young trumpet player came from Haiti to America for the first time. He had been raised in an orphanage in his native country, and so was better off than many of the young people of his land. Haiti is one of the poorest nations in the world. I know. I have been there. Many Haitians are slender as a stick. Small wonder, given that they have no food to eat. I once asked a friend of ours, a wonderful pastor/bishop/politician/entrepreneur named Octamolere Liberius or "Octa" for short, what would be a fair wage for a Haitian worker. Octa thought for just a second, and then replied, "Oh, about \$8.00" "An hour?" I replied in astonishment. "Oh, no!" replied Octa, "A **week!**"

He went on to explain, "A man can feed his wife and **ten children** quite comfortably on a weekly salary of \$8.00." I was utterly astonished.

Now this young musician was taken by his American friends to a Golden Corral buffet. He could barely control his astonishment when he saw one menu item after another placed in gleaming metal containers, in seemingly endless supply. It took a great deal of exhorting by his friends to get him to go back up for **seconds**, a concept unheard of in his country. At the end of the meal, many of the plates of his friends still had food on them. When the waitress came to clear the table, the young Haitian asked what would happen to the uneaten food. The waitress told him that it would be thrown away. The young man was stunned. How could good food possibly be thrown away? He understood that there was no real way to send the food back to his native land, although that had been the first thing that had popped into his mind. Perhaps there were poor and needy here in the US that the food could be given to? The waitress replied in the negative. It seemed that it was a mandate of the Food and Drug Administration of our country that all uneaten food had to be thrown away every single day for fear of possible infection, disease and possible legal action because of it. The young Haitian sat stunned at the dinner table and began to weep openly. The thought of all of that good food being thrown away was more than he could stand. America could feed a healthy percentage of the world with the excess food that she throws away each and every day from restaurants and homes across the nation. We recycle plastic, glass, newspaper and the like. Why couldn't we recycle food? We need "Good Samaritan" legislation reenacted in this country which protects those individuals and corporations who want to step out and help those who have needs. As it stands right now, any bowery bum who happened to get sick because of some supposed botulism can find an ambulance chasing attorney who will help him sue a US corporation for a percentage of the take. This is unconscionable.

Small wonder, then, the rest of the world, much of which is starving, looks upon us with both disgust and envy. I found out just how big I really am when I traveled to India. I traveled coach the whole way. The flight from Cincinnati to Frankfurt, Germany was no big deal, other than the fact that you had to sit for eight straight hours except to go to the bathroom. Not being able to move wreaks havoc on my hands and feet because of the peripheral neuropathy I suffer from. It also impacts my knees, courtesy of football. But it wasn't intolerable because the seats were built for larger American and European customers. When we reached Germany, things took a turn for the worse. We missed our outgoing flight because of a judgment in error by our travel agent. We were stuck in the airport for four hours, and then were rerouted to Mumbai (Bombay) on another flight. Unlike the previous plane, these seats were constructed with India in mind. I was jammed up against other passengers in seats that accommodated perhaps 75% of me. On the previous flight I had specifically requested an aisle seat open on the left so that I could extend and stretch my left foot, where the problem is the worst. On this flight, I was stuck in the middle, with no wiggle room at all. The next eight hours were pure agony. We arrived in Mumbai only to find that the airlines had lost my luggage. It wouldn't show up again until I picked it up on my way back out of the country two weeks later. Another four hour flight across India, a 12-hour car ride on the bumpiest interstate I had ever ridden on, and we were there. Somehow, I had survived. But I had a problem. We were scheduled to dedicate the orphanage in only two days, and I had only a suitcase full of clean underwear to my name. So Raj took me shopping for clothes. It hadn't dawned on me how much bigger I was than most of the people around me until I met the little tailor. He was perhaps five feet tall, but with an air of authority much larger than that. As he measured me, he huffed and puffed in amazement, like someone measuring out a suit for King Kong. His two apprentices stood by in silent awe. After taking my measurements, he solemnly informed me through Raj, acting as translator, that the suit would cost the exorbitant price of \$100.00 US. I almost fell over. A custom-made suit for someone my size in the US would cost a bare minimum of \$400.00 - \$500.00! Of course, he had no way of knowing that. I was so excited that I used the \$300.00 worth of "mad money" (discretionary funds for personal use) that I had brought along to order not one, but three suits. They are the most beautiful clothes I have ever owned.

After leaving the tailor's shop, we went looking for casual pants and shirts. That's when the real fun began. I told the owner of the men's clothing shop what I wore in a pants size, and he looked at me as if I had lost my mind. They searched the store high and wide before they came up with two pairs of pants that actually fit. Then we tackled the shirt problem. I told them that I normally wore an XXL. When they came up with something and we opened it up, it looked more than a wee bit too small. So I

tried it on. It was barely a single XL. Even what they called an XXXL was marginally an XXL. That's how vast the size difference was. It never dawned on me until recently how out of place I must have looked to an ocean of tiny, slender, dark-skinned, black-haired, shiny white-toothed people.

In India, as in most of the 3rd World, every American is viewed as being rich. And, to a very real extent, that is true. Even our "poor" are so much better off than the poor of other countries that it is like night and day. In fact, one of the standard approaches in Indian ministries is to find a wealthy American or Australian and hitch a ride on them. One of our US dollars translates into roughly 40 of their rupees. That means that it costs less than \$30.00 to clothe, feed, house and educate an orphan in India. It costs a grand total of \$50.00 to pay for the college tuition of an Indian student attending Junior College for an entire year! The disparity between the US and the rest of the world is beyond the ability of the average American to conceive. Only if you have traveled outside the continental boundaries of the US can you begin to appreciate the stark difference between the haves and the have-nots. Let tell you another true story.

Ruth, Raj, the orphans and the students have often spent extended times in prayer and fasting. And by fasting, I don't mean giving up cheeseburgers for Lent, or only eating two meals a day. I mean **no food at all**. How can they do it so often? **Because they have to**. Many are the times when there has been absolutely no food at all in the orphanage. There are no soup kitchens to go to, no Section 8 Housing to apply for, no free bread at local churches on Wednesday nights. Where the light of the Gospel is dim, these things simply don't exist. Our nation has a social conscience because Christianity has a social conscience. Other religions have no such mandates. To the Hindu, you are poor, starving and homeless because it is the result of bad Karma built up in a previous life. To the Muslim, It is Kismet, your fate, the will of Allah. To the Buddhist, it is something that you simply learn to ignore, because all material things aren't really real and don't count. Only the Christian loves. Only the Christian cares. Only the Christian extends himself out to others on behalf of the Lord He loves. But in India, less than 3% of the population is officially Christian. Recent estimates place that figure closer to an actual 25%, a staggering growth. The huge disparity between the two numbers is due to the fact that most new converts, and there are many, are almost totally from the "Backward" Castes, groups of indigenous darker-skinned natives living in Southern India. The lighter-skinned Aryan invaders of 3,000 years ago live largely in the Northern, more mountainous regions and are mostly of the Brahmin, Hindu castes. If any of these new converts declare themselves officially Christian on their social registration forms, they automatically lose any benefits that might be due them in India's somewhat broken social welfare system, such as scholarship money to go to college. Because of this deliberate discrimination against Christians, there was very little of any help for Ruth and Raj when they only had the orphanage. I can clearly remember one three day fast that they all were forced to go on during the peak of the summer last year. After three days, a pastor's wife from a local village came to visit them. She had heard that they had no food, and so she brought what little she had: **a cluster of grapes**. Eagerly but carefully Ruth separated each grape from the cluster and carefully counted them out. There was **one grape per child**, with four left over. And so she and the children **gratefully** broke their three-day fast by eating one grape each. Now do you begin to get the picture? We have so much, and could do so much more than we do. But people as a whole do not care unless it affects them and their immediate family and circle of friends. I could cite statistic after statistic to you, but I think that these two stories made it far clearer than any cold statistic could. In fact, when I went to one of the primary sites on the internet to pull up a few, there were an overwhelming number of negative, terrible reports of famine from all around the world. Things are not getting better. They are getting worse. As the world population hurtles toward the **nine billion** mark by 2050 or sooner, the specter of famine increases. Right now, India alone has over **one billion people**. And **40%** of that one billion are **under the age of 14**. That means that there are **400 million children in India right now, many of whom either have no parents, or whose parents cannot afford to feed them or support them**. China has **1.3 billion people**. Here's the best way to understand India or China. Take the current population of the United States. **Now quadruple it**. Now **reduce the available living landmass of the continental United States by 25%**. You now have India. Increase the population by another 33% and increase the landmass back to the original dimensions of the US and you have China. Imagine what it would be like if your neighborhood had **four times as many people living in it**. Imagine what it would be like if your house were only 1/4th the size it is right now. Picture yourself driving to work in the morning in traffic four times as congested as it is now. But further

picture yourself driving in a car that seats two, or on a motorized bike, or sitting in what looks like a golf cart driven by a Briggs and Stratton lawnmower engine. Imagine that you only ate **one meal a day during good times**. Further imagine that your "meal" consisted of **rice, rice, rice, and, oh yes, rice**. Further envision that on a good day you might have a little vegetable stew on the side. And always place curry sauce in your food pan next to the rice, hot enough to remove your tonsils if you still have them. That way, even though you don't get much to eat, the **taste of eating** remains with you for hours afterwards. That's why most foods in the 3rd World are so unbearably over-seasoned to us Westerners. We eat **quantity**. They eat **quality**. Or at least that's the thinking behind their culinary skills.

Now try to imagine what these people think of fat, waddling, over-weight, wasteful America. Try to picture in your mind how we must appear to them. Small wonder that we are hated, despised and yet envied by the entire world. And imagine what America could yet do to redeem herself in the eyes of the world if she truly experienced a major revival which changed her heart into a giving, caring, global Alpha Female for the world. We could once again be Lady Liberty, beckoning to the poor, huddled masses, still yearning to be free. We could once again set the standard for global morality, instead of defaulting to sadistic, cold-hearted radical Islam. We could win the world with the love of Jesus Christ, expressed in food, medicine, supplies and caring and sharing. When I was in India, everyone was kind and appreciative of us, particularly in Narsapur, where word of our coming had spread throughout the town of 70,000. It's a little town by Indian standards, so word spread fast. Everywhere I went, people would stop and thank us for coming and for what we were doing for the orphans of India. Men on bikes stopped and thanked us, clasping their hands together in front of them in traditional Indian fashion. I spent my whole time there in that position, returning gratitude for gratitude and respect for respect. I also found that my little digital camera was the greatest ice-breaker in the whole of India. Whenever I met someone, I offered to take their picture. Many were so astonished that someone actually cared enough about them to take their picture that all resistance to these huge American strangers just melted away. In a nation of one **billion**, one **individual** doesn't count for much, unless you tell him that he **does matter** by simply asking respectfully if you can take his picture **because he matters to you**. In a world where **so many** have **so little** and **so few** have **so much**, it takes **so little** to let someone know that **they matter to you**. And once they realize that they matter to **you**, it becomes very easy to explain to them that they matter to you because they also matter to **your God**, who **loves them personally** and sent **His Only Begotten Son** to **die in their place**, to **redeem them from their sins** and to **bring them into His House**, where there is **always a banqueting table** set before them, and they will **never run out of food again!**

Having addressed the issue of famine, we still have one major issue to explain: **the beasts of the earth**. What on earth is that all about? For a long time, that final point didn't make sense to me. And then, as I did further analysis of what will take place later on, particularly in the 7th Seal, I discovered a key. I have discussed this point elsewhere in this series, but we need to address it here as well. As the horrors of the first Four Seals unfold, not only humanity is affected. All the living creatures of the planet, animal, vegetable and those few strange primitive forms that are neither animal nor vegetable are all affected adversely. Also remember that each of the Seals is **accumulative** and **ongoing**. When the 1st Seal opens, it is running all by itself. But when the 2nd Seal opens, it **and** the 2nd Seal are both running **at the same time**. When the 3rd Seal opens, **all three Seals are running concurrently with one another**. The 4th Seal does exactly the same. So do the 5th Seal and the 6th Seal. By the time we reach the staggering events of the 7th Seal, we have a series of **overlapping disasters** that are on the verge of overwhelming both the earth and the inhabitants thereof. Now, please notice that the **beasts of the earth** are listed as the very **last consequence of the 4th Seal**. That implies that the 5th Seal of Global Persecution, the Tribulation, is already in progress, as are the events of the 6th Seal and perhaps even the dreaded 7th Seal, the Wrath of God. And it is in the 7th Seal that we find the explanation of the mysterious **beasts of the earth** comment found in the 4th Seal. Remember that all of the previous Seals are still operating even after the Rapture at the end of the 6th Seal. As the End of the Age approaches, the planet reels incrementally closer and closer to complete total annihilation, a true **ELE**, or **Extinction Level Event**.

By the time the events of the **4th Seal** are coming to full bloom, a series of celestially driven events hammer the earth in the **7th Seal**. Seven angels appear in Heaven with Seven Trumpets, which they are given instructions to sound. Listen to what follows:

*"⁷ The first angel sounded: And **hail and fire followed**, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And **a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.**"*

– Revelation 7:7

What are we seeing in this 1st Trumpet of the 7th Seal? Frankly, I believe it to be a **meteorite shower**. A **massive** meteorite shower. As we have begun to explore our Solar System, we have made some astonishing discoveries. Scientists now believe that the neat, uniform orbits of the eight major planets didn't use to be so neat and uniform. There is also significant evidence that suggests that the Asteroid Belt just beyond Mars might have once been a planet like Earth or Mars, and that this planet was destroyed in some unimaginable event of incomprehensible violence. In addition, beyond the Gas Giants of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, we have Pluto, now considered a Dwarf Planet by most astronomers and a huge, as yet unmeasured expanse of asteroids and comets which we now call the **Oort Cloud**. The Oort Cloud may be as large as the inner planetary Solar System itself, or even larger. The number of pieces of hurtling, jumbled pieces of rock, ice and stones is almost beyond measurement. There is growing evidence that gravitational forces periodically sweep vast amounts of these asteroids and comets out of their positions in the Oort Cloud and send them hurdling toward the sun. The Gas Giants, particularly Jupiter, act as giant vacuum cleaners, sucking the majority of these potentially deadly events into their gravitational influence and ultimately into the planets themselves, just as the **Strand of Nine Pearls** did with Jupiter some years ago. But some of those wayward pieces of rock and ice find their way into the inner rocky planets, where they become potential sources of destruction for all life on earth should they collide with us. In addition, meteors from the Asteroid Belt are already inside of the Gas Giants, and any of them sent sunward have nothing in their way to slow them down. A good view of a full moon with the naked eye reveals one giant meteorite strike after another on the surface of our good neighbor. An inexpensive telescope yields even more graphic detail of the number of times that our moon has been struck with explosive violence from Outer Space. Unfortunately, the moon has virtually no atmosphere to stop incoming missiles from beyond. The earth does. Most of the objects that are constantly hurled at our planet are small enough so that they burn up harmlessly in our atmosphere. But every now and then, something comes in that is big enough and fast enough to strike the surface of the planet without disintegrating first. In fact, if the item is large enough and fast enough, even exploding miles above the surface of the planet will still yield staggering destruction, just as a probable comet did at Tunguska in upper Siberia many years ago. I will discuss the Tunguska event later on in this Episode when we talk about the 6th Seal. We have clear geological evidence of a major strike just offshore of the Yucatan Peninsula and possible evidence of another mega strike offshore of Indonesia. But it doesn't always have to be one single large object that wreaks enormous destruction. It can be many small ones instead. We have clear Biblical evidence for such events in Revelation 6:13, 7:7, 7:8, 7:10-11 and 16:21. Whether by single large objects or multiple smaller ones, it is clear that the earth is going to receive a pummeling beyond description as the end draws near.

One of the key side-effects of the events described in Revelation 7:7 is that **1/3rd of all the trees will be burned up** and **all of the green grass will be burned up**. Now, consider the following chain of events:

- (1) **1/3rd of all trees burn up**. This causes...
- (2) **Massive oxygen depletion**, because trees create most of the oxygen on this planet and absorb most of the carbon dioxide emitted by animals. This in turn causes...
- (3) **Large predators and other wild animals to come down off of mountaintops and forests** where they have been living, isolated from human contact. Thus humans and large carnivorous predators are **forced into proximity with one another** for the first time since the Ice Age. Now...
- (4) **All of the green grass burns up**. This kicks the cycle into high gear because...
- (5) **All herbivores live entirely off of green grass, particularly domesticated ones, such as cows, sheep, goats, etc.** This partial destruction of the forests and the complete destruction of all grasslands, whether domesticated or wild, causes...

- (6) **A massive die-off of herbivores all around the world.** This in turn creates...
- (7) **A massive food shortage for the carnivores, large and small,** which rely on herbivores, both wild and domesticated, for food. This includes deer, rabbit, and various forms of birds, insects, and all domestic animals. What we are seeing is a...
- (8) **Complete collapse of the natural food chain.** The predators, who have been forced into uncomfortable proximity to humanity by the partial destruction of the forests, now find their normal food supply abruptly taken from them. With both wild and domestic herbivores almost totally extinct, the carnivorous predators are forced to turn to the only significant food supply left to them...
- (9) **Humanity itself,** which now becomes the principle food supply for them. Since mankind has already been struck by multiple disastrous events itself, and since humans have no natural defenses such as wings, claws, scales or even sharp teeth, we become an easy target for wolves, bears, lions, tigers and even smaller predators, operating in packs. If you've ever heard a pack of coyotes howling together at night when you are in a house off by itself in the woods, you know what it feels like when the prey in you makes your hair stand straight up on the back of your neck. It will make your blood run cold, because you know that if they caught you alone without a weapon, they could take you down and kill you in a matter of moments.

And so, the final aspect of the 4th Seal plays itself out in a grisly fashion. Maybe that's why they call them **grizzly bears**. Brrr!!! Makes you kind of queasy in your stomach, doesn't it? I hope you already had breakfast and have a good store of energy in you, because someday in the near future you may need to expend that energy to prevent yourself from becoming breakfast for some ravenous critter. All the more reason to have your heart right before God, don't you think? For those of you who have fantasized that you will pleasantly and gently waft off of this planet before all this bad stuff comes, let me disabuse you of that illusion. Everything that I have described here is **real, logical and certain** to come to pass, all of it **before** we are caught up in the clouds. As I now constantly teach people, some of us are going to look **up** and see Him coming **down**, but a far greater number of us are going to be **coming down with Him** to get our resurrection bodies first, and then will be joined by a significantly reduced number following up **behind us**. Frankly, dear friends, does it matter which way it happens? Sudden death, sudden glory. This life of 70 or 80 years if we have the strength is not worth clinging to, given that we are going to spend eternity in His presence, basking in His glory, filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. So when I am forced to tell you the **gory truth**, it is only because it is going to lead to a **greater glorious truth** that is to follow. As I write these closing sentences in this Day's article, my knees ache constantly. The ball of my right foot also hurts. My feet, afflicted by peripheral neuropathy, with the ends of the nerves stripped of their insulation, feel like I am standing on two inch thick foam pads with millions of tiny needles inserted. I have learned to live with it, but not to accept it. I can function, but not well. Think I want to hang on to this body in this condition any longer? Think again. Gladly would I embrace being with Christ, for with Him there is no more pain and suffering. Even though I would not yet have my resurrection body, I would nonetheless be free of the torment of this body. And that would be wonderful. Frankly, it doesn't matter to me **which** group I am in, as long as I am **in one of them**. As times draw to a close, you, too, need to adopt this attitude. If this life is so very precious to you, might you be tempted to trade away eternal life in order to try and hang on to this pathetic one you currently have? No, dear friends. To die is Christ. To live is gain, to serve Him better here. But do not fear him who can destroy this body in this life. Rather fear Him who can cast both body **and** soul into Hell for all eternity. No better reasons can be given to serve Him. None are necessary. He extends His loving, nail-scarred hands to you, not to necessarily deliver you from your own suffering, but to strengthen you so that you can endure until the end, either for the supernatural healing of your body, or your removal from a body which no longer works. Either way, something better is in store. Something far grander has been prepared for you and I. Beloved, it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that **we shall be like Him**, for we shall see Him **as He is!** Amen and Amen!

Day 17 – The Tribulation



“⁹ When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” ¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.. – Revelation 6:9-11

As we have walked through the first four Seals, we discovered that none of them were global. That remarkable fact, hidden skillfully in the pages of Zechariah, is not taught by any Biblical scholar that I know of. Yet the uncanny parallel of Revelation 6:1-8 with Zechariah 6:1-8 cannot be ignored. As we looked at the first four seals, it also became painfully evident that **all four of them are already open and active in the earth**. That means that the 5th Seal of Global Persecution must either be **ready to open** or **already be open and active as well**. Frankly, in looking at the current world attitude toward Israel and America and examining the general hostility toward Christians in most of the nations in the 10/40 Window, one would have to say that the 5th Seal is already open and racing toward full bloom.

In order to understand why I teach that this 5th Seal is the Tribulation, we need to take a close look at what Revelation says, and then compare notes with the Olivet Discourse. Because there are some variations between the two, it has often caused confusion. Good Lord willing, by the time we are done with today's *E-Pistle*, we will have cleared up the confusion. First, let's look at the defining passage in Revelation.

As the 5th Seal is opened, John sees the souls of a large group of martyrs. Why have they been martyred? For two reasons:

- (1) **The Word of God**
- (2) **The Testimony which they held**

When John says the **Word of God**, it must by definition refer to the Old Testament and the New Testament, or what we call the Bible. This obviously refers to Christians who are dying for their faith. Does it also include Jews, who are also being persecuted and killed? Perhaps, but probably not. As we move into this topic, I will show you a parallel passage later on in Revelation that clearly identifies Christians as the primary target of this global massacre. When these slain martyrs ask the Lord how long it will be until their blood is avenged, they are told the one thing that they don't want to hear: **they will have to wait**. Why will they have to wait? Because **many more like them will have to be killed** until the quota is fulfilled. That is a grisly and chilling prospect. **Not enough of you have died yet**.

Those kinds of statements make folks in the Pre-Tribulation Camp very nervous, as well they should. As I have stated repeatedly in other books in this series, it is utterly impossible to support a Pre-Tribulation Rapture stance from the Bible if you take the passages in question chronologically, logically and in context. Consider what Revelation has told us so far. First, war between nations will break out in the Northern Hemisphere. Second, ethnic genocide with men killing one another will erupt in the 10/40 Window. Third, the wheat and barley crops in the Northern Hemisphere will crash, causing

skyrocketing inflation in those countries. However, olive oil and wine crops centered around the Mediterranean will be unscathed, providing a stable economic base for a revived Roman Empire from which the Anti-Christ will eventually pull ten nations out and into a confederation which will be his base of power. But the Anti-Christ will not make his appearance until Chapter 13, and we are only in Chapter 6, so a great deal has to transpire between now and then. Fourth, plague and famine will sweep the Southern Hemisphere. At no time during these traumatic events has there been any indication of a removal of Christians from the events, nor is any sort of exemption granted to Christians in any country or region of the planet. The Bible says that the rain falls on the just and the unjust alike (Matthew 5:45). Years ago, I heard a cute little ditty about that Scripture, and I share it with you, just for the fun of it.

*"The rain it falleth every day on both the just and unjust fellows,
But more upon the just because the unjust steal the just's umbrellas!"*

Now, Fifth, a persecution erupts **globally** against people **because they are Christians**. Again, absolutely no indication is given that any exemption is granted. Instead, being a Christian becomes a very difficult, terrible thing, something that will **cost you all you have, even your very life**, if you choose to retain your allegiance to Christ. No rapture. Not yet. Not until the end of the 6th Seal, and we have many more horrors to pass through before we reach that point in the timeline.

What, then, of those who have been teaching or have been taught that the church, and particularly the American church, will somehow magically, mystically avoid the persecution that is **already going on across the rest of the world**? When people come to me with this mindset, here is the question that I ask them: **what remarkable characteristic does the church in America possess that makes it exempt from suffering while all of their brothers across the world have to?** Is it America's greater spirituality? Hardly. Saints in Eastern Europe and China make us look like whiney babies. Are we more committed to holiness and sanctification? Take a good, hard look at the moral condition of the ministers of the Gospel in America, and you already know the answer. The shepherds of America are immoral, worldly, corrupt, carnal and shallow. When I travel to India, I constantly have to apologize for the ongoing sinfulness of America's spiritual leadership. Everyone wants what America has, but no one wants to be what America has become. The answer to my question is always the same: **American Christianity in its current condition has NOTHING to commend itself above Christianity as found in the rest of the world, except perhaps for godless, atheistic Europe.** And **that**, dear friends, is **nothing** to take pride in. As such, American Suburbianity possesses no characteristic that would make it exempt from a global persecution of Christians.

I did not come to my current beliefs as the result of sour grapes. Hardly. Just the opposite. For 15 of my 30 years, I was an enthusiastic, even rabid Pre-Tribber myself. If you have read Episode One in this series, you are already familiar with my story. God came to me and challenged me to teach the Revelation of Jesus Christ myself. Up until that point in time, I had been a **second-hand scholar**, relying blindly on the supposed scholarship and research of the "experts" in the Charismatic, Word/Faith world. Imagine my shock when, after reading sequentially through Revelation and then cross-footing it to Matthew, Mark, Luke, I and II Thessalonians plus a scattering of other related passages, I discovered that not only was a Pre-Tribulation Rapture a complete fabrication, totally unfounded in Scripture, but that the whole concept of a **seven year Tribulation is also a fiction** brought about by careless study and interpretation. There is no such thing as a Pre-Tribulation Rapture, nor is there such a thing as a Mid-Tribulation Rapture or a Post-Tribulation Rapture. The timing of the Rapture has **never** had a connection to the timing of the Tribulation, except that the Tribulation comes much earlier in the timeline. What, then, do I believe? Based on what the Word of God says, I am firmly convinced, more and more as time goes on, that the only valid Scriptural interpretation is that of what is called the **Pre-Wrath Camp**. Never heard of them? Neither had I. In fact, I became a member of the camp before I even knew it existed. I discovered, much to my amazement, that the **Tribulation** was the **5th Seal**, and that the **Rapture of the Bride portion of the church (50%)** was at the **end of the 6th Seal**. The seven year period spoken of by Daniel and Revelation occurs, according to Revelation, in Chapters 12 and 13, much, much later. Don't believe me? No problem! Just take a lined tablet and make your own master outline of Revelation, just as I did. Too much hard work? Willing to use my outline? Cool. Then just follow down the outline,

locating the events we have just talked about in the Revelation timeline. And then pay close attention to how far they all are apart. Yet Pre-Trib "scholars" preach and teach a Pre-Trib Rapture as if it were the very Gospel itself. I shudder to think what will happen when all of the Spirit-filled Christians in America and much of the world who have been proselytized by them find out that they are in the midst of a global persecution **and they are all still here**. Actually, Jesus accurately predicted what would happen in Matthew in the Olivet Discourse, and it is to Matthew that we must go now to find out the "rest of the story", as Paul Harvey used to say!

"⁹ Then they will **deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.** ¹⁰ And then **many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.** ¹¹ **Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.** ¹² **And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.** ¹³ **But he who endures to the end shall be saved.** ¹⁴ *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*" – Matthew 24:9-14

It is extremely informative to look at this passage and break it out, one statement at a time. In Verse 9, Jesus talks about the fact that believers will be **delivered up to tribulation**. As we move along in Matthew, we will find that there are actually **two** Tribulations (didn't know that? Neither did I, until I finally did my homework). The first is the one which we refer to as **The Tribulation**. The Greek word used for **tribulation** is **thlipsis**. Remember how I have taught you that Revelation is internally linked to itself and externally linked to other books of the Bible by means of **symbols** and **phrases**? This is a classic example, and one of the most important of the **phrase to phrase** linkages. Remember that Greek word. It will come up again and again in our research. For the moment, we will concentrate on this first Tribulation. We already know from Revelation 6:9 that it will involve the wholesale slaughter of individuals **for the Word of God and the testimony (of Christ) that they held**. Let's see if that description fits what Jesus is talking about in Matthew. He says that in the process of delivering believers up to tribulation that **they will not just be persecuted, but actually killed**. So far, so good. He also says that believers will be **hated by all nations for His Name's sake**. This now places Christians into the same category as the Jews. No special persecution has to be established for the Children of Israel. They have been ruthlessly persecuted all throughout their history by Midianites, Amalekites, Philistines and Haman the Agagite, direct descendant of Agag, the king that was killed by Samuel. They have been deported by Assyrians and Babylonians alike. Greeks have tried to stamp out Judaism, even sacrificing a pig on the altar in the Temple. Romans have disbursed them across Europe and the known world. The church has tried to systematically wipe them out for most of her history. Adolph Hitler proposed the Final Solution, which, fortunately for the Jews, never got a chance to become final. And now it's **our** turn. Now, in this 5th Seal, Christians all over the globe get the chance to find out again what it means to be a hated, hunted, persecuted minority.

With this in mind, imagine what will happen to the millions of quasi-Spirit-filled Christians in America, most of whom have been taught and passionately believe in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. Right now they are still clinging to the fantasy that they and they alone will be mystically transported through the atmosphere and avoid all the hard times and persecution. My conversations with most Pre-Tribbers are usually very short. The minute I suggest that they might have to pass through even the *teeniest* part of adversity, they quickly place their hands to their ears and stop listening immediately. I have even had them physically do it, much to my amazement. Every once in a while, I run across someone like you, dear reader, who secretly suspects that it is not going to be all butterflies and buttercups in the coming years. Now, after being a solitary voice preaching the truth about what is coming for 15 years, all of the "experts" who so passionately preached against me and against what the Word of God clearly states are now starting to sing a different tune. I hate to say it, but it almost makes me mad. I guess I sound like a grumpy old man, huh? This is the kind of stuff that drives prophets crazy. You want people to turn and repent. But after so many years of rejection, you almost get to the point where you say to yourself, "Good! Let them fry in their stupidity!" And sometimes God even agrees with the prophet. The Lord told Jeremiah not to even bother to pray for the people anymore. They had gone beyond the point of no return. Fortunately for you, dear reader, your salvation and my sanity, there are more and more individuals out there like you, who are starting to ask the difficult questions that the Pre-Trib camp simply can't provide rational answers to.

Jesus anticipated that this would happen, and accurately predicted the only logical outcome. He simply stated that **many would be offended**. Offended about what? That they had been told since the early 1900's that would not have to suffer at all for Christ. And all because of one vision that a little 15 year old girl said she had all the way back in 1830. The view was so attractive that it began to gather momentum, fueled by such individuals as Dwight Pentecost and Hal Lindsey. But being popular is not the same thing as being right. Jeremiah had to deal with false prophets and false prophecies all throughout his ministry. What were the characteristics of a false prophet? Hear what the Lord says to Jeremiah.

"¹³ *Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness; and from the **prophet** even to the **priest**, everyone deals falsely.* ¹⁴ *They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, **saying, 'Peace, peace!' when there is no peace.***" – Jeremiah 6:13-14

This same judgment is repeated again in Jeremiah 8:11 and Ezekiel 13:10. What was the response of the people when these false promises of deliverance did not come to pass?

"¹⁵ ***We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and there was trouble!***" -- Jeremiah 8:15

The Lord later expands on His explanation of what is involved in issuing false prophecy, and it should make the blood of most feel-good, exhortation-only "prophets" run cold with fear of divine retribution.

"¹⁶ *Thus says the LORD of hosts: "**Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; they speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the LORD.*** ¹⁷ ***They continually say to those who despise Me, 'The LORD has said, "You shall have peace"; and to everyone who walks according to the dictates of his own heart, they say, 'No evil shall come upon you.'***" ¹⁸ *For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD, and has perceived and heard His word? Who has marked His word and heard it?"* – Jeremiah 23:16-18

If we look closely at these passages, and there are dozens more just like them all through the Scriptures, we find that one of the characteristics of a false prophet is that **he tells people that only good things are going to happen to them even though their conduct does not warrant it**. For those of you who are used to typical Charismatic prophecy, this should trouble you deeply. Think carefully: what percentage of the prophecies that you have heard or been given yourself involve **nothing but good news, none of which ever seems to come to pass!** It is my experience in over 30 years of ministry that at least 70% of all prophecies utter in Charismatic and Full Gospel circles never come to pass. This is the primary reason why Paul admonished the Thessalonians not to despise prophecies (I Thessalonians 5:20). Why on earth would he have to say something like that to them? Because as the Gentile church began to experiment with the Gifts of the Spirit, there was a lot of trial and error, sometimes much on the side of error. Since everyone wants to hear good news, it soon became fashionable even among Gentile believers, to manufacture dreams, visions and prophecies. The more good things you told people, the more popular you were, that is, at least until the roof caved in and the prophecies proved to be false.

God made it clear to Jeremiah that He had neither sanctioned nor sent any of these so-called prophets.

"²¹ ***I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.*** ²² ***But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused My people to hear My words, then they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings.***" -- Jeremiah 23:21-22

Then the Lord finally unloads all of His righteous anger and wrath on these wanna-be's and never-will-be's and warns them that He is opposed to them.

"²⁵ *I have heard what the prophets have said **who prophesy lies in My name**, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!'* ²⁶ *How long will this be in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies? Indeed **they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart**,* ²⁷ *who try to make My people forget My*

name by their dreams which everyone tells his neighbor, as their fathers forgot My name for Baal. ²⁸ The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream; and **he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully.** 'What is the chaff to the wheat?' says the LORD. ²⁹ 'Is not My word like a fire?' says the LORD, 'And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?' ³⁰ **'Therefore behold, I am against the prophets,'** says the LORD, **'who steal My words every one from his neighbor.'** ³¹ Behold, I am against the prophets,' says the LORD, 'who use their tongues and say, "He says."³² 'Behold, I am against those who prophesy false dreams,' says the LORD, 'and tell them, and **cause My people to err by their lies and by their recklessness. Yet I did not send them or command them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all,**' says the LORD. ³³ So when these people or the prophet or the priest ask you, saying, 'What is the oracle of the LORD?' you shall then say to them, 'What oracle?' I will even forsake you, says the LORD. ³⁴ And as for the prophet and the priest and the people who say, 'The oracle of the LORD!' I will even punish that man and his house. ³⁵ Thus every one of you shall say to his neighbor, and every one to his brother, 'What has the LORD answered?' and, 'What has the LORD spoken?' ³⁶ And the oracle of the LORD you shall mention no more. **For every man's word will be his oracle, for you have perverted the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God.** ³⁷ Thus you shall say to the prophet, 'What has the LORD answered you?' and, 'What has the LORD spoken?' ³⁸ But since you say, 'The oracle of the LORD!' therefore thus says the LORD: 'Because you say this word, "The oracle of the LORD!" and I have sent to you, saying, "Do not say, 'The oracle of the LORD!'"' ³⁹ therefore behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you and forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and will cast you out of My presence. ⁴⁰ **And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.'**"

- Jeremiah 23:25-40

I know that's a fairly long passage, but what God has to say to these false prophets deserves more than just a sound bite. He becomes so angry at the false prophets that He forbids them to even **mention** the "Word of the Lord", a euphemism for a prophecy. What is the key sin of the false prophets? **That by convincing the people of God to believe a lie about the consequences of their conduct, they make the people immune to true prophecy and correction, and so doom the people to judgment.** That's why, in Ezekiel Chapters 3 and 33, God warns Ezekiel that if he does not warn the people of impending judgment, if they then die in their sin, unwarned and uncorrected, **Ezekiel himself will be held accountable for their blood.** This, then, is the judgment of the Lord against the Pre-Tribulation Camp. Having not only failed to warn God's people of the impending peril, but also immunizing them against those who are true prophets who are attempting to warn them to repent, these men heap up eternal judgment against themselves when the Great White Throne is revealed. How many people who have prayed a prayer of salvation and even been baptized in His precious Holy Spirit will become offended and fall away when they discover that they have been lied to all along about escaping from the time of troubles? The carnage will be awful. I estimate that as much as 80% of the Charismatic and Word/Faith movement all across the world will be come offended and fall away. The Pre-Tribulation doctrine is so firmly interwoven into their theology that it will be impossible for most of them to separate the failure of that doctrine from the validity of the other things that they have been taught. Having been told a lie regarding the positioning of the Tribulation and the Rapture, they will then begin to doubt **everything** they have been taught regarding the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Bitter and enraged, they will turn on one another and hate one another, particularly **other Christians and specifically the pastors, evangelists and, yes, "prophets" who told them they had nothing to worry about.**

Isn't that exactly what Jesus said would happen? He stated that **"many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another."** In one of the most horrifying sequences of events in all history, a huge portion of the church which claims to have the Holy Spirit will become offended and turn on the remainder who have chosen to cling to the truth and will become **the chief agents of their betrayal and persecution.** The church will literally **devour itself** during this terrible time. Huge mega-churches will be torn asunder. Families will be divided for all eternity. Friends will turn one another over to the burgeoning anti-Christian sentiment growing in governments all across the world.

All of this is terrible to imagine, and well beyond the ability of most Spirit-filled Christians to imagine. But stop for just a moment and take a good, hard look at the fellowship or church to which you belong. Now ask yourself this question: **how many of them are just barely saved and still living in deep**

personal sin? Don't like the answer? Neither did I as a pastor. Now ask yourself another question: **How much would it take for them to turn on you and betray you if it meant saving their own worthless hides?** Uh huh. Didn't like that answer any better, did you? Now, one final question before we move on: **what if they were angry at you and the pastor for teaching them a lie about being persecuted? How long would it take for them to betray the entire congregation?** Measuring that in minutes? Or seconds? Exactly. Now you understand what will happen all across the United States and the rest of the world when, nation by nation, congregation by congregation and individual by individual, the church comes to the horrible realization that it has been lied to. This kind of apostasy has already occurred in history. During the First Century, the church was faced with a moral dilemma. A good number of new converts quickly un-converted when threatened by the Roman authorities. When Christianity eventually became not only acceptable but the state religion of the empire under Constantine, the churches were flooded with former converts who had gone into apostasy under duress but who now wanted to climb back into the fold with the rest of the sheep who had stayed faithful under persecution and death. How was the church to deal with the problem? It took a whole generation to sort out the problem. The most recent example occurred in 1948 when the Communists took over China under Mao Tse-tung. The church in China had been taught, you guessed it, a **Pre-Tribulation Rapture**. They were firmly convinced that Mao was the Anti-Christ, ushering in a terrible seven year Tribulation. They were also firmly convinced that they would be raptured out of this world before Mao took over the country. Needless to say, that didn't happen. Christians were massacred by the millions. Martyrdom was the order of the day. And close on the heels of the first wave of martyrs was an even bigger wave of apostates, who, feeling angry and betrayed by their pastors and teachers, turned on other believers, hated them and betrayed them to the Communist authorities. The shell-shocked remnant was forced to rethink their theology. They re-examined the Scriptures and found the dozens of references to being faithful under persecution and adversity. They then completely rewrote their theology and adopted a Christ-one-way-or-another mindset. Sudden death meant sudden glory. Prayer and fasting became a way of life. And suddenly, the true church of the First Century re-emerged from underneath all the religious trappings it had foolishly placed on itself and began to walk in signs and wonders, with miracles and massacres running side by side, just as it did under imperial Rome. Today the church in China is the most vibrant version of Christianity on the globe.

All of this is pretty unpleasant news, but the worst is yet to come. Jesus wasn't done prophesying. What will follow next is only the logical extension of the events that have transpired up to this point. Once the frenzy of apostasy and betrayal is done, there still remains a problem. Now, America and much of Africa is filled with former believers who, although they now reject the Gospel of Jesus Christ, still hanker for something spiritual to give them a nice little buzz every Sun's Day. No problem! You see, dear friends, the Anti-Christ isn't just **against** Christ. He wants to **replace** Christ in the hearts and minds of God's people. And so he strategically places **false prophets** and **false apostles** in the path of these wandering, wondering souls. They begin to preach about a New Age that is about to dawn, an age in which Christianity with its bigotry and homophobia will be done away with and replaced with a New Religion and a New Savior. *"Behold!" they will say, "He is about to appear on the earth and will bring peace to the earth for the first time. Not even your phony Jesus was able to do that. This new savior will truly be the Prince of Peace that everyone has been talking about. Come and join us as we worship him."* Many former Christian churches will become the homes of this new religion. Even many in the Muslim world will begin to worship this new leader, viewing him as the *Madhi* prophesied in Islam, their very own version of the Christ. But leading the way in the vast new, global religion will be **millions of former Spirit-filled Christians**, who, having rejected their former faith, now just as eagerly embrace a new religion in which they get their very own **personal spirit** to indwell them, instead of having to share in a single Holy Spirit as before. I am sure that you can figure out exactly what kind of spirit that "personal spirit" actually is. Oh, there will be signs and wonders. Jesus said that there would be. As soon as the Holy Spirit is pulled from the Gentile world at the end of the 6th Seal, demonic signs, wonders and miracles will abound across the globe. The greatest of the false prophets will be able to bring fire down from heaven. Many will hail him as a new Elijah, come to usher in a new age and a new religion. Exaltation of self will be the order of the day. Selfless love will be mocked and discarded as old, shopworn and useless. Sexual "diversity" and "freedom" will be the keywords of the day, as all previous sexual boundaries are discarded and men, women and animals all intermingle in a hellish orgy. The creation of human-animal and animal-animal hybrids will be one of the top priorities of the geneticists of the day.

All of this is prophesied, at one point or another, in the Holy Scriptures. All of it makes sense. Each new step will logically follow in the footsteps of the others that went before it. Yet in the midst of all this, there will remain a faithful few, a remnant, a small part left over, that absolutely refuses to bow down, deny the faith or lose hope. There will be fewer each day for a while, as all the chaff and dross is shaken out of the church. Then, when only the pure wheat remains, a remarkable thing will occur. Just before it is gathered up into the granary, an explosion of the crop will occur. With everything carnal burned out of them by the fires of persecution, the remnant will share, testify, witness and lead untold millions or perhaps even billions to Christ during the final hours of the planet. Yes, many of the new converts will accept Christ only to be struck down, headless, in a matter of moments. But their immortal souls will be set free even more instantly. The more Rome persecuted the church and tried to wipe it out, the brighter the lights inside believers burned, and the more quickly they multiplied. The same will be true in this final chapter. And, just as Jesus said, **he who endures to the end shall be saved**. Not he who falls away at the beginning of adversity. Not he who rejoices for a short while but then burns out when offense occurs on account of the Word. Not he who becomes entangled in the world, the desire for riches and other things and the cares surrounding him. Only he who endures. Who refuses to walk away from Christ, regardless of the consequences. **He who endures to the end.**

It would be wonderful and simple if we were able to stop there in today's discussion, but, alas, there are some sticky issues we have to deal with. You see, Jesus doesn't stop speaking at that point. He goes on to elaborate in great detail about a number of other issues, and, in doing so, creates a **ton** of confusion for Bible scholars. After saying that the Gospel must be preached to all the nations before the end must come, He then continues, and begins to get very specific.

" ¹⁵ Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be **great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.** ²² And **unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.** "

– Matthew 24:15-22

When scholars examine this passage, they generally focus on the "abomination of desolation", linking the reference to the Anti-Christ and a **future tense** event, something that has **not yet happened**, but will at some future point in time. This *E-Pistle* is not the place for an advanced study of this topic, but I discuss the whole issue at great length in *Episode Four – The Crucified Bride*. To understand this passage, and the positioning of the appearance of the Anti-Christ in relationship to the Tribulation, we have to back up a little bit in the conversation, and remember the original three-part question that the disciples asked.

" ³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, **when will these things be?** And what will be the **sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?**' "

– Matthew 24:3

As we have discussed elsewhere in this series, the disciples probably thought they were asking a single, three-part question. Unfortunately, as time would prove, they were really asking **three** questions. As a result, Jesus gave them **three** answers. That fact that the Olivet Discourse is actually broken into three separate parts is completely missed by most Revelation scholars. Let's break out what Jesus said, and match the question to the answer.

(1) When will these things be?

This question was asked in reference to Jesus' prediction that the Temple would be so utterly destroyed that not one stone would be left on top on another. He is, of course, referring to the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem in AD 70 by Titus and

the Roman legions. In the process of doing so, Titus sacrificed pigs flesh on the altar, thus defiling it. This is the **abomination of desolation referred to by Jesus**. Does it also refer to some future event? Possibly. But it is not as absolutely certain as most so-called scholars would have you believe. Where did Jesus answer this question? In **Matthew 24:15-20**. More on that in just a second.

(2) What will be the sign of Your coming?

This answer is found in **Matthew 24:21-31**. In fact, Jesus specifically mentions the **sign of His coming** in Verse 30, followed immediately by the Rapture in Verse 31. This answer is more detailed than the previous one, because so many more things must happen.

(3) What will be the end of the age?

This answer is found in **Matthew 24:4-14**. In fact, in Verse 14, Jesus specifically says, "*and then the end shall come*". Everything else in the passage is meant to explain the sequence of events that will lead up to the end.

Immediately we seem to have a problem. The order of events as outlined in Revelation is **not** the same as the order in Matthew. Various scholars have bent themselves into a pretzel trying to reconcile the differences in the sequencing. Actually, it's quite simple, and we have already discussed the reason why. Jesus, in the Olivet Discourse, was speaking **extemporaneously**, off the cuff, on the fly, by the seat of his pants, just like a politician fielding a multi-part question at a news conference. This was not a prepared speech, like the edict contained in Revelation, handed down from the Father to the Son for implementation. This was Jesus, **as a man** (and that's the other reason why!), answering their multi-part question **as the answers came to Him through the Holy Spirit**.

When seen in this light, it turns out that there really is no conflict between the Olivet Discourse and the Scroll of Revelation. Both contain exactly the same facts. But the Olivet Discourse is less structured, and, as such must take a seat behind the orderly Father-to-Son edict issued in Revelation. So when you are trying to match the two passages up, always remember that the Master Outline is found in Revelation. When you take the various statements in Matthew and link them by symbol and phrase to Revelation, everything matches up perfectly, thus ending the debate about the two passages.

The fascinating thing about both narratives is that I can prove conclusively to you that there is no such thing as a Pre-Tribulation Rapture by simply following the outline given. In the Olivet Discourse, the Rapture occurs in Verse 31, all the way at the end of the narrative. In Revelation, the Rapture occurs in Revelation 7:9, documented in Revelation 7:13-14. Interestingly enough, Jesus stops at the Rapture in Matthew. But that's perfectly OK, because the Wrath of God, the dreaded 7th Seal, won't involve any of God's faithful. The prepared half of the church, commonly referred to as the Bride, will be caught away in the Rapture, having endured both the 5th Seal (the Tribulation) and the 6th Seal (the Great Tribulation) and been found faithful. Only the disobedient portion of the church (the Five Foolish Virgins), the Jewish people and the unbelieving, rebellious Gentile world will be left to face God's Wrath. I wouldn't want to be there, **would you???**

There is much, much more that we must talk about regarding the Olivet Discourse. But that will have to wait until tomorrow, when we will make an attempt at **Decoding the Discourse**. Until then, may God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him!

Day 18 – Decoding the Discourse



“³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” – Matthew 24:3

Yesterday we opened a can of worms by mentioning to you that the order of events in Revelation is not the same as the order of events in Matthew in what is commonly called the Olivet Discourse. Even though we discussed why that is so, we still left a lot of unresolved issues, so it is only fair to dedicate at least one more day to analyzing step by step what is going to happen and when it is going to happen. If, by the time we are done, you still believe in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture, I don't know what anyone could do to convince you otherwise. For some people, only the threat of a cold steel scimitar poised over their neck will finally get them to reconsider their view on the subject. But, as the writer of the book of Hebrews said, “*we have better hopes in your case*”.

If you will remember, we shared with you how the Olivet Discourse is actually divided into three answers, one for each of the questions that the disciples asked. Now it's time to actually look at each of those three answers, and decode them, one statement at a time. This will take a little time, but it is absolutely necessary so that you can have a full and complete understanding of this passage. Then, the next time someone tries to do a fast shuffle on you and misuse this critical passage, you will be able to call those shufflin' feet of theirs onto the Biblical carpet!

When we look at the Olivet Discourse and try to picture the setting in which it occurred, we quickly find ourselves on amazingly familiar territory. Jesus had confronted the Scribes and Pharisees only perhaps an hour or so before in the Temple, and ended the fiery conversation with the famous Hebrew greeting, “*Baruch hava beshem Adonai!*” (Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord!). Jesus warned them that they would not see Him again until they were willing to at least offer their very own Messiah the common courtesy of the standard greeting that godly people used with one another. Outraged, He then turned and stormed out of the Temple, only to encounter the twelve casually sightseeing. After a brief and somewhat unpleasant encounter with them, He continued back out of town, through the Eastern Gate and to Bethany, where He walked part of the way up the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane, where He found a comfortable place and sat down, trying to deal with all of the anger and the emotions of rejection and frustration that He was dealing with because He had to do everything He did as a man, and men can feel anger and rejection and frustration. Finally, seeing that He had calmed down, the disciples gathered around Him and Peter, James, John and Andrew posed the three questions.

He probably had not anticipated the questions because He was dealing with issues of His own regarding the rejection of His Messiahship by the Jewish people. So, when the three questions came, His mind fastened on the **last** of the three questions, and He began to answer it **first**.

Question #3 – What will be the end of the age?

“⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: ‘**Take heed that no one deceives you.**’ ⁵ For **many will come in My name**, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of **wars and rumors of wars**. See that you are not troubled; for **all these things must come to pass**, but **the end is not yet**. ⁷ For **nation will rise against nation**, and **kingdom against kingdom**. And there will be **famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places**. ⁸ **All these are the beginning**

of sorrows. ⁹ Then **they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you**, and you will be **hated by all nations for My name's sake.** ¹⁰ And then **many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.** ¹¹ Then **many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.** ¹² And because **lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.** ¹³ But **he who endures to the end shall be saved.** ¹⁴ And **this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.** – Matthew 24:4-14

Now, remember the basic theme of this answer: **what will be the end of the age?** In order to answer this question, Jesus is forced to discuss **everything that will happen before the end**, so that the disciples will know when the end is coming and be able to anticipate it. With that in mind, He gave them a kind of **checklist** and **timeline** that they could follow. By turning what He said into a list, suddenly, everything becomes much clearer.

- (1) **There will be a great deal of deception regarding false Christs and false messiahs.** Don't be sucked in by all their rhetoric. It will all be a lie.
- (2) **There will be wars and rumors of wars.** Don't worry about those, either. All of these things will have to come to pass, **but the end will not occur at that time** (Pre-Tribbers, pay close attention!).
- (3) **"Nation" (ethnos - ethnic group) will rise against "nation".** (Notice how Jesus lists the internecine warfare between ethnic groups **first** in the Olivet Discourse and **second** in Revelation. That's the first "discrepancy", which, of course, really isn't one for the reasons that we have already discussed).
- (4) **"Kingdom" (basileia - nation) will rise against "kingdom".** (This is the other flip-flop from Revelation, because in the seals nations rise against nations **first**, before the explosion of ethnic warfare).
- (5) **There will be famines.** This corresponds to the 3rd Seal, with its wheat and barley crop failures, and, to a certain extent, to the 4th Seal as well. This is a perfect match with Revelation.
- (6) **There will be pestilences (plagues).** This corresponds to the 4th Seal, with its pale horse, perfectly.
- (7) **There will be earthquakes in various places.** Now, we have skipped the traces again in the Revelation, hurtled straight over the 5th Seal of global persecution, the Tribulation, and moved to the **first global earthquake since the Flood.** Actually, what Jesus said about earthquakes in **various places** is already happening. I have seen some very interesting statistics about the dramatic increase in earthquakes **all over the globe.** In fact, I recently saw a chart, and use it in my PowerPoint presentation on the **Great Tribulation**, the **6th Seal**, to illustrate the incredible increase in **undersea earthquakes.** There has been a **geometric increase** in the number of undersea earthquakes in the last 100 years. Why is that significant? Because later on, in the 7th Seal, one of the Bowl Judgments will be that the **oceans will die and turn the color of a dead man's blood.** Now, I hope and pray that you have never seen a dead person, and that you never have to. But I can tell you with absolute certainty that the blood of a dead person does not run red. Instead, with the loss of oxygen, it turns a very dark red, almost black. It is a grisly sight. And what could possibly kill all the life in the oceans, beginning with the microscopic life forms upon which all other life depends? The loss of oxygen from the ocean, and the pollution of the ocean by vast amounts of toxic gases and minerals. Where could they possibly come from? From all the exposed **black smoker vents** which are continuing to open up at an increasing rate all across the floor of the oceans. They are pouring lethal materials into the oceans, not from the top, but from the bottom. By the way, Jesus has now also included the 6th Seal in our little to-do list of things that must happen before the end comes. We only have to pick up the 5th Seal to complete the list, and that will happen very shortly. Remember, Jesus is speaking **extemporaneously** as the **Son of Man**, so it's perfectly OK for Him to ramble a little bit. He'll straighten the list out for us when He shows up later on in His very own Revelation.

- (8) Jesus stops at this point in the timeline and specifically warns the disciples that all of the events listed above are **only the beginning of sorrow!** Again, dear Pre-Trib friends, please take careful notice of what He just said. After war, ethnic genocide, famine and plague, it is still **just the beginning** of the terrible things that are to happen. We still have to walk through both the 5th and the 6th Seals before the Rapture will finally occur.
- (9) **They will deliver you up to (the) Tribulation.** Congratulations. We have finally arrived at the very thing which Pro-Tribbers have enthusiastically taught we would **never** have to go through, and whoop, here we are! We haven't reached the end just yet. We have some more stops to make along the way. People are going to **kill you**. You will be **hated by all nations**.
- (10) **Many will become offended.** They will **betray one another**. They will **hate one another**. We will see the greatest **apostacia**, or **falling away**, that we ever have seen in the history of the church, **all because of a certain doctrine that promised safety and security but never delivered on that promise**. Am I being too blunt? Too tough? Rather than to see you become offended, fall away, miss the Rapture at the end of the 6th Seal, take the Mark of the Beast in the 7th Seal and burn forever in the Lake of Fire. No, dear friends, I don't think **any** measure that I might take to save you from that likelihood would be too strong. If I broke your shoulder pushing you out of the way of an oncoming truck and thus saved your life, would I be sued by you for harming you? Perhaps in this insane society in which we live, yes. But not if you have any sense at all in your head. You would realize that my only concern was to save your life, and my only recourse was to jerk you as violently as possible out of harm's way.
- (11) **False prophets will arise and deceive many.** Why? For the very reasons that we have just outlined, plus all the other things which we covered in yesterday's *E-Pistle*. After all, **someone** will have to be there to take care of all those poor, lost, confused sheep, **won't they???**
- (12) **Lawlessness will abound.** Once a generation of lawless individuals has been produced, bitter, resentful, carnal, selfish and rebellious, a leader will be necessary to properly represent those individuals. And the **Man of Lawlessness**, a.k.a. the **Man of Sin**, a.k.a. the **Son of Perdition**, a.k.a. the **Anti-Christ** will begin his slow but steady rise to ascendancy, beginning with one Aryan nation, probably Austria, then expanding to a three-nation pact and finally into a ten-nation confederacy from which, in the 7th Seal in the 13th Chapter of Revelation, he will finally assume complete control and domination of the world. But, in order to do so, he will need to begin the process during the 5th Seal and build from there. His foundation will be a generation of lawlessness, and a people of lawlessness.
- (13) **The love of many will grow cold.** Love of God, love of nation, love of family and love of friends will perish. The only "love" left will be of two kinds: **Love of self**, also known as egotism and selfishness, and **eros**, or **sexual "love"**. Both view others as objects to be manipulated, used and then discarded. Treachery and betrayal will abound. Sexual immorality will sweep the globe. If you think what is happening in America right now is bad, just wait until then. Oh, wait. That's right. We **are** in the 5th Seal already, aren't we? Do you realize what that implies? Somewhere in Austria or Germany right now lurks the man who will eventually rise to world domination. He is waiting for the opportunity to appear to the world as a savior, a man of peace. That will come, starting around 2012, with the trigger events in 2014. I write about these trigger events prophetically in *Episode Five – The Time of the Beast*. But he is already there. **Waiting**.
- (14) **But despite all of these things, he who endures to the end shall be saved.** Now, take one more careful look at the passage of Scripture that we just quoted, and examine my analysis of it. Tell me, dear friend, have I in any way added to, taken from, or distorted what Jesus said? No? I didn't think so. You see, the Lord has given me a few gifts. One of them is the ability to take complex things and make them easy to explain. I'm a "*splainer*". I "*splain*" things to people so that they can understand them. That's what Philip did for the Ethiopian Eunuch. The Ethiopian was a highly intelligent man; otherwise he would not have occupied the high position he did in his nation's government. But there was something about Isaiah 53 that he just didn't get. Philip was anointed by the Lord to give him the understanding that he needed in order to be saved. That's

my job in regards to you. When most people read Scripture, they do not understand what they are reading. It takes a *splainer* like me to help them get where they need to go in their understanding. And, frankly, there's a whole lot to "get" about Revelation and the End Times. In the light of Jesus' answer, **properly divided** or explained, can there be any doubt about the timing of the Rapture? Oh, wait. We forgot something.

(15) This Gospel of the Kingdom MUST be preached and WILL be preached TO ALL NATIONS.

And then, and only then, **can the end come**. There are still untold hundreds, perhaps thousands of ethnic groups and tribes that have yet to hear the Gospel and the nations in which they dwell are in most cases unceasingly hostile to any attempts to evangelize them. Missionaries are usually forbidden. Bibles are far and few between, and many of these ethnic groups have no Bible written in their own language. We still have a long, long way to go to take care of all of them. "But Pastor Ray", you might say, "Matthew says that we have to preach to the **nations**, not the ethnic groups! Surely we have already done that and Christ is certain to return almost immediately!" Ah, my friend! If only that were true. Remember the little comparison between the Greek words **ethnos** and **basileia**? Remember how we explained to you that **ethnos** means **ethnic group**, not **nation**? Well, if you pull out your dusty, unused copy of Strong's, you will find that the word translated **nation** in Matthew 24:14 is actually our little friend **ethnos**. Not nation, ethnic group! So now, we have compounded the problem for a speedy return for Christ. Don't get me wrong. I want Him back as much, if not more than you do. The cry of the church almost 2,000 years ago was **Maranatha**, which means, "**Even so, Lord come!**" But what is God's answer for those same 2,000 years? **We must wait a little longer until all of us to die for our faith have actually perished. And then, only when ALL of these events have been accomplished CAN THE END COME!**

Question #1 – When will these things be?

" ¹⁵ **Therefore** when you see the '**abomination of desolation**,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ **then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.** ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath." – Matthew 24:15-20

Having addressed the **third and final question** that the four inquisitive disciples had asked, He turned His attention to the **first question**, the one that centered on that uncomfortable confrontation at the Temple back in Jerusalem. It was logical for them to be concerned about this issue first, because it involved their own native country. If Jerusalem and the Temple were to be reduce to utter rubble, it would be a really, really good idea to know **when** it would happen, so that you could arrange your vacation plans to be **out of town when it happened!** The disciples were concerned not only for the welfare of their nation and their people, but also for their own personal safety. It would eventually prove to be totally irrelevant, since all but John would die a martyr's death anyway, several before the destruction of Jerusalem, and some afterwards. It is within the framework of these six simple verses that almost all current End Times theology and Pre-Tribulation Rapture doctrine go totally askew. Ask yourself a question: how many times have you heard or been taught from the pulpit of your own church that this particular passage clearly referred to the Anti-Christ? Dozens? Perhaps hundreds? No doubt. What if I told you that this passage may very well have **absolutely nothing to do with the Anti-Christ?** Would that shock you? It should, because the more I study it and the historical circumstances surrounding it, the more convinced I become that we have taken these six verses and dislocated them out of the time stream to fit our own particular preferences. Once again, we have decided to redefine the Bible, instead of letting the World of God redefine us.

Let's take a good hard look at what Jesus is saying here and see if we can make sense of it. When He says **therefore** or **then**, you can often count on there being a **change of topic**. At the very least, it always indicates a **new point is to be made**. That makes it easy to turn it into an outline. In this case, the **therefore** in Verse 15 indicates a shift from the topic **what will be the end of the age** to **when will the prophecy You issued about an hour ago regarding the destruction of the**

Temple actually come to pass? All the rest of you can worry about the end of the age. Me, I'm gonna find out about this no stone on another thing and concentrate on it. We are notoriously short-sighted. Our current global attitude regarding runaway global warming is a classic example. There is no doubt in my mind that we have passed several points of no return regarding stopping runaway warming, and are about to cross several other critical ones as well. Yet we act, all across the world, as if it were not **really** all that important to **me**. I have been studying this topic for quite some time, and am firmly convinced that a significant percentage of the traumatic events in the 6th and 7th Seals are directly linked and attributable to what we are doing to poison our planet. This is neither the time nor the place to go into the subject, but the disciples' short-sightedness is mirrored in us today. We still only really care about our own often-worthless hides, and we do the absolute minimum to get by, and, of course, to somehow **escape the Wrath that is to come** with as little effort as possible.

Jesus begins by discussing the **Abomination of Desolations**, sometimes translated as the **Abomination that makes desolate**. In plain English, something is going to be done that is so abhorrent, so hideous, and so unclean to a devout, ceremonially clean Jew, that it would **forever render the object involved unusable for religious purposes again**. It would make it **desolate**, or **abandoned**. So, what kind of hideous act would qualify for such a description? Interestingly enough, it had already happened once before in Jewish history, in fact, not all that many years before Jesus' time.

Because of Israel's location smack dab in the middle of major trade routes between the east and the west, it had been a frequent target of attack and invasion. As long as kings like David, Solomon, Hezekiah and Jehoshaphat ruled, the nation was relative safe. But when ungodly kings ruled and the people practiced ungodly habits, both the Northern and Southern kingdoms were the target of frequent invasion and often overrun. Sometimes, all they did was swap one master for another. After all, they told Samuel they wanted a king **just like all the other nations had**, right??? Often as not, that's exactly what they got: **a king just as ungodly and corrupt and weak-willed as the kings of the nations around them**. Not all prayers should be answered, for obvious reasons.

After suffering defeat and humiliation at the hands of the Assyrians and the Babylonians, the people of God were next subjected to subjugation by one Alexander the Great. Alexander swept through the known world until the age of 33, when he either died of an illness contracted in India or was poisoned by his own generals, who were frankly tired of the chase and wanted to go home to Greece. After his death, his vast empire was carved up among the four generals who served him. One of those generals produced the Ptolemies, who ruled Egypt, and another produced the Seleucids, who ruled Israel and the surrounding area. From the lineage of the Seleucids came as lunatic a king as has ever ruled a nation, one **Antiochus Epiphanes**. One of Alexander's overriding goals was to **Hellenize** his entire empire. Now, that doesn't mean that everyone was to act like someone named Helen. The Greek culture was referred to as Hellenic because one of the early tribes, under the leadership of fabled Achilles, was called **Hellas**. When the Greek city-states united to sail against Troy under Agamemnon's leadership, they decided to unite under that name. Later on, Alexander would make it official. To Hellenize a people meant that they had to abandon their own culture, practices, weights and measures and other details and adopt a single standard common to everyone else in the empire. From Alexander's standpoint, it was a brilliant move. It meant that information, goods and services and military enforcement could occur much more smoothly. A single, unified culture has been one of America's great strengths in the past. While acknowledging and permitting cultural diversity (the Irish, Scotch, Germans, Italians and the like all maintained some cultural identity to this day), nonetheless a single language, English, and a single religion, Christianity, have dominated our nation. As such, we have moved as a whole with a single purpose, and a common base on which to stand. All incoming immigrants knew that one of the requirements of this new land would be to learn the *lingua franca* or language of exchange for their newly adopted homeland. It did not matter if they spoke to one another in their own native tongue, so long as they were able to communicate with others outside their cultural enclaves in English. I can remember as a freshman at the University of Evansville traveling to Chicago with my good friend Pete Chiculski (I **think** that's how he spelled it!) to visit with him for Thanksgiving. Nobody could spell Pete's last name, and only a few could pronounce it, so we just called him Pete Chicago. I had a leg up in the whole cross-cultural process because I had gone steady in high school with a young girl named Suzie Jamilokowski and dated another girl named Shirley Schoiniere

(pronounced *schwan-yea*). Suzie was Polish and Shirley was French. When I went to Chicago and visited with Pete and his family, when Pete's mother didn't want me to understand what she was saying, she would speak to Pete or his father in Polish. Most of her conversations were in broken English, peppered with Polish words that she didn't know the English equivalent to. **But at least she was trying.** One of the great frustrations of Americans today is the apparent unwillingness of Hispanic immigrants, particularly those from Mexico, to learn English. At the current rate, America will be completely bilingual within the next 30 years or so. In fact, in Texas, many phone menus now list *Espanol* rather than English as language selection number one. America is rapidly moving from a mono-cultural, unified country to a multi-cultural, divided country, much like most of the countries in the world today. This can only serve to weaken our nation, because we will be divided from within. Jesus clearly pointed out what would happen to a divided household, and we are no exception to the rule.

Alexander had this cultural and political unity in mind when he first introduced Hellenization. But some of his successors went much too far in their fanatical enforcement of the concept. Under Antiochus Epiphanes, this fanaticism went completely off the edge. Here are the rules that Antiochus forced upon the Jews:

1. **They were to all be one people.** (On face value, not a bad or evil statement)
2. **Each subject was to abandon his native customs.** (Uh oh. Can we see where this is going?)
3. **All sacrifices were forbidden.** (Directly violating Jewish law)
4. **Sabbaths and Feast Days were to be profaned.** (Guaranteed to cause violence)
5. **To desecrate the Sanctuary and the Priests.** (Now to open rebellion)
6. **To build high altars and shrines and idols.** (More of the same)
7. **To sacrifice swine and unclean animals.** (Now we're talking war!)
8. **To leave their sons UNCIRCUMCISED.** (Violating the most fundamental covenant of all!)
9. **To forget the Torah and change all their observations.** (Absolutely unthinkable)
10. **Execute ANYONE who violates these ordinances.** (Shades of Hitler!)
11. **Erect the ABOMINATION THAT DESECRATES on the 15th day of Hislev by SACRIFICING A PIG ON THE ALTAR OF BURNT INCENSE!** (Congratulations. You wanted a war? **You got a war!!!**)
12. **Sacrifice incense at the doors of the houses and in the street.** (Too late now. Too late.)
13. **If you find a Torah, tear it up and burn it!** (You got the spears? Bows? Arrows? Good!)
14. **If anyone is found with a scroll of the covenant or observing the Torah, put him to death.** (Everyone ready? Good. On the count of three...)

Can you imagine the reaction of the Jews of that day to such an edict? It caused the region to explode into open warfare, and brought about I and II Maccabees, stories about that period and the brave Jewish freedom fighters who temporarily brought independence to their country. Unfortunately, Rome eventually brought that period of independence to an end, and so Judea chafed under Roman rule and never forgot what had been done to their culture, their religion and their Temple by the Greeks.

So it was that when Jesus spoke of the **Abomination of Desolations**, He was clearly referring to an event that had **already happened in the past and was destined to happen again very soon.** When would it be fulfilled? In AD 70, under the Roman General Titus. Jerusalem would be sacked and burned and the Temple would literally be dismantled stone by stone by the Roman legion soldiers, who had been told that the top of the Temple was made of pure gold. When the Temple had been burned, so it was said, the gold had seeped into the cracks and crevices between the stones. Since Romans soldiers got paid a lousy base salary (in **salt**, no less! The Latin word for salt is **salarium**, from which we get the English word **salary**). The only bonus those boys ever got paid was in **pillage and plunder.** So after the fighting was over, the winners got to strip the losers of everything they had. Even the Children of Israel did that against Ammon, Moab and Mt. Seir during the days of Jehoshaphat (II Chronicles 20). As a result, the soldiers disassembled the entire Temple, much like a jigsaw puzzle, searching for non-existent gold in the seams between the giant foundation stones.

To help you further understand the events that transpired, here is a parallel passage from the Gospel of Luke, along with a little Pastor Ray commentary inserted along the way:

"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then (When? When the armies of Rome attack Jerusalem with the clear intention of destroying it) let those who are in Jerusalem flee to the mountains (Good idea, considering the city is going to be sacked and burned!), let those who are in midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. (Makes sense to me!) For these are the days of vengeance (Read Matthew 23:32-36. Jesus specifically states that **on the Jews of that day** will come the righteous blood shed on the earth from Abel on. He specifically says that **all these things will come upon this generation**, the generation to whom He is talking. Remember, don't personalize the word **this**, as if He were talking to you. Remember the **context** in which He was speaking. He was speaking to a **particular generation of people**. And also remember that some of these very same people had transferred the curse involved in killing a righteous, innocent man off of Pilate and onto themselves in Matthew 27:25, when the crowd assembled in front of Pilate said, "His blood be upon us and on our children".), that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they (The Jews of His day) will fall by the edge of the sword (Exactly what happened!), and be led away captive into all nations. (Clearly has already happened) And Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED." -- Luke 21:20-24

Can you see how both the passage in Matthew and the parallel passage in Luke clear speak of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70? Oh, and by the way, while Titus was at it, he set up an altar to the Roman God Jupiter in the Temple, thus defiling it all over again, and creating the Abomination of Desolations that Jesus was referring to. There can be no doubt. From a historical perspective, every single thing that Jesus said regarding the **Abomination of Desolations was totally fulfilled in AD 70**. So, what does that imply for the current use of these passages to support something that the Anti-Christ is supposed to do? It puts it into clear jeopardy. Now "scholars" get around this by creating what they call a **near-far** prophetic fulfillment model. What they mean by that is that **certain prophecies may be fulfilled more than one time in history**. I struggle with this concept. Part of me, familiar as I am with the cyclical nature of history, wants to buy into the concept. The other part of me, however, wants nothing to do with it because it permits wholesale tampering with the authenticity and accuracy of the Word of God. Let me explain. Psalm 22, for example, has multiple prophetic references to the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. It is one of the most anointed passages in the Bible. Every single one of the details David referred to were literally fulfilled that fateful day on Golgotha. Every single one of those details referred **exclusively** to the **first** coming of Christ. I would not expect them to be fulfilled **again**. That would put them in direct conflict with all the prophetic details in the Bible regarding the **second** coming of Christ. The same is true of Jesus' prophecy regarding Daniel's Abomination of Desolation. But, in a bizarre twist, that prophecy **has already been fulfilled twice!** This is where things get really sticky. You could argue that the **second fulfillment was attached to the second issuing of the prophecy**. That would be totally consistent. Jesus, in **repeating** Daniel's prophecy, actually was **re-issuing it**, thus allow it to occur a **second time!** Head spinning yet? Don't feel bad. This revelation is coming to me even as I write it down, and I am struggling to keep up with what the Holy Spirit is showing me even as the words flow out of my fingers onto the keyboard in front of me. I never know when this is going to happen, but I sure do love it when it does happen!

Without a consistent model of operation, the Bible turns into a quagmire of subjective interpretation. If God is not consistent in Who He is and how He deals with man, then I can interpret any Scripture in any way I darned well please. And that clearly violates II Peter 1:20, a principle that I hold at the core of my entire systematic theology. You see, dear friends, **everything** I teach is integrated into a seamless whole. Everything has to and does fit together. The more I study the Word of God, the more incredible, totally impossible "random occurrences" I find. As I have said repeatedly, the Bible is the ultimate **Matrix**, and Neo and Morpheus can't hold a candle to the revealed Word of God. Ironically, there are multiple Biblical references all throughout that movie trilogy. By far the best one is when Morpheus' ship, the **Nebuchadnezzar**, is destroyed. As he watches the mechanical calamari dismantle

his vessel, he says, in direct quote from Nebuchadnezzar himself in the Book of Daniel, "*I had a dream, and it is gone from me!*" referring to the destruction of his beloved vessel.

I need to add one final observation before we close for today. If you will remember, all the way back in Matthew 24:16-20, Jesus warns his disciples, and, by implication, all of **their** disciples, whom they would teach Jesus' words to, to **flee from Jerusalem as fast as they could when they saw this desecration occur**. In order for our stance that this passage has already been fulfilled, this also would have to have happened, and, in fact, it did.

After the desecration of the Temple, in clear fulfillment of Jesus' words, Titus was forced to withdraw from Jerusalem militarily and to break his own siege of the city because of political machinations back in Rome. Titus was in danger of losing his own place politically, and so had to hurry back to the capital of the empire along with his army. During this momentary lull in the action, the Jewish Christians in the city, recognizing the **absolute fulfillment** of Jesus' words, would flee from the city pell-mell and head into the mountains, looking for places to hide from the wrath to come in their own day. The non-believing Jews, on the other hand, infused with a false sense of patriotism, stayed in the city, to their ultimate doom. Over a million Jews died when Vespasian, under the order of Titus, returned to mop up the Jewish insurrection, sacking and burning the city and leveling the Temple to the ground, just as Jesus had said.

No matter how we look at this matter, history seems to point to the fact that everything Jesus had to say in answering the first of the disciple's questions was completely fulfilled a very long time ago. Up until now we have answered two of the disciple's questions, but one question still remains, and it is the one which burns into the heart of every Christian believer since then. What will be **The Sign of Your Coming?** Tomorrow we will look deeply into this final question. Until then, hold on to your faith, saints!

Day 19 – The Sign of Your Coming



“³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” – Matthew 24:3

For the last two days, we have been examining the Olivet Discourse found in Matthew Chapter 24. In the process, we have answered the disciples’ **first** question, “*When will these things (the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem) happen?*”. We have also answered their **third** question, “*What will be the end of the age?*”. In doing so, we established a clear timeline which the end times must follow, and successfully reconciled it with the Seals of Revelation, eliminating the so-called discrepancies by pointing out the differences in Jesus as Son of Man and Jesus as Son of God and the difference between an extemporaneous response and a formal edict. This leaves us with only one unanswered question, the **second** question that they asked, “*What will be sign of your coming?*” In order to reply to that question, we have to turn to Jesus’ third answer, found in Matthew 24:21-31.

“²¹ For **then** there will be **great tribulation**, such as has **not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.** ²² And **unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.** ²³ **Then** if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. ²⁴ For **false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.** ²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand. ²⁶ 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. ²⁷ For as **the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.** ²⁸ For **wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.** ²⁹ **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.** ³⁰ **Then** the **sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.** ³¹ And **(then) He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**” – Matthew 24:20-31

In looking at my editing of this passage, it would seem that I have an obsession with the word **then**, and with good cause. Many years ago, there was an old rock and roll song called “*And Then Along Came John*”. In the song, one terrible thing after another happened to the innocent heroine as the villain placed her at harm’s risk. But in every case, **along came John**, who rescued our heroine out of every one of those perils. In describing each crisis, the narrator would say, “*and then he (fill in the blank)*”. The use of the word then implies that **the next step or action is taking place**, moving us from one point in the timeline to another. This is exactly what Jesus is doing in this passage. Just as in His first response to their third question, He uses the word then to step from one major event to another. As such, the passage lends itself perfectly to be being converted into a list, and so we shall do just that!

(1) Then there will be (the) Great Tribulation. Several articles ago, I mentioned the Greek word **thlipsis**. It is used all through the Olivet Discourse as well as in Revelation in the 6th Seal. We have already identified one use of this word in the Tribulation itself, the 5th Seal. Now we encounter the word again. Just as Jesus gave us link after link in Matthew to the first five seals

when He answered the question "*when will the end come?*", so now He is going to give us link after link and clue after clue to identify this final answer. **Thlipsis** means **tribulation** or **trouble**. We might use the term **crisis** combined with the word **suffering** to best understand its full meaning. In the 5th Seal, the term is used all by itself. Not so here. Jesus adds another word to modify it, the Greek word **megas**, from which we get our word **mega**. The KJV and NKJV both translate the word as **great**, but if you think about what the word mega means in our society today, you could also translate the phrase as the **Huge Tribulation** or **Super Tribulation**. No matter how you look at it, the **Megas Thlipsis** is something far above and beyond what had preceded it. Far and above, Pastor Ray? What could be worse than a global persecution of all Christians? How about a series of global disasters affecting **all** mankind, not just Christians? It's almost as if the earth has all that it can stand and rebels by shaking puny mankind off of its surface. The first four Seals were regionally limited, but once Satan and rebellious mankind take the gloves off and push persecution to a global level, God sees his bet and raises him one, unleashing the most devastating series of cataclysms in the history of the world on the inhabitants of its surface.

- (2) **This series of events is going to be the worst disaster since the beginning of the earth, and nothing after it will equal it either.** That's a pretty impressive statement to make, considering that Jesus was including the Flood, caused by another huge seismic disruption, and the splitting apart of the supercontinent **Pangea**, during the days of Peleg. We know from studying the geological record that the earth has had a pretty violent past, but what Jesus has just told us is that we ain't seen nuthin' yet!
- (3) **This series of events is going to be so violent that unless it was deliberately shortened, nothing would be left alive on the planet.** There's always been some discussion about the term "**all flesh**". Some believe that it refers only to human flesh, while others think, as I do, that it would be the ultimate **E.L.E.**, or **Extinction-Level Event**. We've got an awful lot of ways to do this planet in nowadays. There is the always popular **nuclear option**, complete with trailing nuclear winter and total blackout of the sun due to pyroclastic ash and dust in the upper atmosphere. Newly added to our options is **the global warming method**, in which we create runaway global warming, boosting the temperature of the planet up by perhaps as much as six degrees, causing the center of the planet and most of the Northern and Southern Hemisphere to turn into a vast desert wasteland. Another option that we have been toying with is the **biological option**, a scenario in which we finally create something so totally lethal that it becomes impossible to create an antidote for it in time, all of the science fiction TV shows and movies notwithstanding. And finally, there is the **global goo** solution. In this exciting new way of destroying all of life on this planet, we successfully create microscopic robotic or cellular creatures designed to eat, say, oil spills, except that they get so good at their job that they mutate and eat everything, turning the entire planet into a large ball of enzymatic goo. I know it probably sounded ludicrous to say what Jesus said in His day. Somehow we aren't laughing anymore. Wonder why?
- (4) **Once these events get underway, there will be a ton of false Christs and false prophets out there promising deliverance from the mess we've put ourselves in. Don't believe them, even when they are able to perform mighty signs and wonders.** So compelling will these demonic miracles be that the False Prophet, the understudy and chief advocate for the Anti-Christ, will be able to call fire down from heaven, just like Elijah did. His act will be performed during the 7th Seal, the Wrath of God, during Revelation Chapter 13. With the Holy Spirit taken out of the way (He who restrains – II Thessalonians 2:7), there will be no further restraints placed on demonic activity on the planet. Right now, in any nation where there is even the faintest presence of Christ, there are limits and hindrances placed on the Devil's activity. The stronger a nation is for Christ, the more difficult it is for unclean spirits to operate in any kind of supernatural activity. But as a nation strays away from God, demonic influences and possession become far more commonplace. As a point of reference, when I began in the ministry about 30 years ago, perhaps one woman in four had been sexually assaulted at some point in her life and required counseling and sometimes even deliverance from unclean spirits that had entered into her body at the time of the physical assault. Now I find that the rate of assault and infection is close to

100%. In some nations, such as Ghana, each woman is **required** to receive an “ancestral spirit” as part of her coming of age and beginning her period. In short, any woman who comes to Christ in Ghana **must** be taken through deliverance and that unclean spirit cast out of her before she can be sane and in her right mind. America, with its rampant sexual immorality and total lack of parental restraint, is right on course to become a nation just like Ghana.

(5) My return will be so dramatic that it will be like lightning covering the sky from the east to the west. Oh, dear friends, there is soooooo much here! This is one of the most meaning-packed verses in the entire Bible. In fact, I’ve dedicated several articles to it throughout this series. For right now, let’s make the following points:

(a) You can forget about those who preach and teach an “invisible” or “secret” Rapture or Return. There’s not a person reading this book who has not seen a dandy of a thunderstorm, particularly if you live in the Midwest. Every region has its own problems, but in Ohio and Indiana, our problem is spelled **T-H-U-N-D-E-R-B-O-O-M-E-R**. There are a great many trees where we live right now, mature trees, tall and majestic, providing ample shade and beauty. But when a thunderstorm comes through, I can count on a bare minimum of one hour the next day playing “pick-up-sticks”. The violent winds shake down a hefty share of the dead branches. I have to pick them up so that my riding mower, “Old Red” (it’s actually orange – don’t ask!) doesn’t choke on them when I mow. When one of our Midwestern thundestorms come through, it’s actually a thing of beauty, wild and untamed. Many years ago, we owned a home that faced due north, with a beautiful 14’ x 41’ deck that I had built myself on the southern exposure in the back of the house. Each summer, the thunderstorms would come from the southwest. I would sit there in the evening under the overhang and watch the storm come, then sit back and let it “donder und blitzen” (thunder and lightning) to its heart’s content, marveling at the power of the storm. There can be no doubt. When Christ finally returns for the Bride portion of the church, **nobody** is gonna miss it!

(b) Everything in the Kingdom goes from East to West – even Christ’s Return! If Christ is returning from **East to West**, then several things also must be true. First of all, the angels and departed saints returning for their resurrection bodies that make up this Swat Team Invasion Force are probably going to come out of the wormhole just outside of earth’s atmosphere directly above Jerusalem, just as the Four Horsemen did. They will then rapidly deploy across the face of the globe, moving from **east to west**, across Europe, the Atlantic Ocean, the Western Hemisphere, the Pacific Ocean, the Far East and finally back above Jerusalem. This also will be utterly impossible to miss. In fact, it plays a critical part in creating the sign of His coming.

(6) Where ever the carcass (body) is, that is where the eagles (angels) will be gathered. Here’s another quote from Jesus that most people look at and go, “*Huh?*” Unless you realize how badly this is mis-translated, you will never get it, either. As yourself this question: Where was Jesus crucified, dead and buried? Right you are! Jerusalem. A carcass is, bluntly put, simply a dead body. Jesus was as dead as you can get and was in belly of the earth for three days. This statement clearly identifies the **entry point for His return as directly above Jerusalem**, just as I pointed out in my previous comment. The “eagles” are the angels, whose job it is to accomplish two things:

(a) Bring the righteous dead from heaven back to earth so that they can be Resurrected.

(b) Gather up the Bride portion of the church on earth and Rapture them.

Now, when you and your friends get into a heated debate about the End Times and you get to this Scripture, just smile and tell them you’ve got a handle on this one. I actually expand on this topic a great deal more in another Episode, so to get all the goodies on this one, you’ll just have to buy the complete set. C’mon, it won’t break you. You’ve thrown away good money on bad causes

many times in your life. Yeah, **you!** It won't hurt you to spend a little money to find out **exactly** what is going to happen in the End Times, and **in what order it will happen**. 'Nuff said!

- (7) **Jesus now gives us a blow-by-blow description of what is going to be included in the Great Tribulation.** This is so letter-perfect and so detailed that it will take a little bit of paper and ink to show you, but it will be well worth the trip. Time to decode again!
- (a) **Jesus says after the Tribulation a specific series of events will take place.** He has already said that a **Great Tribulation** will occur, with events so drastic as to destroy all life on the planet unless they are deliberately curtailed before they run to their logical completion. Once we compare this list to the list in Revelation, you will see clearly why we call this **6th Seal** the **Great Tribulation**.
- (b) **Event # 1 – The sun will be darkened.** Now, with this article open and the Matthew passage in clear view, open your Bible and turn to Revelation 6:12. John, in describing the events, says that a **great global earthquake** occurs. If you reference that to Matthew 24:7, you will see that He anticipated this event. Immediately after the great earthquake, the very next thing that happens is that **"the sun became as black as sackcloth of hair"**. I had absolutely no clue what sackcloth made out of hair looked like, so I did a little research. It turns out that although we typically think of sackcloth as being made out of some sort of burlap sack, it turns out that most Biblical sackcloth was made of **goat's hair**, and that goat's hair is normally **jet black**. Aha! Now, that makes some sense! Remember, Revelation wasn't written so that it would make sense to **us**. It was written so that it would make sense to **John** and **the people of his time**. It would have been impossible for John to have used references that made sense to us in our culture. He never experienced it. All he could do was to describe what he saw in the best way he knew how. It's our job, as students of the Word, to do the research that connects the dots for us today. Frankly, as I write all my books, I keep at least three internet connections open at all times. The first is the **Blue Letter Bible** (www.blueletterbible.org). It is the tool that I use to check the original Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew text and research the various meanings for those words in Strong's Concordance. The second URL I keep open is **Bible Gateway** (www.biblegateway.com). I use it to cut and paste passages from the NKJV into these articles. I also use it to do key word searches on various themes and to find a particular passage that I remember the text to but not the location of. The final link I keep open is a generic link that timeshares between the **Google** and **Yahoo Image Search Engines**, which are where I find all my cool pictures at the beginning of each day's topic, and the wonderful online encyclopedia, **Wikipedia** (www.wikipedia.org). I have learned so much from these terrific tools. Granted, you sometimes have to sort through some of the garbage, and, yes, even porn that clutters the internet, but the genuine knowledge, insight and understanding that can be obtained by using this greatest of man's inventions far outweighs the occasional bouts with nasty web sites and viruses. The internet is not the pearl of great price, but it can certainly lead you to some pretty nifty pearls if you search long enough and wisely enough. Enough on that, though. What we have done is to establish the first of these events as occurring **after** the Tribulation and **in** the 6th Seal. Now on to our next event.
- (c) **Event # 2 – The moon will not give its light.** Although this is not the article to explain the connection between the global earthquake and both the sun and the moon being blacked out (we will get to that in just a few days), it is worth noting that, just as with the first four Seals, there is a clear **cause-and-effect** chain going on here. Quickly, let me explain. The massive global earthquake, so severe that according to Revelation, it causes all of the islands and the mountains in the world to be relocated, perhaps dozens or even hundreds of miles away from their original sites. An earthquake this severe is unprecedented in the geological history of our planet except for the massive tears in the crust that occurred just prior to the Flood. This massive disruption of the tectonic plates triggers volcanic eruptions all across the globe, both above and below the surface of the sea, on an unprecedented scale. This massive vulcanism throws an unbelievable amount of pyroclastic ash, soot and

dust into the upper atmosphere, which in turn blocks almost all sunlight from reaching the earth. This causes both the sun and the moon to be effectively **blacked out**. If we turn to Revelation 6:12, we find that it is described as "**the moon became like blood**". There's an old sailor's saying that goes like this: "**red sky in morning, sailor's warning; red sky at night, sailor's delight**". The reference to the red sky is that weather systems typically move from west to east, and red clouds result when the sun shines on their undersides at either sunrise or sunset. The blood red moon indicates a staggering amount of junk in the atmosphere, altering the reflected sunlight off of the surface of the moon.

- (d) **Event #3 – The stars will fall from heaven.** When we look at this event, we have to realize that John was no astronomer. He wasn't seeing actual stars fall from heaven. If he had, the earth would have been incinerated long before the surface of an actual star touched our planet. What, then, was John seeing? **Shooting stars**, or, as we know them now, **meteorites** falling through the atmosphere of our planet, with some of them probably impacting. Actually, given the amount of junk that has been hurled into the upper atmosphere by this time, John may actually have been witnessing the **re-entry of large chunks of rock** hurtled into the stratosphere by the immense power of the volcanic eruptions. Either explanation would satisfy the actual event, and makes perfect scientific sense. When we go to Revelation Chapter 6, we find it described in this way: "**And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind**".
- (e) **Event #4 – The powers of the heavens will be shaken.** This particular description is very interesting, especially when we link it to the matching passage in Revelation 6:14. Listen to how John describes it: "**Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up**". Later on in this Episode I will describe in much greater detail what is happening here. What we are witnessing is a **partial blowoff of the earth's atmosphere**. The loss of even 25% of our atmosphere and the attendant oxygen would be catastrophic beyond imagination. Could such a thing happen? Yup! In fact, it has already happened – **on Mars!** Tell you more about this one in a later article.
- (f) **Event #5 – Then the Sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven (be seen in or just outside of our atmosphere).** If you will remember, all the way back at the beginning of our little journey, we were trying to find out the answer to the one unanswered question: **what will be the Sign of Your Coming?** Tada! We have finally arrived! Isn't it great? But there's still a teeny, little problem that we haven't solved. Exactly what **is** this Sign that John is talking about? Well, take a real good look at the sky. Remember how it got completely blacked out by all the trash that the volcanoes were hurtling up into the atmosphere? That produced a **global blackout**, didn't it? Now, suddenly, in the midst of all of this darkness, with clouds of dust and ash filling our atmosphere and the very air we breathe, suddely, directly above Jerusalem, something begins to happen. Although our view is badly obscured by all the dust and ash in the air, suddely an **enormously bright light** begins to appear **directly above the Holy City** and then spreads with **the speed of lightning (almost instantaneously), going from the east to the west, across the surface of our planet until it ends up back directly above Jerusalem again, closing the gap above our wondering eyes.** Dear friends, for those of us who are still alive when that momentous event occurs, **we have just witnessed the Sign of the Son of Man: the sky transformed almost instantly from near total blackout to brighter than the sun at midday.** What is causing this glow, you might ask? The answer is simple: **untold millions of angels and only a slightly lower number of returning saints of God, hovering just above the atmosphere of our planet, awaiting orders from the Son of God Himself to begin the SWAT team operation.** How totally cool is that? But even cooler things are about to happen.
- (g) **Event #6 – Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn.** Why will they mourn? Well, duh! What do you think? After what the people of the world have just put Christians through in the 5th Seal, having Christ Himself show up at the end of the 6th Seal was not

exactly what they were bargaining for. Obviously, this can't mean anything good for them. Of course, this, too, was prophesied, in this case by Zechariah, when he said, "*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 firstborn.*" (Zechariah 12:10) It is interesting to note that everybody is unhappy about Christ's return except those who have waited faithfully for Him. The Jews are unhappy because they realize for the very first time that He really **is** the Messiah that they have so fervently waited for, and that they have suffered needlessly for almost 2,000 years because they did not know the time of their visitation. The rest of the world is mourning because they know that there will be certain retribution by Christ for what they have done to His people. There will be one more group that will mourn as well, the half of the church that has been asleep at the wheel, unprepared, unfilled with the Holy Spirit, with no oil in their lamps. They will be denied access to the wedding party, just as the Five Foolish Virgins were. Since they weren't willing to live for Christ, they will have no other choice left to them except to die for Him during the 7th Seal.

- (h) **Event #7 -- They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.** In the light of this and so many other Scriptures, how could **anyone** teach a secret Rapture? The Bible says again and again that all eyes will see Him, in one form or another. I don't know if I will be alive to be looking up when this event occurs, or, having passed over to the other side, will be looking down on the earth as I and untold millions of other believers hover suspended just outside the atmosphere of our planet, awaiting the Trumpet. Either way, as they say, it's "all good!"
- (i) **Event #8 -- (Then) He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet.** Paul talks about that Trumpet in I Thessalonians 4:16, when he says, "*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.*" I know I'm beating this to death, but, c'mon guys! A **secret** Rapture? Get real! Finally the angels have been released from their holding position and the Swat Team Rescue is about to take place. But before Christ rescues those who are **alive and awaiting** His return, He owes a favor to those who **are no longer alive and have no physical body at all**. That fact leads us to the final step in this entire "then"-based process...
- (j) **Event #9 -- They will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.** What happens next is simply astounding. The task force that has come from heaven consists of two groups of individuals. The first group is all those faithful believers, both Jewish and Christian, who have died in their faith, waiting for the promise of the resurrection. David will be there, perhaps hovering close to his son Solomon. Samuel will be there, as will Elijah, Elisha, Moses, Gideon and, of course, Father Abraham. But right next to them will be such men as Matthew, John Mark, Luke the Beloved Physician, John the Beloved, Paul, Barnabas, John Wesley, John Calvin, Billy Sunday, William Braham, John of Cupertino, Augustine, and innumerable others who have trusted in Christ as their Savior. Some, we will have heard of. Others will be totally unknown to us, but not to Him. The second group will be the angels, who have helped facilitate this process. Please notice that Jesus says that the angels will gather together His elect from one end of **heaven** to the other. This is how returning believers will get from heaven back to the earth. Based on my research, I am totally convinced that the number of angels who remained faithful to the Lord in the Great Rebellion far outnumber the number of humans who have ever lived or are alive right now on our planet. As such, it would be possible to assign each individual human soul their very own guardian angel. We wouldn't have to share him with anyone. It would appear then, that each angel gathers up the human soul entrusted to their care and carries them through the wormhole that allows them to pass from the universe that we call heaven into this universe, entering just above Jerusalem. I further suspect that the angel will then transport that precious human soul directly over the place on our planet where they passed away. When the Trumpet sounds, Phase I will commence, with both angel and deceased

believer plummeting through the atmosphere downward, plunging into the earth or the sea at the point where they died, and then erupting back out with the believer now in possession of a brand new resurrection body. Paul elaborates on this two-step process in I Thessalonians Chapter 4, so we will return there for a more detailed examination.

" ¹³ *But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.* ¹⁴ *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*** ¹⁵ *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, **that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.*** ¹⁶ *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And **the dead in Christ will rise first.*** ¹⁷ ***Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.***" – I Thessalonians 4:13-17

There you have it! The dead in Christ will rise first. Then it's **our** turn. There is a minor problem, however. In Matthew, Jesus tells us about the angels who will aid in the transportation of those who are already **in heaven**. But what about us poor schlubs down here **on earth**? How on earth (pardon the pun!) are we supposed to get our own resurrection bodies and go airbourne at the same time? Never fear, campers! That's why the Bible says that we are to seek the **whole counsel** of God. If all the pieces of the puzzle aren't in one place, that means that the missing pieces must be elsewhere. All we have to do is to turn to the Gospel of Mark to find **the rest of the story**.

" ²⁴ *But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;* ²⁵ *the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.* ²⁶ *Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.* ²⁷ *And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, **from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.***" – Mark 13:24-27

Now we have transportation arranged for both those coming from above and those coming from below. Also please note how perfectly the Mark account marches Matthew in terms of the events contained in the 6th Seal.

Speaking of the 6th Seal of Revelation, if our linkage between the Olivet Discourse and the Seal is to be perfect, there must also be a record of the Rapture contained at the very end of the 6th Seal which matches what we have just read in Matthew, Mark and I Thessalonians. Is there? Man, I thought you'd **never** ask! Matthew, Mark and Luke record the event as viewed from **earth**. Paul views the event as a **process between the two**. But Revelation views the Rapture from the perspective of **heaven, after the event has occurred**.

" ⁹ ***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,*** ¹⁰ *and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"* -- Revelation 7:9-10

Please notice that it is a **great multitude, so large that it cannot be counted**. That's quite a crowd, isn't it? It is from **every nation, tribe, people and tongue**, so it is a comprehensive panorama of all of humanity. That is consistent with Jesus' instruction to **make disciples of all men**, and the further stipulation that the Gospel must be **preached to all ethnic groups**, so that the harvest of humanity will be wholly representative of all humanity. No ethnic group will be left out. For those of you who are still harboring latent racist tendencies, it is time to get a grip on yourself and let go of them! Given the existing profile of humanity on the globe, odds are better than 50% that the feller living next to you in the Eternal City will not have the same skin color as you! And there is no such thing as the wrong side of the tracks in the New Jerusalem.

There can also be no doubt that this scene is in heaven. After all, this massive crowd is standing **before the Throne and the Lord**. Right now, Jesus is seated at the right hand of God the Father, from whence He shall come to judge the quick (alive) and the dead. But before that happens, He needs to remove the faithful from the earth. After all, it wouldn't be fair for the faithful to be punished with the unfaithful in the 7th Seal, the Wrath of God. You see, even though we have had to endure a whole lot of stuff and go through both the **Tribulation** and the **Great Tribulation**, we still have escaped the **Wrath that is to Come**, just as He promised we would. He **never** promised that we would escape **Tribulation**, just that we would escape **Wrath**. But even with all of this clear-cut evidence, the Pre-Trib Camp might (as has!) said to me, "OK. *I'll buy all of that so far. But what proof do you have that this group of people are actually the people who have been raptured? Couldn't they be the saints that are already in heaven? Or, alternately, if the Rapture occurred in Revelation 4:1 (which you and I already know is not correct!) then couldn't this just be the Marriage Supper of the Lamb?*"

If Revelation 7:9 were forced to stand on its own, without supplemental internal documentation, there might be some wiggle room for their argument. But, alas! Even those fading hopes are shattered by what is said just a few verses later in the text. We now return to Revelation for the *coup de grace*.

"¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, '**Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?**' ¹⁴ 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

Oh, how I love the Word of God. It is so consistent, so thorough, so totally complete and so completely perfect! There is not a question common to man that is not answered, in one form or another, in God's precious, Holy Word. I have read much of what the other "holy books" of the world have to say. Much of it is good. Some of it is madness and evil. But none of them can hold a candle to the bright and shining glory that is the revealed Word of God!

Look at how perfectly the Lord handles the situation with John. One of the 24 Elders comes up to him and asks him two questions, simple yet definitive, shades of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. In that movie, one partner asks the other, "Who are those guys and why do they keep following us?" Of course, he already knows the answer to both questions. Unlike him, John has absolutely no clue as to the answers to his two questions. But we run ahead of ourselves. Let's get back to the two questions. Here they are:

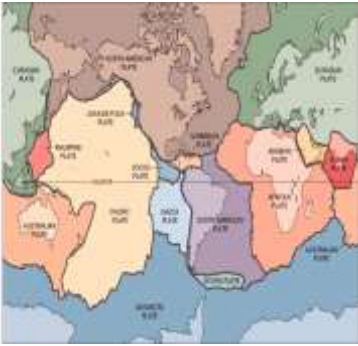
- (1) **Who are all these people?**
- (2) **Where did they come from?**

In our day, John might have answered, "*I have absolutely no idea!*" Instead, he answered in the form consistent with that time and place and, while implicitly acknowledging his own ignorance, goes one step further and honors the Elder by implying that while John may not know, **the Elder does**. Once John has acknowledged which of the two of them has the correct answer, the Elder fills in the blank and forever ends the discussion. Who are they and where have they come from? **These are the individuals who have come out of the Great Tribulation!** As they use to say in Philly, "*Bing-badda-bing!*" You can't get **out** of a tub unless you are already **in** it. You can't get **out** of trouble unless you are already **in** trouble. And you can't come **out** of the Great Tribulation unless you are already **in** the Great Tribulation. And, oh yes, the Greek words used for the phrase, "Great Tribulation"? **Megas Thlipsis**. Exactly the same phrase as Jesus used in the Gospel of Matthew. At this point, there can be no doubt. Scripture interprets Scripture, perfectly. After the Tribulation, the 5th Seal, comes another Tribulation, greater and more terrible by far than its predecessor. The **Great** Tribulation, the 6th Seal, fulfills everything that Jesus said in the

Gospels. And at the very end of the Great Tribulation comes the event that all Christendom has hoped and prayed about for almost 2,000 years, the Rapture of the Bride. Ironically, Jesus ends His discourse with the Rapture. Why does He not venture into the 7th Seal, the Wrath of God while He's on the topic? Because it wasn't relevant to those listening. What will occur in the 7th Seal deals almost totally with the **disobedient**. The half of the church that was not ready. The nation of Israel, who has been rebellious for nearly two millennia. And the unbelieving nations of the world, still hostile and vengeful, even though they have just witnessed the first real invasion of the planet from outer space. Yes, Virginia, those science fiction movies have been right all along, at least in part. But instead of bug-eyed aliens or little green men, this invasion is launched by He who **created** the planet. What He made is now enemy-occupied territory, but that condition will not last. The Swat Team Rescue Operation has been successful. Now will come a full-scale artillery assault on the enemy, ending with a Normandy-style invasion in Chapter 19 that will, in one mighty battle, forever end the conflict, at least for another thousand years.

And so, dear reader, we have come to the end of the Olivet Discourse. Now you finally have full understanding of what it says. Those verses should both warn you and empower you to live a pure and holy life, separated unto the Lord, and with your lamp full of oil at all times, so that when the time comes, **you will be ready to go**. To be sure, we have only dealt all of the events in the 6th Seal a glancing blow in this article, but we will turn our full attention to them starting tomorrow, when we learn how to do the ***Tectonic Boogie!***

Day 20 – Tectonic Boogie



“¹² I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.” ~ Revelation 6:12-14

In yesterday’s article, we kind of stuck our nose into the 6th Seal during our analysis of the Olivet Discourse in Matthew Chapter 24. During that analysis, I made some fairly wild-sounding statements that I promised you faithfully we would come back to and take a closer look at. As the 6th Seal opens, we have a bang-bang series of events which look, at first glance, to be totally unrelated to one another. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, every single one of these events are related to one another in a cause and effect chain and make perfect scientific sense when we look more closely at them.

In order to understand this global earthquake in terms of both magnitude and impact, we have to go all the way back to Genesis to begin our research. We also have to ask ourselves how the earth was **originally** created versus what it looks like today. If we look at our planet in its current condition, here is what we see:

- (1) A mostly round rock planet, slightly fatter in the middle than it should be, with a molten nickle-iron core that is spinning around much like a top.
- (2) A 23.5 degree tilt on its axis which produces our seasons and may have actually caused the ice ages.
- (3) 2/3rd of its surface is covered by water.
- (4) Underneath the surface of our planet are a series of **tectonic plates** on which the continents, oceans, islands and mountains of our planet ride. These plates grind and push against one another, causing earthquakes, volcanoes and other seismic events.
- (5) A thin protective layer of air called the atmosphere which all life depends on.
- (6) A much larger magnetic bubble around the planet called the magnetosphere which helps to deflect lethal radiation from the sun away from the inhabited portions of the planet.
- (7) Roughly seven billion humans crowded on the arable portions of the land masses in each continent except Antarctica. This population is increasing at a staggering rate, and will pass nine billion within the next 50 years if it continues to grow at the current rate.

This planet, teeming with all kinds of life, is surrounded by a deadly, near-absolute-zero vacuum which we call outer space. To the best of our knowledge, no other planet in our solar system is capable of sustaining life. Only Mars, our next-door neighbor, seems to have once supported the kind of environment in which life could have formed, but lost that environment a long time ago.

Just beyond Mars is a large cluster of rocks which we call the Asteroid Belt. Scientists disagree about whether these once formed a planet similar to Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars, but the possibility

exists. Beyond the inner rock planets are a series of gas giants: Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. Beyond them is a wild jumble of asteroids, mini-planets and comets called the Oort Cloud. One of those mini-planets is called Pluto and used to be classified as a planet when I went to high school.

This is the state of the planet as it exists right now. But it is unwise to assume that it has always been this way. In fact, the Bible says that the planet was once very different than it is right now. In fact, the beautiful earth that we know and love is actually covered with the evidence of a terrible cataclysm that happened not all that long ago. The evidence is covered by and large by the oceans we have now, but if you lift all that water off the surface of our planet, you find a terrible scar that runs the full length of the Atlantic Ocean and then splits and goes into the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. Clearly, something went very, very wrong. What on earth happened, how does it impact what we have today, and what are the implications for our future and the fulfillment of the prophecies found in the Scroll? The best way to answer these questions is to return to Genesis and take a close look at the earth when it was first created.

"¹ *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* ² *The **earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.** And the Spirit of God was hovering over the **face of the waters.***" – Genesis 1:1-2

At the very beginning of creation, we find the earth in a condition of vast disarray. The Hebrew words used to describe this condition are **towhu** and **bowhu**. **Towhu** can mean a variety of things: formlessness, confusion, unreality, emptiness, nothingness, empty space, wasteland, wilderness or a place of chaos. **Bowhu** can mean emptiness, void or waste. When we combine the two words together, we end up with several possible valid combinations. The **first possibility** that presents itself is exactly what we find if we venture beyond this earth and into outer space; a **chaotic void** (formlessness, emptiness, nothingness, empty space, place of chaos). Into that void God will inject light, order and life through the Holy Spirit. That interpretation would be totally legitimate given our options. The **second possibility** is of **an earth that is already in existence but in a total state of chaos** (wasteland, wilderness, place of chaos, waste). An earth like this would mirror the condition of the other planets in this Solar System. A **third possibility**, and one that is an intriguing compromise between the two is that of an **earth that has already been formed but which is completely covered by a vast ocean of water**. The fact that Verse 2 says that the Holy Spirit was **hovering over the face of the waters** seems to support this. A few other translations use the word **brood** instead of **hover**. This adds even more intrigue to the situation, since it is the same word used to describe what a **mother hen does to hatch her young**. In fact, her chicks are referred to as her **brood** because she **covers them in order to impart warmth and life to them**. I personally like this third option. In a sense, the Bible actually contains two separate creation narratives. The first narrative begins in Genesis 1:1 and stops at Genesis 2:3. The second narrative begins in Genesis 2:4 and ends in Genesis 2:25. Ignore the fact that the narratives don't end cleanly on chapter boundaries. The chapters and verses of the Bible were added long after the original text was written. Although there are some really neat linkages, such as Revelation 6:1-8 and Zechariah 6:1-8, you cannot consider the chapter and verse designations as divinely inspired, at least not at the same level as the text in the original languages.

The fact that the earth is pictured as a solid rock ball completely surrounded by a vast amount of water is truly amazing considering what we know about the existence of water elsewhere in the Solar System. As far as we know, there is absolutely no free-standing water on Mercury or Venus because those planets are far too hot. Although there is some disagreement on exactly how hot Mercury is, some experts place the surface temperature of the planet closest to the sun at over 800 degree Fahrenheit. Venus is actually hotter, running as high as 900 degrees Fahrenheit, due to a runaway greenhouse effect on the surface of the planet. The gas giants are too far away from the sun and much too cold, with temperatures ranging from 240 degrees below zero in the upper clouds of Jupiter to 400 degrees below zero on Pluto. Besides the earth, Mars is the only other planet that shows some historical evidence of having contained a significant amount of liquid water. Although all water on Mars now seems to be frozen into a kind of permafrost mixture, extensive mapping of the surface of Mars by probes we have sent there clearly indicates that Mars once had vast oceans, with as much as 50% of the planet's surface once covered by water. Mars also had an atmosphere at one point in time, but lost

it for reasons that we will discuss later on. Now, you might say, "*Pastor Ray, all this is well and good, but I didn't buy this book to take lessons in astronomy. What possible relevance could all this information have to Revelation?*" Glad you asked that question, friend, glad you asked. I spend a lot of time watching the Science Channel. I am amazed at the number of times that I have discovered information that integrates perfectly with the Bible in general and Revelation in specific. As I have studied the events described by John in Revelation, I have tried to analyze them from a scientific standpoint, working on the assumption that what John saw was, in most cases, **literally true**, not figuratively true. I know that many of the things he saw were symbols that require analysis and decoding. But I firmly believe that the physical events he saw happen were literal and physical. He just had no way to accurately describe many of the things that he saw.

If we assume that John is describing actual physical events, then we also assume the responsibility to try and find out what kind of natural events would produce the conditions that John saw. My research into these matters is one of the driving forces behind this series of seven books on Revelation.

As an example, when I did research on how scientists believe Mars lost its atmosphere and all of its water, I suddenly saw a parallel to one of the events of the 6th Seal. I'll tell you about that later. Without liquid water, life as we know it cannot exist, and liquid water only exists within a fairly narrow temperature range. Below 32 degrees Fahrenheit we are dealing with a solid. Above 100 degrees Fahrenheit and we are dealing with a gas. I find it impossible to believe that that so much liquid water could form around a dead planet randomly. We find water everywhere we go in the Solar System, particularly in the comets, which are essentially dirty snowballs. But the earth is an anomaly in almost every way, the exception to the solar norm, which is too cold or too hot and very, very dead. The earth's positioning is nearly perfect. Its size is nearly perfect. Everything about our planet speaks of either random chance at an impossibly high level or tampering by an incredibly powerful intelligence at an even higher level.

Let's assume for just a second that the Genesis narrative is both accurate and correct. Let's say, for sake of argument, that at the beginning of the process that created both life and intelligent life on this planet, the surface of the planet was completely covered by a vast ocean of liquid water. Such a condition could produce aquatic life, but not land animals or humans. With that in mind, the next thing God did was to **separate the water from the land and create two great regions containing water, one beneath the surface of the planet and the other above the atmosphere of the planet**. Sound far-fetched? Let's take a look at what God did next in His process of creation.

*"³ Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day. ⁶ Then God said, 'Let there be a **firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.**' ⁷ Thus God made the **firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.**" – Genesis 1:3-8*

What did Moses just tell us? That God created a **firmament** to separate **one body of water from another body of water**. What was the firmament called? **Heaven**. Or, in our modern terms, the **atmosphere of our planet**. Atmosphere? How can I say that? Simple. In Hebrew thought, there were **three** heavens. The **first heaven** is the **atmosphere** that surrounds our planet. This is the heaven that Genesis is talking about. The **second heaven** is the **physical universe** in which we live, and which we still have an almost unlimited amount of things to learn about. The **third heaven** is the heaven in which the Lord dwells, outside of the universe that He created some time ago. To the best of my understanding, that third heaven is a **parallel universe**, perhaps directly adjacent to our own universe, and a part of the multiverse which quantum and particle physics postulate must exist. Currently, scientists tend to think that there are as many as 12 separate universes in the multiverse of which we are a part. Pretty wild, huh? It turns out that all of the fantastic things which Holy Scripture tells us and which arrogant intellectuals used to constantly say had to be symbolic and allegorical may

well be representations of physical realities so bizarre that the writers and observers really didn't know how to write them down. This is why Paul, writing in II Corinthians 12, says,

"² *I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—**such a one was caught up to the third heaven.*** ³ *And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—* ⁴ *how he was **caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter***" -- II Corinthians 12:2-4

When Paul was caught up into that third heaven where Paradise actually exists as a physical place, he saw and heard things that He wasn't allowed to talk about. Why? Hey, who would have believed him?

Remember that I told you that the earth now is nothing like the earth as it used to be? Hang on to your hat. We are in the process of terraforming the earth itself! After the separation of waters from water by means of an atmosphere, what did the earth look like? First of all, at least half of the massive volume of water had been transferred above the atmosphere of the planet. Because of the laws of science, it would have automatically assumed the form of a sphere, similar to the shape of the earth itself, but perfectly arranged and uniform. Inside of this liquid globe was the atmosphere of the planet. Below the atmosphere was the rest of the water. The **water barrier above** the atmosphere would act as a **perfect protection from the lethal UV radiation** coming from the sun. Any life developing on the planet below would have nothing to worry about from abnormal mutations of cells, also called cancer or cellular degeneration and decomposition, also called death. Any creature formed on the planet below could realistically expect to **live forever**, barring unforeseen accident. Animals and plants alike on the planet inside the bubble could also expect to grow to amazing sizes, since nothing limited the growth potential of each thing. Does the fossil evidence of this planet support such possibilities? You bet! Scientists have drilled core samples out of the frozen rock of Antarctica, taken from far below the miles of ice there and found, much to their amazement, giant ferns as tall as 30 feet! Most of the dinosaurs grew to be sizes that dwarf the largest of animals that walk the surface of the planet today. Our elephant or rhino would just be an appetizer to *Spinosaurus*, the largest predator ever to live. Paleontologists estimate that it was 55 feet long and weighed about 10 tons! It was 1½ times bigger than *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, and would have probably snapped T-Rex's neck in real life, just as it did in *Jurassic Park III*. Or consider the plant-eater *Seismosaurus*, who was 80 feet tall, 150 feet long, and weighed in at a svelte 100 tons! You can't find anything like that today!

Below the barrier, God prepared for the next step: **separating the remaining water from the land masses underneath to provide a place for non-aquatic life to develop.**

"⁹ *Then God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear'; and it was so.* ¹⁰ *And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.'*" – Genesis 1:9-10

So far, so good. But one task remains that is not clearly documented in Genesis, except by implication.

A significant percentage of the surface water must be stored **underground**, underneath a **tectonic shell**, solid and seamless, except for minor areas where the water could seep up through the ground, rich in minerals and nutrients to trigger plants to grow to enormous sizes. Herbivores eating those plants would also grow to huge sizes, and carnivores devouring the herbivores would be almost a big. Is this documented in Scripture? Absolutely.

"⁴ *This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,* ⁵ *before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. **For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground;*** ⁶ *but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground*" – Genesis 2:4-6

This, then, is the earth **as God created it**. It certainly is a lot different that the earth that we know now. Our planet is a pale shadow of that fantastically abundant, perfectly engineered jewel in the void. It was a planet that never knew rain. That is why when Noah tried unsuccessfully for 100 years (**not 120!**) to warn the people of the earth that **water would fall from the sky**, they laughed him to scorn. Why, everyone knew that water always came **up from the ground below!** It was an **almost** perfect planet. The tectonic shell, composed of hard granite, had to have areas where the underground water, super-heated by the molten core of the planet and under tremendous pressure due to the incredible weight pressing down on it, could come pouring through. To help you understand what the Pre-Flood, Post-Creation Earth was like, think about Yellowstone National Park. It is actually a super-caldera; a volcano so gigantic that the last time it erupted it blew up and almost destroyed all life on the planet. Now picture the same super-calderas **scattered across the globe**. Probably at least 50% of the earth's surface was land mass. Certainly the percentage of water **above** ground was much less than it is today. More arable land meant more human beings could live there. There is clear evidence that the entire area that we know today as the Mediterranean Sea was once **farmland**. The geological evidence points to a huge stone wall at what are now the Straits of Gibraltar that held out the Atlantic Ocean. When it ruptured, probably in the Flood, the waters of the Atlantic came streaming into the fertile area as a giant wall of water, destroying everything in its path. Everything, that is, except heavy stone buildings, which are now being detected by underwater survey teams.

With an estimated 50% of the surface of the planet capable of supporting human life, the population before the flood could have easily burgeoned to around 12-15 billion. That may be hard to believe, but we are well on our way to 9 billion now, and we only have 1/3rd of the surface of the planet to live on. As humanity expanded rapidly over the globe, a problem began to arise. Any time that a person sins, it releases an actual negative life-force, or, if you will, a **death-force**, into the planet. The only thing that can cancel **death** is **life**. And where is the life found, according the Scripture? **In the blood** (Leviticus 17:11-14). Had man been living righteously, we might still have the pristine gem we started with. But the Bible also records that man's thoughts were **continually on nothing but evil** (Genesis 6:5) and that the earth was **filled with violence** (Genesis 6:11). As evil increased across the globe, the death-force released into the atmosphere began to place an enormous strain on the tectonic shell. Finally, it could stand no more. God had already warned Noah of a great Flood (Genesis 6:13-22). As a result, from his 500th year when the triplets, Shem, Ham and Japheth, were born (Genesis 5:32) until his 600th year when the Flood finally struck (Genesis 7:11), Noah did two things. First, he preached righteousness to a world that wanted nothing to do with it or the righteous God who had created them and their world (II Peter 2:5). Second, he built an ark with the help of his sons. No one else would help him, for everyone thought him to be mad or kidding, just as they did with righteous Lot (Genesis 19:14). When the end finally came, it came in two separate ways. Listen carefully to what happened and **in what order it happened**.

*"¹⁰ And it came to pass after seven days that the **waters of the flood were on the earth**.¹¹ In the **six hundredth year of Noah's life**, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, **on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened**.¹² And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights."* – Genesis 7:10-11

All through my childhood, I was taught that it rained 40 days and 40 nights. And that is true. But I **wasn't** taught was that **the water came exploding up out of the ground first!** Read Verse 11 very carefully one more time. **First, the fountains of the great deep were broken up. Then, the windows of heaven were opened!** The Hebrew word used in the passage expresses the image of **rupturing explosively**. Since the super-heated water was under enormous pressure from above and had nothing but solid rock beneath it, there was only one direction that it could go – **straight up**. And it didn't trickle out, either. Christian scientists who have studied the Flood estimate that the water came pouring out of the ground at hundreds of miles an hour and probably went miles into the air. Pity any poor soul that was standing on the ground where the rupture occurred. When the super-heated water traveling at supersonic speeds passed the outer edge of the atmosphere, it ran into an obstacle: **a bubble of super-cooled water or ice surrounding and protecting the planet**. When the super-heated water hit the super-cooled ice, only one thing could occur there as well: **the ice would explode, begin to melt and then cascade into the atmosphere of the planet and eventually**

fall down on the earth. In addition, all of the water that had gone **up** was still compelled by gravity to come back **down**. The resulting compounded deluge was beyond anything that we can imagine. Picture standing at the foot of Niagara Falls underneath the full force of the mighty flow of water coming down. How long would you survive? Now you understand something of what our wicked predecessors experienced.

What about the tectonic shell? It had already ruptured across a broad area. Scientists today call it the **Trans-Atlantic Ridge**, but if you were to lift all of the water up from the ocean floor, you would find a still-festering wound running the full length of the Atlantic Ocean going north-south, and adjacent tears running underneath South America and coming out in the South Pacific. It then continues south of Australia, goes straight through the Indian Ocean, and terminates right at the edge of Saudi Arabia. And the descendants of Ishmael thought they were safe in building Dubai in the UAR (United Arab Emirates) into the financial capital of the world! All their billions of dollars are about to be destroyed. All of the oil money that has made them unspeakably rich and fueled terrorism across the globe is about to backfire on them. The highest building in the world is being constructed in Dubai. Can you say, "*Tower of Babel*"?

The tear then continues around the Horn of Africa and joins back into the Atlantic Ridge again. With no water underneath the shell to continue to support it, it shattered into 15 different **plates**, or broken pieces, just as the shell of a hard-boiled egg breaks when the egg is tapped against a table top. Those pieces then collapsed down into the spot vacated by the super-pressured water, forming what we know today as the ocean floor. Eventually things stabilized to a certain extent, but nothing would ever be the same again. Now, lethal radiation could come pouring onto the surface of the planet for the very first time. The results of this wholesale radiation poisoning were dramatic and devastating, and can be best illustrated by the one thing that the survivors measured: **the length of men's life spans**.

Before the flood, the average life span of a human was an astounding 912 years, excluding Enoch, who was raptured at the age of a mere 365. Adam died at the age of 930. Methuselah set the record, enduring for 969 years. Children continued in their childhood until about the age of 100, when puberty finally set in. The first child was born at about the age of 110. Women probably continued in their childbearing years until 600 or so. Small wonder, then, that the earth could go from 2 individuals to 12 billion in only 10 generations. I've done a simple Excel spreadsheet to illustrate the model. Although I can't show you the spreadsheet here, it is contained in our DVD series. What I can do is to show you some simple math to illustrate how it happened.

Adam and Eve produced, according to Hebrew tradition, some 53 children. Given the length of their lives, they would have only had to have produced one child every ten years or so to reach that figure. Also considering the fact that children matured much more slowly than they do now, by a factor of almost 10 to 1, it would mean that Eve would have nursed each of her children for as much as 25 years. It is very rare for a nursing woman to be able to conceive, since her body doesn't make the necessary biochemical changes required for child bearing until she is done nursing the current child. As you can see, all of the factors come together to support what Hebrew tradition tells us. If Eve only nursed each child for 10 years, and then became pregnant again, it would add up to at least 50 children, all gapped by about 10 years.

I know that these kinds of figures must have your head swimming, but remember, I told you that the earth as it existed before the flood was a vastly different world than it is today. We cannot imagine the vitality and energy that was present in all life on the planet at that time. Lethal UV radiation has done more damage to us than we can possibly comprehend.

Now let's focus for just a minute on those 53 kids. Let's round the number off at 50 to make the math simple. Since people married their brothers and sisters in that first generation (What else were they supposed to? Marry Martians?), 50 children would produce **25 couples**. If each of the 25 couples had 50 children of their own, suddenly Adam and Eve would have had **1,250 grandchildren** to set a table for when they planned their family reunion! If those 1,250 children all intermarried with one another, the next generation had **625 new couples**, who in turn produced 50 children each, creating a new

generation of **31,250 great-grandchildren!** Suddenly, renting a hall for the reunion was no longer an option, and they were looking at constructing a stadium to handle all the kids. Just think about the baby-sitting fees that must have changed hands. Those 31,250 great-grandchildren all grew up and got married to one another, producing **15,625 new families** which in turn would have had **781,250 great-great-grandchildren!!!** If you sit down with a calculator and a pencil and paper, it won't take very long to see how many people could be added to humanity in 10 generations. If you actually do the math, you will be both astounded and horrified to see the geometric growth of mankind in the final two generations before the Flood. Now further imagine that all but 8 of those individuals **have nothing but evil on their minds 24x7.** Scary thought? You bet!

After the flood, however, it was a totally different story. Noah, the last of the Antediluvian (before the Flood) Patriarchs, lived to be 950 years old. Shem, one of his three sons, only lived to be 600, a 350 year drop in longevity in just one generation. His son, Arphaxad, only lived to be 438, another catastrophic drop in the life span. Then, for a few generations, things seemed to stabilize. We're not exactly sure why. Salah, next in line, lived to be 433. His son, Eber, lived to be 464. But then the plummet began again. Peleg, in whose days the super-continent Pangea split apart to form the continents as we know them now, only made it to 239. His son Reu did the same. Serug, next in line, lived to be 230. So again there was a temporary stabilization, but just like the last time, it was just that: temporary. Nahor only made it to 148. His boy Terah made a temporary rally back to 205. And now we have finally come to Father Abraham, who lived to be 175 years old. In 11 generations, mankind's life span had plummeted from an average of 912 years to 175 years. Even then, the collapse wasn't done. Joseph, born four generations later, would live to the "ripe old age" of 110.

The collapse in the life span had at least one addition horrifying effect. Fathers had to watch the death of their sons, grandsons, great-grandsons and so on. I didn't realize this until many years ago when I created a graph representing each of the ages of the Patriarchs and the offset of when they died. Suddenly the facts leaped out at me. Eber, who lived to 464, had to watch his son, grandson, great-grandson, great-great-grandson, great-great-great-grandson and great-great-great-great-grandson Abraham die and be buried, while he continued on! What a terrible prospect! Children are supposed to bury their parents, not the other way around.

The amazing thing about all of this was not that it happened, but rather that the Lord had prophesied that it would happen all the way back in Genesis 6:3.

*"³ And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet **his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.**"*

Here is yet another classic example of mis-translation and shoddy scholarship. The word which both the KJV and NKJV translate as **strive** would be much better translated as **remain**. I cannot count the number of times that I have heard a preacher say from the pulpit that it took 120 years for Noah to build the Ark. How preposterous! If they had bothered to **study to show themselves approved**, they would have discovered in the Scriptures I outlined earlier in this *E-Pistle* that less than 100 years were involved in building the Ark. The reference in Genesis 6:2 to 120 years represents a **reset in man's life span**, not the amount of time required to build the Ark.

We are finally done laying the foundation for Revelation 6:12-14. It seems like an awful lot of work to go through just to make a point, but it really isn't. You now fully understand the staggering long-term damage done to the planet the last time that the aggregated sins of humanity caused the earth to go into convulsions. Last time the earth was ripped from stem to stern. This new earthquake will cause as much damage to the planet as the last one did. How severe will it be? Time to do a little more research and a little more thinking.

In Revelation 6:14 it says that **every island and mountain are moved out of their place**. If you were to lift the oceans off of our planet, you would be able to examine the complete surface of the globe. Once you did, you would discover something that John did not know when he wrote those

words. Every island all over the world is nothing more than a mountain that sticks up out of the ocean floor higher than the water at that point is deep. There are many mountain ranges in the oceans that are completely submerged, yet are actually higher than some of our best mountain ranges on dry land. Some of the mountains are formed by one tectonic plate grinding up against another, forcing the edges of one or both plates to buckle and thrusting the buckled materials straight up in the air. Other mountains are formed by volcanic activity, as one volcanic eruption after another gradually builds the volcano higher and higher. Either way, there is absolutely no difference between a mountain on dry land and an island in the ocean. Both are the result of the same processes. The only difference is that one is surrounded by water and the other is not. John did not know that. All he knew was that in his vision, both the islands and the mountains were dislocated and relocated. Now here's the next question: **what would it take to relocate an entire mountain chain or a string of islands like the Hawaiian Islands?** The answer is very disturbing.

Just a moment ago, we lifted all the oceans of the planet off of the surface so that we could take a look at the complete topography of the earth's surface. Let's leave it off for just a second and look a little closer. If we were to zoom in on the Hawaiian Islands, we would see that they have been created by a series of undersea volcanoes, working patiently over a long period of time. If we then lifted all of the extraneous rock, soil and mud out of the way so that we could get a good look at the tectonic plate structure underneath, we would see that the Hawaiian Islands and the volcanoes that created them rest on what is called the Pacific Plate. Likewise, the Rocky Mountains rest on a plate called the North American Plate. The Andes Mountains in Peru and Argentina rest on the South American Plate. The Himalayan Mountains rest partially on the Indian Plate and partially on the Eurasian Plate. Anywhere that one plate is resting against another, one of two things will happen. First, mountain ranges are more likely to be formed if two plates are pushing up against one another. Sometimes one plate will begin a process of **subduction**, sliding underneath the other without pushing it up. But often, both will be thrust up into the air at the point where the two meet. Second, earthquakes and volcanoes are more likely to occur at points where plates collide. The western shores of both North and South America, Alaska, Japan, parts of China, the Philippines and Indonesia are all part of something called the **Ring of Fire** which circles the Pacific Ocean. Ironically, almost all of the world's computer industry is located on the most geologically and volcanically active place in the world. Talk about building your company in the industrial park of Sodom or Gomorrah!

In order to physically relocate a mountain or island, you would either need to **move the entire plate** on which it rests or **the plate itself would have to destabilize and begin to break up**, just like a giant glacier breaks up when it reaches the sea in the frozen Polar Regions. As I have been writing this article, the Holy Spirit has been showing me one thing after another. I put this paragraph off till the next morning because I was tired and wanted to go to bed. But the Lord woke me up at 3:30 with it fresh on my mind, and at 3:33 AM I typed the words of this paragraph. For those of you who don't know, Jeremiah 33:3 is called **God's Phone Number**. In it, the Lord says, "*Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know*". Halleluia! Now I know for sure that the relocation of the mountains and islands will be caused by the **disintegration of the tectonic plates**, not just their movement! The tearing apart of the plates and the significant movement of all the mountains and the islands of the world will also trigger phenomenal volcanic activity, a topic that we will discuss tomorrow. The level of destruction and loss of life will be immeasurable. No more destructive single event will have happened on the earth since the Flood itself, which is why I had to go all the way back to the Flood to describe to you the way the Earth **used** to be and the unprecedented changes which that tectonic upheaval brought about on this planet. Many of the remaining events in the 6th and 7th Seal will tie directly back to this traumatic event. It will also set the stage for an even more traumatic tectonic disaster in Revelation 16:20 during the 7th and final Bowl Judgment. Whereas this particular cataclysm merely **relocates** all of the islands and mountains, perhaps by hundreds of miles, listen to what this final event does:

" ¹⁷ Then the **seventh angel poured out his bowl** into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, 'It is done!' ¹⁸ And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a **great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth**. ¹⁹ Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the

*cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. ²⁰ Then **every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.** ²¹ And **great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent.** Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.” – Revelation 16:17-21*

This event, which I will discuss in much greater detail when we get to it in another *Episode*, will signal the complete collapse and disintegration of the tectonic plates. All weight-bearing structures, mountains and islands being the principal features with weight, will collapse into the liquid magma beneath the now totally unstable fragments of the former shell. The earth will literally **melt down**. Only one mountain will be left standing, and it will be thrust up as the greatest mountain in the history of the world, in preparation for 1,000 years of blessed peace. But we are not to that point yet, and so we must return to the 6th Seal, to finish up the disasters found there. We have now explained what will happen to the mountains and the islands when the Mega-Earthquake hits, but we have not yet discussed what will happen to block out the sun, moon and cause what **appears** to be a series of violent meteorite showers. We’ve run out of time for today, so come back tomorrow, when we will all sing a strange tune entitled **Smoke Gets in Your Eyes**. Until then, walk in faith, walk in hope and walk in love! May the blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ rest upon you and your household. Amen and Amen.

Day 21 – Smoke Gets In Your Eyes



“¹² I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.” – Revelation 6:12-14

In yesterday's *E-Pistle* we examined the three greatest tectonic disasters in the history of our planet. The first disaster occurred at the time of the Flood. It forever changed this planet and the life on it. The second disaster has yet to occur, but we are well on the way toward seeing it happen. Frankly, I would rather not be here when it does, but I don't have much choice in the matter. Faithful or unfaithful, believer or unbeliever, **everyone** is going to be here when the lid comes off the pot. When I teach or discuss these matters with faithful believers, I tell them that this event will be the final warning bell for those who are backslidden or unsaved. No one will be able to miss this mega-quake and the events that will follow. The final hyper-quake will occur in Revelation 16:20 and will cause the complete disintegration of the tectonic plates and the collapse of all mountains and islands into the magma. Only one mountain will survive the cataclysm, and that peak is Mount Zion, which will be thrust up higher than any mountain in the history of the world. Ezekiel's Temple will be built on this new and improved mountain of God, a temple so huge that it will look like it is a city to Ezekiel as he comes in from overhead.

While we have studied some of the aspects of these three events, we have not pursued what **else** will take place as a result of the quakes. As it turns out, the next four events are directly connected to what has happened deep in the earth. We will get to the ultimate cause of all these things later on in today's article, but we have some side effects to deal with first.

Yesterday I mentioned the **Ring of Fire**, a string of active volcanoes that surround the Pacific Ocean. The ring includes the western coasts of North and South America, Alaska, northeastern Russia, China, Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia. The vast majority of the 300 or so active volcanoes in the world can be found in the ring. What most people don't know is that in addition to the 300 active volcanoes there are over 1,100 inactive volcanoes. In fact, Mexico City is sitting on a currently inactive volcano, a very dangerous place to put the capital of a nation. But Mexico City is not the only metropolitan area in danger. 20 of the 21 major cities in the world are located near a geologically active area, including San Francisco and St. Louis in America. Everyone knows about the Great San Francisco Earthquake. But not everyone is as familiar with the powerful earthquake that occurred near the little town of New Madrid, Missouri in 1812. There were actually four major earthquakes over a period of time, three before the "big one", with multiple aftershocks following each one. So powerful was the dislocation of the ground that the Mississippi River actually ran **upstream** for three days! The Mississippi River changed course, new lakes were formed, church bells in New England rang from the shocks and sidewalks in Washington DC cracked as a result of the tremors! If those same quakes were to hit the region today, they would devastate St. Louis and cause untold millions or billions of dollars of damage.

It is not the **immediate** damage caused by the earthquakes in Revelation, however, that will constitute the **majority** of the damage to the planet. I know that seems hard to believe. One would think that the liquefaction of the tectonic plates would be ample cause for alarm, but there are things even worse caused by the earthquake which will follow shortly. Right now there are 1,100 inactive volcanoes in the world, but they won't stay inactive for very long when the Mega-quake of Revelation 6:12 hits the planet. The planet's surface, torn by the violence of the quake, will begin "bleeding" magma from so

many eruption points, both old and new, that it will be almost impossible to count them. The violence of the eruptions will match the magnitude of the earthquake. Imagine, if you will, over 2,000 volcanoes erupting **all over the globe at the same time!** To help you gain a perspective on what will happen to this planet, let me take you back in history to four separate incidents involving only one volcano at a time, and then you can multiply those events in your mind by 2,000.

Incident #1 – Mt. St. Helens, Washington State, May 18th, 1980.

Mt. St. Helen's is an active volcano well known for its ash eruptions and pyroclastic flows. It is one of the 160 active volcanoes located in the Ring of Fire. Nothing in its history, however, prepared the region for what would happen that fateful day. Instead of simply erupting, as had been the norm, the top of Mt. St. Helen's literally blew off. A huge **pyroclastic flow** of superheated ash, rock and smoke came rushing down the side of the mountain at over 700 miles an hour. Nothing could escape its path. Fifty-seven people were killed and 250 homes, 47 bridges, 15 miles of railways and 185 miles of highway were destroyed. The eruption caused a massive debris avalanche, reducing the elevation of the mountain's summit from 9,677 feet to 8,365 feet and replacing it with a mile-wide horseshoe-shaped crater. In addition, the region was covered with a thick cloud of deadly ash. Why deadly? For starters, the pyroclastic flow that came streaming down the mountainside and hurtling up into the atmosphere was superheated to 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit. Contact with it would mean instant death. But even after the ash cooled, it was still a killer. If you were to examine the ash under a microscope, you would see that it looked and acted like **tiny shards of broken glass**. Once inhaled, these tiny knives cut the lining of the lungs, producing a condition called **Marie's Disease**. The disease damages the lungs beyond repair and triggers, for some strange reason, runaway bone growth. The two conditions cause an extremely slow and painful death. Keep all of this in mind, because we have not even begun to examine the disastrous aftermath of a volcanic eruption.

Incident # 2 – Krakatoa Island, Sunda Strait, Indonesia – August 26-27, 1883.

It was a typical sultry day in the Indonesian island chains. Krakatoa was, like almost all the Indonesian Islands, a product of volcanic activity. The island was known for its violent eruptions, but no one on or around the island saw what was coming. Suddenly, without warning, Krakatoa **exploded**. The detonation destroyed two thirds of the island. It was the equivalent of 200 **megatons** of TNT, 13,000 times the yield of the *Little Boy* atomic bomb that destroyed Hiroshima at the end of World War II. The explosion ejected more than 25 cubic kilometers of rock, ash and pumice into the atmosphere. If that had been the end of the matter, it would have been bad enough. But the damage was just beginning, and it is at this point that we begin to understand how the sun and moon could be blacked out or severely dimmed during the 6th Seal.

In the year following the eruption, **average global temperatures fell by as much as 1.2 degrees Celsius**. Weather patterns continued to be chaotic for years, and temperatures did not return to normal until 1888. The eruption injected **an unusually large amount of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) gas high into the stratosphere** which was subsequently transported by high-level winds all over the planet. This led to a global increase in sulfurous acid (H₂SO₃) concentration in high-level cirrus clouds. The resulting **increase in cloud reflectivity would reflect more incoming light from the sun than usual**, and **cool the entire planet** until the suspended sulfur fell to the ground as acid precipitation.

The eruption **darkened the sky for days afterwards**, and produced spectacular sunsets throughout the world for many months. British artist William Ashcroft made thousands of color sketches of the **red sunsets half-way around the world from Krakatoa** in the years after the eruption. In 2004, researchers proposed the idea that the blood-red sky shown in Edvard Munch's famous 1893 painting *The Scream* is also an accurate depiction of **the sky over Norway** after the eruption. Munch said: "**Suddenly the sky turned blood red ... I stood there shaking with fear and felt an endless scream passing through nature.**" Also, a so called **blue moon** had been seen for two years as a result of the eruption.

Notice what Munch said? **The sky turned blood red.** Why? Because of all the soot, ash and particulate matter that had been hurled into the air by the explosion of **one single volcano halfway around the world!** Krakatoa produced some spectacular results on the other side of the globe, but the destruction was largely limited to the Indonesian island chain itself. However, this is not so with our next example.

Incident # 3 – Mt. Tabora, Sumbawa Island, Indonesia – 1815

Mt. Tambora is another volcanically formed island in the Indonesian island chain. Its eruption was so violent that the sound of it was heard in Sumatra, 1,000 miles away. It was the largest eruption since the Lake Taupo eruption in 181 AD in New Zealand, an eruption so violent that skies were turned blood red as far away as China and Italy. Mt. Tambora, however, did more than just colorize the skies. So much pyroclastic material was ejected high into the stratosphere that as it drifted to the northwest, it began to cause **dramatic climatic changes.** The following year, 1816, was a year of great difficulty in both North America and Europe as the ash and dust gradually drifted overhead, still suspended in the upper atmosphere. Temperatures dropped so radically that the **ground stayed frozen year-round.** As a result, all of the crops failed, causing mass starvation, riots and bizarre brown and red snow in Europe. In America, it became known as the **Year Without a Summer.** Most of the central and northern United States, including Ohio where we currently live, were drastically affected. Historian John D. Post has called this "*the last great subsistence crisis in the Western world*". The volcanically induced winter was also called the *Poverty Year* and *Eighteen Hundred and Froze to Death.* Although we may chuckle at the final title now, it was clearly no laughing matter to the people of the North America and Europe. What did the explosion at Tambora cause? **Long-term darkening of the skies over two continents, drastic temperature reductions, crop failures and starvation.** All over the actions of **a single volcano.** Do I have you thinking yet? Worried a little bit? Good. But brace yourself. **It's going to get worse than this.**

Incident # 4 – Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming – a very long time ago

One of the most beautiful and fascinating places to visit in the United States is Yellowstone Nation Park. The park covers 3,400 square miles and contains many geysers, including the famous "Old Faithful", so-known because of its amazing consistency in erupting a giant plume of heated water. The region is filled with numerous hot springs and is a wildlife refuge center. American explorers who first scouted the region were astounded by what they saw, and were not believed at first when they recounted what they had seen. But underneath what **could be seen** was something far less beautiful and far more deadly that **could not be seen.** It wasn't until the 1960's and 70's that Bob Christiansen of the US Geological Survey realized what Yellowstone actually was – **the calderas of two exploded massive super-volcanoes.** What's a caldera, you might ask? It is the hollow, relatively flat cone region left after a volcano explodes. Often, lakes form in these calderas once they cool down because there is no naturally occurring drainage for water out of the caldera. In this case, the two calderas are so massive that they form an entire region. The first caldera is **50 miles x 25 miles.** The second caldera is even bigger, measuring **50 miles x 30 miles.** According to vulcanists who study these things, the explosions of these two caldera many millennia ago **posed a severe threat to all life on the planet.** I do not agree with the time spans given by the scientists, but I will report them to you within the context of helping you realize the devastation caused by things that happened on our very own native soil and endangered everything alive. According to the scientists, the first major explosion of the super-volcano occurred some 2.1 million years ago and hurled so much pyroclastic material into the atmosphere that it equalled **2,500 times the output of Mt. St. Helens.** The second eruption supposedly occurred about 1.3 million years ago and produced the same kind of results. As geologists have studied Yellowstone, they see evidence of the North American plate moving over what they call a stationary "hot spot" in the earth's mantle, a place where eruptions and massive lava flows are frequent and common. As such, there is geological evidence of eruptions that trace from Washington through Oregon, California, Nevada and Idaho. The most recent explosion supposedly occurred some 70,000 years ago. Although it is difficult to predict when a volcano will erupt again, Yellowstone has begun to show signs that it is starting to "wake up" again. In the spring of 2003 large groups of bison suddenly began to die. At first, park officials were at a loss to explain what was happening, but autopsies of some of the bison revealed that they had died because they were **poisoned by noxious**

fumes which the ground had suddenly began to emit. Walking trails suddenly had to be closed off because the ground became **too hot to walk on.** The area is now experiencing **25 minor earthquakes a week.**

If the Yellowstone supervolcano were suddenly to choose to erupt, it would cause destruction beyond anything that mankind has ever experienced. A regular volcano ejects **millions** of cubic feet of ash and debris into the atmosphere. A supervolcano ejects **billions** of cubic feet. The last explosion at Yellowstone was **one million times bigger than the A-bomb at Hiroshima!** It produced enough ash to bury the state of Texas **five feet deep.** An explosion would blanket at least **half of the United States** with ash and bring the nation to its knees. Perhaps we do not have to worry about Russian or Chinese nuclear weapons. Many End-Times experts have commented that the United States is not mentioned in End-Times prophecy. I totally disagree. America is mentioned as one of the major empires of the final days in Daniel's dream in Chapter 7 of the book that bears his name, along with England, Russia, a four nation Pan-Arabic League and the empire of the Anti-Christ. It is America that comes to the aid of the "woman clothed with the sun", who represents Israel, in Chapter 12 of Revelation. But in Chapter 13, America is not mentioned, nor does it play a role in the events that follow. Perhaps our nation is nearly destroyed by the fresh eruption of the supervolcano that lies lurking beneath the surface of one of the most beautiful regions in the world. Only time will tell.

Up until now we have dealt strictly with volcanoes that are land-based. But with two-thirds of the surface of our planet covered by water, it only makes logical sense that there must be **two times as many volcanoes under the sea as there are on the land.** Remember that we told you that there about 300 active volcanoes in the world today, 160 of them found around the Ring of Fire. Also remember that we told you that there are about 1,100 dormant volcanoes spread across the world. Now **triple that number**, and you have an idea of how many active and dormant volcanoes must dot the surface of our planet. In addition, parallel to what is happening at Yellowstone, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of reported undersea volcanoes that are active. In 2002, the number suddenly began to escalate, and took off like a rocket in 2004. Unfortunately, I don't have any statistics available to me after 2004, but based on what I believe is happening deep within the core of this planet, I have no reason to believe that the rate of increase has slowed down one teeny, tiny bit.

Volcanoes above ground can be deadly, but it would appear that undersea volcanoes can be even deadlier. On September 6, 2007, an article appeared in the Sydney, Australia Morning Times discussing a topic that immediately grabbed my attention. Again, I present the comments of the scientists involved with a grain of salt sprinkled on their time estimates. Evolutionists believe that everything has happened very, very slowly over a long period of time. Creationists like me obviously do not share that belief. In the article, the writer suggested that human civilization might have been millions of years more advanced today had it not been for **massive chains of undersea volcanoes** that erupted billions of years ago. (See why it attracted my attention?) New research by two Australian and NASA scientists has found that the birth of the oxygen-rich atmosphere we breathe was delayed 200 million years by **marine volcanoes that destroyed the vital gas almost as fast as it was being exhaled by early bacteria.** (This will have huge implications later on in the **7th Seal** when we reach the **2nd Bowl Judgment** and the **oceans become like the blood of a dead man**)

Mark Barley, from the University of Western Australia's School of Earth and Geographical Sciences, said that scientists had already found convincing evidence that bacteria were generating oxygen 2.7 billion years ago. In theory, the Earth's atmosphere, then largely made of nitrogen, carbon dioxide and possibly methane, should have filled rapidly with oxygen. *"But it didn't,"* said Professor Barley. *"There was almost no oxygen for another 200 million years."* Professor Barley, a volcanic geochemist, and Professor Lee Kump, an ocean and atmosphere chemist from NASA's Astrobiology Institute and the Department of Geosciences at Pennsylvania State University, set out to explain the missing oxygen.

Their findings, published in Nature, suggest **most of the early oxygen was destroyed in chemical reactions with other gases gushing from large numbers of undersea volcanoes.** Before 2.5 billion years ago **"the large land masses we know today didn't really exist" and the world was mostly sea,** (Omigosh! Do realize what the dear evolutionary scientist has just done? He has just told us that the earth at its beginning was **exactly as the Bible says it was in Genesis 1:2!** Thank you,

doctor!) Professor Barley said. *"Volcanoes that erupt beneath the sea ... are much more effective at removing oxygen."* However **about that time the ocean crusts started thinning, allowing the oceans to hold more water.** That led to **more land bobbing up above sea level** (Hello? Is anybody paying attention to what he is saying? He just semi-quoted Genesis 1:9-10!). *"As larger, more stable continents formed, more volcanoes appeared on land and fewer were left at the bottom of the sea. Because gases pouring from volcanoes on the land were not able to consume the oxygen as fast as those in the sea, atmospheric oxygen levels finally started rising. The way was opened at last for the evolution of more complex oxygen-breathing life."*

Professor Barley described the shift towards land-based volcanoes as one of the most important global changes in geological history. *"It helped oxygen levels rise, which was ultimately so important to us,"* he said. He said the findings *"highlighted how seemingly subtle changes in the global environment could have major implications for life."*

Dear Friends, I don't even know where to start. Other than just justifying everything the Bible says about the creation of this planet, I guess the next most important thing would be about the effective **destruction of oxygen in the sea through volcanic activity.** If the oceans are depleted of their oxygen, **all life in the oceans die,** and the oceans turn into something that looks **like a reddish-black goo, like the blood of a dead man.** And if all life in the oceans dies, **all life on the land can't be far behind.** In addition, major global cycles that move oxygen from the atmosphere into the sea and then back out again would be severely interrupted.

Dear friends in Christ, can you see what is happening? All of these events that John saw in his vision were not symbolic or allegorical, but rather real and literal. What he saw is going to happen as he saw it in the very near future. God is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should change His mind. Everything that was shown to this poor, itinerant fisherman turned evangelist and apostle will come to pass exactly as it was shown to him.

When the earth's internal rotation comes to a screeching halt (I will deal with that aspect tomorrow), there will be a huge slipping of the tectonic plates over a core which is suddenly no longer rotating. When that happens, the plates, already badly damaged by the events of the Flood, will begin to disintegrate. Major plates will crumble into multiple tinier plates, and the islands and mountains located on those mini-plates will go skidding away with them. We could easily be looking at dislocations of hundreds of miles in some places. It will constitute the most traumatic event in the recorded history of mankind. Then, triggered by the chaos and violent energies being created by the process, not hundreds, but **thousands** of volcanoes will erupt, many explosively, into the upper atmosphere, filling the sky and the air we breathe with deadly pyroclastic flow materials, tiny lethal shards, which, when inhaled, cause slow and painful death. In addition, the sky will darken and the world will grow cold as sunlight is increasingly blocked by all the ash and soot airborne above our heads. This will cause the **sun to become as black as sackcloth of hair** and the **moon to become like blood,** depending on where you are on the planet and how much of the sky has been blocked off. It will cause one more logical thing to happen, and when I realized this fact, it forced me to modify what I believed about Revelation.

For a long time, I taught that Revelation 6:13, in referring to the stars of heaven falling like late figs being shaken from a fig tree by the wind, was a reference to a series of meteorite showers falling on the earth. Now I realize that I was completely wrong. What we are looking at here has nothing to do with asteroids, meteorites or comets. Revelation 6:13 is simply referring to all of the "big stuff" that gets thrown into the air by these several thousand volcanoes and then **comes plummeting back down on our heads** like hard, dried-up figs being shaken off of a fig tree by the wind.

And so we have come full cycle. Everything we have seen so far in the 6th Seal is fulfilled **literally.** Everything follows a logical sequence of **cause and effect,** just as modern science says it should. One event causes the next event which in turn causes the event after that, just as in the 1st four Seals. In addition, we have ample scientific evidence to support what we are saying, as well as overwhelming geological evidence that **it has happened before in the history of our planet.** If it happened **before,** it will certainly happen **again.** We didn't **need** science to tell us what would happen. We

already knew by faith in the revealed Word of God what would happen. What we needed science for was to **confirm by scientific evidence what God had already spoken to us in His Word.**
Halleluia!

Today's *E-Pistle* is one of the most shocking, revelatory articles I have ever written. During the research to write today's work, the Lord showed me so many things, major things that I had never known up until now. Why so long a delay? Perhaps it wasn't time. Perhaps, like Daniel in Chapter 12, Verse 9, these things had to be **sealed up till the time of the end.** But it **is** the time of the end. May the Lord help you and me alike; God is revealing to us **how the world will come to an end from a scientific standpoint.** I know of no one who is teaching what I am teaching. This is not to brag. I stand in utter astonishment at what God has shown me. I, like Daniel before me, want to swoon and fall on my face before the awful truth of what mankind has done to itself and to this planet, and what God Himself must do soon to rectify the situation.

All of this is terrible, but even more terrible events await us. Our planet has been circling the sun for a very long time. I have walked on the surface of this globe for only 59 years. But five years ago, everything suddenly changed for me when I was struck down by a **heart attack** and **malignant, inoperable cancer.** By the grace of God, I survived that terrible time, but I am still **crippled by the after-effects of the attacks.** Just as I survived a heart attack, **the earth itself** is about to suffer a **global heart attack** that will trigger the events of the 6th Seal. Stay tuned for tomorrow, when we take Mr. Earth in as a heart patient, in order to examine what the effects of a **Planetary Heart Attack** have on our patient. If ever there was a time to pray, **now is that time!** If ever there was a time to seek the face of the Lord, **now is that time!** If ever there was a time to free yourself from the sins that so easily beset us all, **now is the time and the place!** If ever there was a time to make your life right with God through His Son Jesus Christ, **NOW IS THE PLACE AND THE TIME!** I urge you to take copies of the last three or four of these articles and give them to every unsaved person you know, starting with your relatives. I know you've been told before that the time is short. You've probably been told that so many times by so many well-intentioned but mis-informed preachers that you've become immune to it. Nonetheless, I am going to tell you one more time, **the time is short.** Until tomorrow. Unless, of course, the earth has a heart attack between now and the time you read the next article. God bless.

Day 22 – Planetary Heart Attack



“¹² I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.” ~ Revelation 6:12-14

Kind of a scary picture, huh? Particularly if you are a heart attack survivor, as I am. There is probably nothing as frightening as an impending heart attack. Sometimes it hits so fast you never know what hit you until you hit heaven. Other times, suddenly there is a pressure in your chest and your left arm goes numb and you know what is happening. The only question is whether you can get help in time, before it is too late. I had my heart attack on the operating table, while the doctors were actually trying to prevent a heart attack. Go figure! I had come home from church that Sunday afternoon feeling out of sorts. I couldn't put my finger on it, but I knew that something was wrong. I decided to lay down on the sofa in the living room, but even rest didn't cure the problem. Later on that evening, I began to experience increasing pressure in my chest, until it was so bad that my wife called 911 and asked for an ambulance. I was rushed to the hospital, where, under supervised medication, the chest pressure gradually receded. The doctors decided that it would be a good idea to schedule a catharization in order to determine if I was on the verge of a heart attack. All during the procedure I was bathed in prayer. The doctor and virtually every person in that operating room were Christians. During a cath procedure they keep you awake so you can describe to them what you are feeling as they slide a very long wire with a teeny camera attached to the end up an artery near your groin all the way to your heart. As they examined my heart and the arteries around it, they discovered an 80% blockage in one of the main arteries. The doctor gave me two choices: they could terminate the catharization and schedule me for open heart surgery in the morning, or they could continue operating that day and perform an angioplasty, in which a miniature balloon is actually inserted right at the point of blockage. The balloon is then inflated, squashing the plaque flat against the artery wall to reopen the channel. I remember saying, *"Let's see. You can either fix it from the inside today or wait and fix it from the outside tomorrow, right?"* The doctor responded affirmatively. And then I replied, *"This is a no-brainer. Let's fix it now, while we're in the area!"* The first probe was removed, and a balloon inserted to flatten the plaque out. Suddenly I knew that something was wrong. There was a terrible pressure inside my chest. Not a pain, because arteries themselves don't have pain receptors, but a strong pushing inside of me. *"Reverend Young,"* the doctor said, *"are you experiencing any pain or pressure in your chest right now?"* *"I sure am!"*, I replied. *"Now, don't be worried,"* the doctor continued, *"but you are experiencing a heart attack right now. When we removed the balloon, your artery collapsed for some unknown reason. If this had happened on the street, you would have been dead within minutes. Fortunately for you, it is happening right here and we are in the process of reinserting another balloon to reinflate the artery and a implanting a stent to keep the artery open when we pull the balloon out"*. I was surprisingly calm. Somehow I knew that God had my life in the palms of His hands, and He wasn't going to let me slip through. I also knew that a stent was actually a sort of collapsable pipe that doctors frequently inserted in arteries to keep them open. I know of one man who has five such stents in the arteries surrounding his heart. I'm surprised he doesn't set metal detectors off every time he passes through them. Finally the surgery was done. I was wheeled into the recovery room, still alive. But the catharization and the subsequent operation had taken a toll on me. I was so weak I could barely lift my head. Another catharization followed the next day, with almost disastrous results. My blood pressure dropped to about 50 over 30, and I struggled to stay alive. After a few days, I was released from the hospital, but I was as weak as a kitten. My battle for life, however, had just begun, because unbeknownst to me, a malignant, inoperable tumor was growing

near my right ear and starting to block off the Eustacian Tube on that side of my head. The next three months would take me to the very edge of death as I struggled against this new enemy. After months of radiation treatments, chemotherapy and intense prayer by friends all over the US and the world, I had survived. But the battle had left me nearly dead. I had lost 80 pounds because of my body's violent reaction to the chemotherapy. I threw up constantly, sometimes as many as five times a day. I was hospitalized over 20 times during that span. And, to top it all off, the young pastor I had brought in to help me with the contemporary service saw his opportunity to betray me, and the leaders of the church that I was pastoring and the District Superintendent of the United Methodist Church, the denomination in which I was pastoring, all conspired with the young assistant to replace me because they thought I was going to die and the young man was available for hire at a much cheaper rate than me. *"It was only business!"*, the church Treasurer told me as they let me go. Actually, I had been fired behind my back days before, and here I was sitting in a service, trying to worship, while all the time they knew that I was no longer the pastor. Finally, a friend who knew took me aside and told me the truth. I was outraged. I couldn't reach the District Superintendent right away, but finally arranged a meeting with him the following morning. Even though he knew my physical condition, he made Bev and I drive a whole hour to talk to him, instead of him coming to see me. In the meeting, I asked plaintively, *"What will I do? Where will I go?"* I had left a full-time job as a senior programmer and support staff member for a hospice in Louisville, making \$53,000 a year in a pleasant, rewarding position in order to go full time into the ministry. I had moved away from friends and relatives in Jeffersonville, Indiana and traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio in order to do it. We had taken a little African-American UMC and doubled membership and set modern day giving records in the first two years. We had seen multiple signs, wonders, miracles and healings. Testimonies abounded. But the old guard grew weary of the young Spirit-filled believers from the inner city. They didn't tithe, they complained. But, hey, how many 16 year olds do? They made a mess in the sanctuary. Well, yes, it did get messy every now and then when we took someone through a deliverance and they vomited up a batch of screaming demons! But we always faithfully cleaned up after ourselves. I guess we had become scandalous to the staid UMC. They didn't want to talk about salvations, baptisms in the Holy Spirit, deliverances and healings. All they wanted to talk about were committees and meetings and guidelines. "Business as usual" will be the epitaph written on the tombstone of the UMC when they finally die as a denomination and fold into the new, improved church of the Anti-Christ, along with most of the main-line denominations and a healthy percentage of the Pre-Trib "Spirit-filled" church as well.

His response to my question? To the day I die I will **never** forget the callous, indifferent, coldly calculating reply he gave me. *"You're a big boy,"* he said flatly, *"You'll think of something."* That was it. After abandoning a safe, secular job for a church paying \$15,000 a year plus a parsonage to live in and transforming the church both spiritually and physically, I was given 60 days to vacate the parsonage as a "favor" to me, along with most of my salary for that period, provided I said absolutely nothing about the termination to anyone (God forbid that the scandal should get out in the papers or in the local community!) and didn't try to recruit any of the members into a new church. This had happened before, they said, and they had to protect the "integrity" of the existing congregation. Integrity? Hah! What a joke! As it turned out, every single person that had joined the church during our ministry, been saved, healed or delivered, left the church, along with several existing members who were appalled and disgusted by what had happened. It became common knowledge in the community, and now, you, too, dear friend know what happened.

Not everyone would have survived the double whammy of a heart attack and malignant, inoperable cancer 30 days apart from one another, followed by betrayal and termination by so-called "Christians" 60 days after that. But God is a good God, even when the circumstances aren't. Even though I was sick, weak and in terrible pain because of the peripheral neuropathy in my hands and feet caused by the chemotherapy, a church formed around all the people who had left Calvary and come with us. Their response to the leadership of the old church? *"If Pastor Ray isn't there, we aren't there!"*

Why have I used almost two full pages to tell you my story? Because **my** story is a sign and a type for what is going to happen to the earth. **I** suffered a **heart attack** which almost took my life. **The earth** will suffer a **"heart attack"** which will almost take the life of everything and everyone on the planet. Remember what Jesus said in the Olivet Discourse? He told the disciples that if **those times had not deliberately been shortened for the sake of the elect, no flesh would have been left alive!** All

life on the planet would cease to exist, and the earth would continue on its way across the void, barren and lifeless, just like all the other planets in our Solar System. I had **other things** attack me as well, some of which were the **direct result** of the heart attack. **The earth** will have **other things** happen to it as well, some of which will be the **direct result** of the "heart attack". Right now **I continue to function, but am hindered** by severe, constant pain in my hands and feet, a loss of 50% of my hearing and saliva glands in my mouth which no longer work. During the 6th and 7th Seals, **the earth will continue functioning**, even though it is **severely crippled** by what is happening to it. **I am going to be totally healed in the near future**. And, despite everything that will happen to our beautiful blue marble, **the earth will be totally healed during the Millennial Reign**.

I have often cried out to the Lord, asking why these things happened to me, striking me down in the prime of my life. Now I know. Just as Ezekiel was a sign and type to Israel about what would happen to it, even though he was innocent of Israel's crimes, so I, too, have become a sign and type. Little did I know or understand this until I began to write this series of articles about the 6th Seal. Then, it suddenly became clear to me. As it had happened to me, so it would happen to the earth. Many of you may not be familiar with my reference to Ezekiel, so let me document with Scripture what actually happened.

"¹ You also, son of man, **take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem.** ² **Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around.** ³ **Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.** ⁴ **Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. According to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity.** ⁵ **For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.** ⁶ **And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.** ⁷ **Therefore you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem; your arm shall be uncovered, and you shall prophesy against it.** ⁸ **And surely I will restrain you so that you cannot turn from one side to another till you have ended the days of your siege."** -- Ezekiel 4:1-8

This passage ranks #2 in the "Wierd but True" category in the Bible, finishing only behind Isaiah's having to walk stark naked for three years as a sign and type against the nation. What actually happened here? The Lord instructed Ezekiel to take a clay tablet, kind of like a chalkboard, and draw the picture of a city on it representing Jerusalem. Then Ezekiel had to set the tablet up on the ground, put little toy tents all around it to represent the besieging army, make teeny, tiny battering rams for battering down the gates of the city and build a siege ramp up against it. In order to take a walled city, enemy troops would often build up a giant earthworks ramp, so that the soldiers could walk right up to the top of the ramparts and gain entrance to the city. Often this would take months and sometimes years, because the people on the wall would be doing everything in their power to stop the earthworks ramp from being built. In essence, it would be like building a Lego Jerusalem, and then using Lego parts to create an army around it with all of the weapons of warfare. Most girls don't do this, but boys often "play soldier" with their little plastic warriors. I actually had a friend in high school who still did this even though he was a senior at the time. He was a bright lad, but more than a little strange. After erecting all of this, Ezekiel then had to place an iron plate between him and Jerusalem, and then had to "set his face against it", meaning that he had to turn away his head from Jerusalem. Jerusalem, in turn, would find God's face turned away from them when they would pray, and the heavens would seem to be made of iron, hard and unresponsive to their petitions and requests. Ezekiel was then **paralyzed by God** and forced to lay on his **left side** for **390 days**, one day for each of the years that Israel, the Northern Kingdom, would be sent into exile. He was then temporarily unparalyzed so that he could turn around on his **right side**, and then had to stay that way for another **40 days** to represent the exile period of Judah. Man, talk about tough! You have to be totally surrendered to God to be able to put up with something like that. I have to confess, I have not dealt well with my physical problems. I want to be healed; to be up and about and doing for Christ. It has been unspeakably hard to have to just sit and type and type and type. If you have the full series of

seven books, thank you, but you now know just how much typing was actually required of me. And the Lord told me that until the seven books were completed, I would not be permitted to go back out into active ministry. That has almost driven me crazy. I know that Paul said that he had learned to be content in all circumstances. Good for him. I'm still struggling more than a little with the concept. I don't want to be on the bench, and I have been forced to be on the bench for the last four years. But things are starting to change. I have pled and pled with the Lord to at least let me do **something**, lest I go stark raving mad. And it looks like the Lord is going to answer my plea for help. As I write this article, we are in Jeffersonville, Indiana, searching for a place to live. Yes, we are strongly considering relocating back in Jeff. We have a core group of about 15 people who have been praying earnestly for us to return for several years. All have committed to become members of a new church which we would form and faithfully attend, tithe and work. It may not be much, but the Bible says not to despise the day of small beginnings, and so I won't. At least it's a start, and at least it puts me back in the pulpit on a weekly basis. That will, in a significant way, ease the fire burning in my chest which says, "Woe be unto me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (I Corinthians 9:16)

It is difficult to imagine the physical and emotional toll these 430 days of paralysis took on Ezekiel. So difficult was it physically that the Lord even invented a special kind of bread for Ezekiel, something which we today refer to as "Ezekiel Bread". What was it made of? Here's the recipe for making Ezekiel bread, folks!

"⁹ Also take for yourself **wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet and spelt**; put them into one vessel, and make bread of them for yourself. During the number of days that you lay on your side, three hundred and ninety days, you shall eat it. ¹⁰ And your food which you eat shall be **by weight, twenty shekels a day**; from time to time (or in regular intervals) you shall eat it. ¹¹ You shall also **drink water by measure, one-sixth of a hin**; from time to time (or in regular intervals) you shall drink." – Ezekiel 4:9-11

Why do I bring up such a strange and seeming insignificant detail in our conversation? Because God often **hides important facts in mundane details**. Why does He do that? **He wants to see if we are paying attention**. Attention to what? Oh, dear friend, you're gonna love this. For every one of you who have ever struggled to be "loosed" while sitting on the toilet, God had just given Ezekiel the recipe for **the perfect cure for constipation and impaction!** What? Are you kidding me, Pastor Ray? Nope! Think about Ezekiel's situation for just a second. He was going to be paralyzed for 430 straight days. Anyone who has ever worked in or even spent time in visitations to a nursing home knows full well what a difficult time many patients having in "being regular". Ezekiel didn't have the benefit of such medical assistance when he lay down for his 430 day paralysis, so the Lord had to provide him with the perfect combination of fiber, protein and other nutrients so that he wouldn't become impacted and die. The combination of grains and beans provided his body with just enough of everything so that he could survive the ordeal. You can buy Ezekiel Break at most health food stores, and even some grocery stores. If it has been made with the same Biblical formula as the original bread was, I would recommend it heartily.

Speaking of **heartily**, we seem to have veered far off course, as usual. Let's get back to the subject of planetary heart attacks. As we examine the events which tore the earth apart during the Flood, and then look at the Mega-Quake and Hyper-Quake which will strike our planet during the events of the Seven Seals, we have to ask ourselves what on earth, or, more accurately, **in** the earth, could cause such a massive dislocation of the Tectonic plates, as well as the destruction of the original Tectonic shell. Enter the Heart Attack Hypothesis. As we have studied the earth on which we live, we have made several interesting discoveries. Truthfully, we know far less about what lies underneath our feet than we do about what lies above our heads. We can observe events that have occurred millions of light years away with near-crystal clarity through our satellites and orbiting telescopes. But we have only been able to barely scratch the surface of the paper-thin crust that wraps itself around our own planet. What little we do know, we know only by inference. By sending shock waves through the planet, we can study the interior of our globe just a doctor can study the inside of a patient's body by using CAT scans, MRI's and the like. In doing so, we have discovered that the core of our planet appears to be made of molten nickel and iron. The temperature of the center of the globe is searingly hot, running as high as 13,000 degrees Fahrenheit. We have also discovered another very interesting

fact about our planet in the process. That nickle/iron core is not stationary. Rather, it rotates, spinning just like the inside of a electric motor or generator. As the iron portion of the core rotates, it creates an extremely strong electromagnetic field; again, just like an electric motor. It is this electromagnetic field, called the **magnetosphere**, which surrounds our planet and protects it from some of the more letal effects of the sun's rays. When deadly radiation from the sun heads toward the earth, most of it is pulled either toward the North or the South Pole and "dumped" there, producing the spectacular Arora Borealis in the Northern Hemisphere and the Aurora Australis in the Southern Hemisphere. This discharges the deadly effects of the radiation, particularly that of UV (ultraviolet) radiation. As we established in a previous *E-Pistle*, it was this lethal UV radiation that robbed mankind of his near-1,000 year lifespan after the Flood. But even now, without the firmament above which once encircled the globe, the magnetosphere still acts as a defender for all life on earth. I find it to be more than just random occurrence that the magnetic field directs lethal radiation to the only two largely unpopulated regions of the planet. If, for instance, the magnetic poles were located over North America on one side of the globe and India on the other side, mortality rates in both regions would skyrocket because of the dramatic increase in radiation. While such a change might seem unlikely, it turns out that history supports the possibility. Researchers have discovered that the position of magnetic north moves constant. It is not, as we were led to believe, a permanent sticking point on the globe. In years past, it was typical for magnetic north to move about the polar region by about 7 miles a year. Recently, geologists have noticed a dramatic and fairly disturbing increase in the erratic location of the Magnetic North Pole. Now the position of the pole is moving by as much as 25 miles in a given year. In studying rocks which contain components which can be aligned magnetically, scientists have also discovered that there have been times when the Magnetic North Pole has vacillated wildly all over the globe. In fact, there have been times when there were not **two** magnetic poles, but rather **three, four** or even more! Recent research seems to indicate that another polar anomaly also seems to occur. It would seem that the North and South Poles **switch places** every 700 years or so! I know that seems almost impossible, but astronomers, in studying our very own sun, have discovered that the sun's magnetic north and south poles switch places every **11 years** like clockwork! They have also discovered that when our sun performs this magnetic switcheroo, it has a little heart spasm of its own and throws off vast amounts of solar material, called **Coronal Mass Ejections**. These coronal mass ejections, or **CME's**, as they are referred to, will play a very important role in several of the events found in the Book of Revelation. More on that later.

The fact that the earth periodically does some sort of internal hopscotch with its magnetic poles is disturbing in and of itself. The enormous momentum of this generator inside of our planet means that vast amounts of molten nickle and iron must stop flowing in one direction and gradually begin to flow in another. The forces required to reroute anything this heavy and dense can barely be calculated, and the amount of stress placed on the thin outer layer of our planet by what is going on in the inside has to, by definition, produce results like increased volcanic activity, earthquakes and the like. Any time this vast, dense ocean of magnetic material shifts course, all kinds of changes take place on the outside. In fact, University of Stanford scientists have even come up with a tentative model of the what this nickle/iron core looks like. Interestingly enough, it is not circular, as most would think. Instead, it bears an uncanny resemblance to an actual **human heart**, with arteries running to the North and South Poles. When I first saw the computer simulation of the electric motor running this planet, I was immediately struck by the disturbing similarity. Then I began to ask myself, "*What would happen to the earth if it had a heart attack just like me?*" Normally, when the earth switches its internal rotational direction, it does so very slowly. If the molten core was rotating clockwise, it will begin to decrease in velocity. Eventually, it will come to a stop, and then, ever so slowly, begin to rotate in the opposite direction, in this case, counter-clockwise. When it does that, three things happen. First, the North Pole becomes the South Pole and vice versa. Compasses which so faithfully pointed toward the Arctic Circle would then just as faithfully point toward Antarctica. Second, the magnetosphere would also reverse polarity. Third, during the period of transition, the magnetosphere would gradually diminish in intensity. When the core finally stopped rotating, the magnetosphere would vanish altogether. For a brief period of time, the earth would be totally unprotected and vulnerable to radiation coming from the sun. Remember this third point. **If the earth's internal heart stops beating, the earth is vulnerable to destruction coming from our very own sun.**

Now, none of this is particularly good news. Any time a rotational change occurs, there are some nasty side effects on the surface of the planet. The ground beneath our feet may seem solid and eternal, but it is very tenuous indeed when compared to the vast amount of material underneath it which is **not** very solid and **not** very eternal, but in a state of constant, liquid flux. The mantle is nothing more than the shell surrounding an egg, seemingly insurmountable to the tiny chick inside the shell, but fragile and temporary to anyone viewing the egg from the outside. Remember: the shell surrounding the fiery center of this planet is just like the egg shell – just barely strong enough to serve the purpose of nurturing life. In the egg’s case, that life is **inside** of it. In the case of the earth, the life is on the **outside of the shell**.

Just imagine, if you will, what would happen if something drastic happened inside of the earth which caused the internal motor to stop **suddenly**? If even a gradual slowdown causes traumatic side effects on the surface, imagine what would happen if the core suddenly stopped rotating altogether. Every now and then I ask people what they think was the Biblical miracle that required the most expenditure of energy. Most people say that it was the parting of **Y[a]m S[u/o]ph**, which when correctly translated as “*Sea of Land’s End*” and not “*Sea of Reeds*” points directly to the Gulf of Aquabah, not the Red Sea. If you want to learn more about what I just referred to, get on your computer and Google *Ron Wyatt*. He was the Spirit-filled Seventh-Day Adventist who first made the amazing discovery. You could also Google *Bob Cornuke* and learn about the equally brave man who followed in Ron’s footsteps. Some people say that the resurrection of Jesus Christ must rank first, since it involved creating the first resurrection body.

This second choice could well be true. But my favorite, and one which no one has ever given as their first choice is the **day when Joshua made the sun stand still** (Joshua 10:12-14). Back in Joshua’s day, people thought that the sun revolved around the earth. We know better today. Well, **most** of us do. There are still some flat earth advocates out there. No matter how hard you try, some people are just never going to get it. But even if the sun did revolve around the earth, the amount of energy required to make it stop for one complete day would be beyond our ability to calculate or imagine. Given that the earth revolves around the sun, it still required that **the revolution of the earth had to be stopped for 24 hours without tearing the planet apart at the seams all over again**. The amount of centrifugal force built into the earth’s rotation has to be astronomical. Somehow, using technologies, forces and energies far beyond anything we have, God brought the revolution of the earth to a standstill for a full day, and did it without triggering a series of global earthquakes and eruptions. There is another mystery hidden in that story. It just so happens that many of the Midianites were struck down and killed as they fled from Joshua’s army by **large hailstones cast down from heaven** (Joshua 10:11). It is not without significance that the hailstones **fell first, before the earth stopped rotating**. I would dearly love to know the connection between the two events, and, believe me when I tell you, dear friends, that there **must** be a connection between the two. Did a huge meteorite shower pummel the planet on the far side of the globe, perhaps in North America before anyone inhabited it, jarring the planet so badly that it momentarily suspended it’s rotation? Did the supervolcano at Yellowstone erupt and throw massive amounts of pyroclastic material into the air which fell back to the earth directly on top of the fleeing Midianites? No one can be sure. I can tell you this much for sure: **every miracle in the Bible has a supernatural origin and a scientific explanation**. This is how unbelievers can look at a miracle and not see it at all. It has to be appropriated **by faith**. The world says, “*I won’t believe it unless I see it*”. The Lord says, “*If you cannot believe it, you will never see it*.” **When God interacts with events in the natural world, He always uses the forces, energies and laws of the natural world to accomplish what He desires to do**. The difference between **Natural Law** and **Supernatural Law** is that when God performs a miracle, He invokes physical laws and science which is still millennia beyond our comprehension, much less use. These **higher** and more powerful Laws are just as immutable as the Newtonian laws of gravity, action and reaction and the like. It’s just that they **supersede** and **preceed** the laws which we know of today. As we are moving into such things as **String Theory** and **Quantum Physics**, we are finding that all of our Newtonian assumptions about physical absolutes are completely wrong. Everything in the physical universe appears to be **relative**, just as Einstein said. This **physical relativity** has led to a corresponding development of doctrines of **moral relativity** that have become popular in our day. This has been unfortunate and disastrous for our country’s stability, but it has also been totally predictable. However, it is important to point out that this current “fad” of relativity is **not** the end of the matter. As we move

deeper and deeper into the quagmire of Quantum Physics, we are going to find **yet another set of rules and laws which undergird them.** It is precisely in this yet-undiscovered layer or realm of **scientific absolutes in which God dwells and from which all His power comes.** You heard it here first, friends. Quantum Physics is only a temporary stop along the way to scientific discovery. In the Millennium we will come to understand and use forces and laws which will make today's scientific brain-busters look like the blocks which a child plays with.

If you were to slice the earth into two pieces, just like an apple, and then allow it to continue on its course around the sun, you would observe things spinning in all sorts of directions. First of all, you would see the earth's core, spinning dutifully in one direction or another. Second, you would see the earth itself, spinning on its axis like some giant top, producing what we know as night and day. Third, you would see the moon revolving around the earth, spinning as it goes, creating additional gravitational forces that produce the tides and also contribute significantly to the timing of volcanic eruptions throughout the globe. Fourth, you would see the earth, with not one but **three** rotational factors to contend with, hurtling around the sun in its own orbit. Fifth, you would see the sun, spinning on its own axis, with its own internal core spinning as well. Sixth, you would see the sun and its Solar System merrily spinning around the perimeter of the Milky Way Galaxy. Seventh, you would see the Milky Way Galaxy in its dance with all the other galaxies. Dizzy yet? Finally, imagine all of these complicated movements to be like the gears in the movement of a mechanical watch, all connected together and dependent on one another. What would happen to the entire mechanism if **someone threw a monkey wrench into one of the gears, jamming it and causing it to suddenly stop violently?** You don't have to have much of an imagination to visualize the enormous level of destruction which would occur. Where would the destruction be the greatest? Certainly not in the fluid core of the planet. Liquid absorbs and **transmits** physical force without being destroyed in the process. Solids, on the other hand, don't fare quite as well. Rock doesn't have the give and take in it that molten iron does. When a violent force is transmitted upward from the core to the solid granite surface of the planet, something must give, and something must be destroyed. That destruction occurs where liquid meets solid, **at the Tectonic level.** The first time this happened, the earth was torn so badly that it ripped up and down the Atlantic Ocean, under South America, into the South Pacific, into the Indian Ocean, up to Saudi Arabia, and under the Horn of Africa to rejoin the rip in the Atlantic. Untold billions or quadrillions of gallons of water came pouring out from under the Tectonic Shell as that Shell not only ripped but shattered into more than a dozen pieces. Just for fun, my son-in-law and I compared two maps: one of the Tectonic Plates and one of the Transatlantic Ridge, the place where the tear occurred. Sure enough, the tear lines all across the globe followed neatly the boundaries of the Tectonic plates. The evidence is irrefutable and insurmountable. Something terrible happened to the earth at the time of the Flood. Something so violent that it literally tore our planet apart at the seams and forever shattered the protective shell around it. The second time it will happen, the Tectonic Plates will be so badly fragmented that the islands and mountains that rest on the individual pieces will be moved hundreds of miles out of their natural places. The third time it happens, the Tectonic Mini-Plates left over from the previous disaster will be completely pulverized and absorbed into the seething hot magma beneath them. Only one small fragment of a plate will remain. The Saudi Arabian Plate, upon which the entire Middle East rests, will somehow miraculously survive the cataclysm and a single mountain resting on it will be dramatically thrust higher than any other mountain has ever been thrust. The Saudi Arabian Plate will collide with what is left of either the African or Eurasian Plate and be catapulted skyward, **just as the Holy Scriptures predicted many thousands of years ago.**

When the Angel Gabriel showed Daniel timelines covering thousands of years of mankind's history, it was more than Daniel could stand. In one case, he was overwhelmed and became ill for several days, unable to resume his normal duties and activities as a counselor of the king. At the very end of his revelations, the Angel gave him a very good piece of advice. **Seal up all of these matters until the time of the end** (Daniel 12:9). At that time, mankind's level of knowledge and understanding was simply not capable of comprehending what Gabriel had shown Daniel or dealing with the trauma which it had to place on his limited view of the world. Eventually, **knowledge would increase** (Daniel 12:4). Once the information storehouse available to mankind was sufficient, they would begin to understand the processes which will be released in the End Times when all of this happens. They would be able to take what God had spoken to them and make scientific sense out of it. In the process, faith

will **decrease** for some, and **increase** for others. For those who have foolishly taken the new information explosion and turned it into a substitute religion, it will result in the widespread rejection of existing religion and faith in God. But for those who believe, it will only serve to confirm and bolster their own faith. Understanding **how** it will happen will not diminish the wonder for them of knowing that **thousands of years before these events came to pass, God Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth, spoke to Holy Men of Old and revealed to them astonishing things which are just now starting to come to pass.** These men did not have the training or the knowhow to theoretically postulate that these things would come to pass. To be sure, some, like Daniel, had scientific training in addition to their knowledge of the Word of God (Daniel 1:4). But others, like Peter and John, were simply fishermen, uncouth and uneducated. Yet these unlettered men accurately predicted exactly what would happen if the entire atomic structure of the physical universe came apart at the seams (II Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 20:11-21:1). Even now, with all of our training in the Scientific Method, we often cannot grasp the full meaning of Scripture. Dear friends, I am dumbfounded myself at times when I read the Holy Revealed Word of God and suddenly light breaks through into the dim recesses of my own mind. When I try to explain all of this to people, I often lose them unless I am careful to go very carefully and slowly. Imagine how hard it must have been for Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah and the like to write down things which made **absolutely no sense to them.** Imagine the frustration they must have felt when they were told that it was not possible for them to understand what they had been told. It was only their job to **faithfully transmit the information on to those in the future who would know what to do with it.** My own heart rejoices when I think about it all. The Eternal One, the Holy One, the Righteous One of Israel, who shaped and formed this universe, understood all about Plate Tectonics before there were Tectonic Plates. He knew about planetary revolutions and internal geomagnetic engines and all of these wondrous things before I was conceived in my mother's womb. He was wise enough and strong enough to bring everything that He has said to pass. And He is kind and merciful enough to be willing to share the details of His Eternal Plan with the likes of you and me. Dear friends, rejoice! Great is our God! Mighty to save! Eternal and eternally trustworthy is He! Now, stay tuned till tomorrow. He who created the lungs to breathe and the air to breathe into them is about to take some of that air away, when you will have to learn to **Catch Your Breath Before It Runs Away!** Until then, may He strengthen and purify your own heart, so that you can serve Him with your whole heart, mind, soul and strength. Amen and Amen!

Day 23 – Catch Your Breath before It Runs Away



“¹² I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.” ~ Revelation 6:12-14

What a strange title! And what a funny looking kitty! Actually, I “borrowed” that picture from a commercial extolling the virtues of a certain kitty litter. But what is funny on film won’t be funny in real life when yet another aspect of the 6th Seal rolls out. Up until now, we have talked extensively about the Mega-Quake which will strike our planet. We went all the way back into Genesis to show you the connection between what happened at the time of the Flood and what will happen, not once, but twice, in Revelation. We then went one step further and asked the eternal question, “*Why?*” God doesn’t mind it if you ask why. Despite many bad sermons on the Book of Job, God actually delights in His children asking how things work. No parent likes it when a child is whiney and complaining. Sometimes “*Why?*” is just another way of saying “*I don’t want to do it!*” But when “*Why?*” actually means “*Explain to me how it works*”, then the Lord has no problems with giving amazing answers to His children. Any father delights in asking the genuine questions of his child when the child comes to him as the expert and asks for understanding. In fact, one of my favorite Scripture passages is the famous “**God’s Phone Number**”, found in Jeremiah 33:3, where the Lord says, “**Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know**”. That sure sounds like an open **invitation to information** to me!

Once we moved beyond analyzing the **effects** of the Mega-Quake and began to ask questions about the **cause** of the Mega-Quake, God began to show me great and mighty things which I had not known up until that point in time. Had I not asked “*Why?*”, I would never have learned this amazing truth. It is clear that the Lord did not intend for this revelation to be opened until this generation. Up until now, knowledge had not increased to the point where we understood that at the center of our planet was a living, breathing electromagnetic “heart” made of liquid nickle and iron, generating the magnetosphere which protects our planet. Once we understood that this planet had a heart, it became possible for the planet to have a heart attack, which is exactly what happened in Noah’s day. If it is possible for a human being to have a heart attack, then it is also possible for a planet to have an electromagnetic heart attack. If this planet could have a heart attack, then it would also be possible, by simple reason, for any other planet similar to ours to have a similar occurrence. And, just as with a human being, it is possible for that heart attack to kill that planet. If a heart attack could kill a human, it could also kill a planet. In order to understand the full impact of a terminal electromagnetic heart attack on the Earth, we must go to our closest planetary neighbor, **Mars**. We have long speculated on the true nature of the Red Planet. From H.G. Wells’ science fiction novel *War of the Worlds*, brought chillingly to life by actor Orson Wells over the radio to the bizarre but genuinely funny *Mars Attacks* directed by Tim Burton, we have envisioned what life on Mars might be like, if indeed it had life. But has life ever existed on our nearest neighbor? Right now, Mars appears on the surface to be a totally dead world. There is virtually no atmosphere, there is no liquid water on the surface of the planet, and everywhere we look, all we can see is a cloud of red dust, covering everything. But if we look closer, there are tell-tale hints of a vastly different Mars that existed long ago. Even though there is no free water visible to the human eye, if we dig down only a little distance, we find ice hidden below the Martian surface. We know that it is ice because not only does it look like ice but as soon as it is exposed to the rays of the sun, it begins to melt and evaporate. We have done extensive mapping of the Martian surface from

satellites which circle the planet on a regular basis. In doing that mapping, we have found evidence of features all over the surface of Mars which could only have been formed by the presence of significant amounts of water. In fact, there is clear evidence that as much as 50% of Mars was once covered by oceans just like our own. In almost every respect, Mars was once a slightly smaller version of earth. With the presence of large amounts of free surface water, life appears to be almost automatic on our own planet. Did Mars also house life? Perhaps. Was there not only life but **intelligent** life? Who knows? It wouldn't take long for a fertile, over-active imagination like my own to envision not only **one** highly developed civilization other than our own, but **two**, one on the Planet of War, as our ancestors referred to it, and another on a planet which no longer exists, situated in what we now call the **Asteroid Belt**, a planet which we will call for sake of argument, **Narvona**. Let's further assume, for sake of argument, that both civilizations had developed interplanetary travel and that both planets had at their disposal weapons of a destructive magnitude that we can barely imagine. If two such world were to engage in a true war between worlds, there could be only one inevitable outcome: **Mutually Assured Destruction**, or **M.A.D.** Did I just make up that phrase? Hardly. Rather, it was developed by our **very own Pentagon** in regards to the arms race with Russia. The United States alone has nuclear weaponry capable of destroying all life on this planet at least **200 times over!** That does not count the vast stockpile scattered across the highly unstable former U.S.S.R., along with nuclear arms located in France, China, Lybia, North Korea, Iran and, yes, Israel. All told, our planet probably has the capability to destroy itself totally, down to the microbe level, around **500 times**. That is a chilling thought, and to make matters worse more and more nations are clamoring to join the nuclear club as the years go by. What if technologies far in excess of our own came to play between Mars and Narvona? What if Navona was utterly destroyed, shattered into a billion small pieces of rock? What if Mars survived as a planet but died as a planet supporting life, with all atmosphere, all water and all living creatures wiped off the planet in a moment of time? That would make a pretty cool science fiction novel and movie, wouldn't it?

The real truth about the death of Mars is much less melodramatic, but no less dramatic. Mars was almost certainly once a world that supported abundant free water and life. But all of that came to an end when Mars suffered a fatal heart attack. How did it happen? We don't really know **why** it happened, but we can speculate with reasonable accuracy about **how** it happened. Just like the Earth, Mars once had a liquid core of molten nickle and iron, two of the heaviest elements that naturally find their way to the center of any planet where the gravity is the greatest. And, just like the Earth, the molten core of Mars rotated just like a giant electromagnetic motor, creating a magnetosphere just like our own. That magnetosphere protected Mars from the deadly Solar Wind just as our magnetosphere protects us. That same magnetosphere allowed an oxygen-rich atmosphere to develop on the surface of the planet. Water began to gather and eventually oceans formed. What would follow would only be logical. Life, and perhaps even intellilgent life, would come into existence. But then, one fateful day, something terrible and lethal happened to the 4th planet in the Solar System. **The giant electromagnetic engine failed.** We do not know if the failure of the engine was gradual or sudden. But we do know that Mars no longer has a molten metal core like the Earth. The heart of the planet is cold and dead. It no longer rotates. It no longer spins. And it no longer generates a protective magnetic sheath around the Red Planet.

As a result of this planetary heart failure, the atmosphere of the planet began to be stripped away. While most scientists speculate that the erosion of the atmosphere was a millennia-long process, there are other possibilities which must be considered. If you will remember, in previous articles I have mentioned **Coronal Mass Ejections**. Just like the Earth, the Sun also has an internal electromagnetic motor, only made out of denser gases, not liquid metal. Every 11 years the Sun goes through a miniature heart attack of its own. During that process the solar North and South Poles swap positions. Also during that process, the Sun becomes highly agitated and throws off huge masses of gas, seething with radiation and deadly energies. These masses of radiation-laced gas are called Coronal Mass Ejections. They have the power to do damage far above and beyond what the Solar Wind can do. Normally, our own magnetosphere protects us from the Solar Wind and most of the negative effects of CME's, but the last time the Sun did its internal flip-flop, a CME smashed into the earth, blowing out global communications for an extended period of time and causing a major power outage across parts of North America. What if such a CME were to hit the Earth without the magnetosphere to protect us? Such CME's also have the capability of creating a global **EMP**, or **Electromagnetic Pulse**. An EMP of

sufficient magnitude could easily knock out all electronic devices across the globe, frying billions of computer chips and circuitry in the process. The next wave of CME's is due in 2011 or 2012. Remember that date. The year 2012 has a vast array of negative events associated with it. That discussion must be tabled for another day. We already have enough problems of our own right here, right now.

Having defined what such a CME could do to the Earth, even with its electromagnetic sheath, imagine what a series of CME's could do to an unprotected Mars, deprived of its liquid core. Instead of the Martian atmosphere being gradually removed over a long period of time, it would **suddenly be stripped off**, and would appear to be **pulling or rolling away from the planet, peeled off by the massive surge of Solar radiation**. Fantasy? No. The right set of legitimate circumstances could suddenly rip a significant portion of the Martian atmosphere from the planet. Deprived of most of its atmosphere, Mars would begin to experience a rapid loss of its oceans as well, as the vast majority of the free water on Mars boiled off into the cosmos. Deprived of its atmosphere and water, Mars would quickly devolve into the barren, lifeless world that we know today. All life would quickly come to an end. With its heart dead within it, Mars would have no choice but to die on its surface as well.

Having painted that scenario, we now return to the planet Earth. Where on Earth, you might ask, did I come up with such an astounding chain of events? Was I engaging in recreational drugs? Reverting to my old hippy-dippy ways in college? Nope. Just following exactly what Scripture said would happen in the Last Days, and asking the question, "Why?" "Well, then," you might ask, "what portion of Scripture has led you to these conclusions?" Why, the passage at the very beginning of this article! In the midst of all of the other traumatic events which Revelation outlines, it says something that has puzzled Bible scholars for untold generations. Smack dab in the middle of the 6th Seal, John says that he saw **the sky recede like a scroll when it is rolled up**. OK. I know you are asking yourself what the connection is between those 11 words and everything that has transpired on the last three pages. Here goes:

Let's take a look at what John said. He said he saw the sky **recede**. Now, the definition for recede is to **draw away from something**. If we were driving down the road and we passed a small town, we could look into our rear view mirror and see it **receding into the distance**. In that case, we would be moving away from the town, and the town would be standing still, relatively speaking. But in John's case, it wasn't he that was moving. **It was the atmosphere of our planet**. John could literally see it **being torn off of our planet and being carried away from him**. Isn't that the exact scenario I just painted for our neighbor Mars? It wasn't gradual, was it? It was **sudden** and it was **violent**. What could cause such an event? **A Coronal Mass Ejection**. But you might argue that such an event could only be possible if the Earth's magnetosphere were no longer in place. **Exactly**. The **Mega-Quake** earlier in the timeline was caused by the **violent stoppage of our molten nickle-iron core**. That violent stoppage not only caused horrific events on the surface of our planet, it also left us **as bare and exposed as Mars was when the Solar Wind and possible CME's tore its atmosphere away from it**. As a result, when an incoming CME hit our atmosphere, it ripped a significant portion of it away from the Earth. I want to caution you: I am not talking wild theory here. Later events during the 7th Seal will confirm these events with other events which could only follow as the logical consequences of what we have just witnessed.

To further clarify the situation, John said that the sky receded **like a scroll being rolled up**. What did he mean by that? In order to understand his statement, we have to examine how scrolls were made. In essence, all a scroll is are two sticks and a roll of parchment paper. The parchment is stretched out and attached to both ends, and then the entire thing is **rolled up from both sides, until both sides meet, with an equal amount of paper on both sides of the document**. When the scroll is read, it is taken from its storage area and placed on a flat surface. The clasp holding the scroll together is opened, allowing the scroll to unroll. But usually it doesn't **want** to unroll. Since the parchment has been stored in a **rolled up position** and since it still contained some moisture at the time it was originally created, as the moisture gradually evaporates, it tends to leave the parchment in the shape it was in as it dried inside the scroll. That means that as a Rabbi, for instance, opens a Torah, the tendency is for both sides of the scroll to want to **roll back together again**, sometimes with some force. That means that the Rabbi has to make sure that both ends are held back from one another. If,

for instance, the Rabbi were to go all the way to Genesis, he would have to forcibly unroll one end of the scroll and roll up the other end of the scroll, thus creating an imbalance and a tension inside the document making it want to revert to its original form. That's what John was talking about. Its as if our atmosphere were attached to the far end of some scroll, and the giant unseen hand holding it in place on the earth had just let go of it. The atmosphere would have literally leaped off of our planet, hurtling into outer space due to the force of the CME that has just buffeted our planet. **The sky would have receded like a scroll being rolled up.** Now we have another event as outlined in Holy Scripture which many have said could only be symbolic, and have outlined a plausible scientific explanation for how it could happen. Is the origin of the event supernatural, even though the circumstances themselves can be explained by natural means? Of course. God will not only initiate the events which will bring it to pass, but He has also given us the privilege of knowing that it will happen far in advance of the actual event. All we have to do is figure out **when** it will happen. And that, dear friends, may turn out not to be nearly as hard to figure out as you might think it would be.

Now, before you freak out and start quoting what Jesus said about not knowing the hour or the day (Matthew 24:36), please remember that He was talking about the **exact time of His return.** That's not what we're talking about here. We're talking about a specific event inside the 6th Seal, **prior** to Christ's return. We have already established the approximate date of the opening of the Scroll, in or around the beginning of the 20th Century, in the early 1900's, prior to the beginning of the First World War. We've also established that it takes extended periods of time for each Seal to open, sometimes several decades. So it would not be unreasonable to establish approximate date for individual events inside the 6th Seal. In doing so, please remember, **I am not prophesying these dates.** If I were, I would preface them by saying, "*Thus saith the Lord*" or "*This is what the Sovereign Lord says*". When I say something **prophetically**, I make sure that it is clear that it is **the Lord saying it through me, not me saying it by myself.** When I am in a **predictive mode**, however, I am speaking **for myself**, based on investigative research I have done. Often, I am right. Many times, it is because of something that the Lord has supernaturally shown me. But I distinguish between **general intuitive leading** and **specific prophetic words**, which I have found as a rule have to be **repeated phrase by phrase** and sometimes **word by word.** Regarding the exact timing of the events of the 6th Seal, I am **predictive**, not **prophetic.**

Having established this distinction, let's move on to analyze the 6th Seal and the events contained in it.

- (1) The **Mega-Earthquake** occurs, initiated by the planetary "heart attack" that we have been discussing.
- (2) The **sun and the moon are largely obscured** and their light is radically diminished.
- (3) A huge **meteorite shower** or vast amounts of pyroclastic material pummel the earth.
- (4) A significant portion of the **atmosphere blows off** of the earth's surface, ripped off by a Coronal Mass Ejection which hits the earth at the same time that the magnetosphere fails.
- (5) The **Tectonic Plates crumble into mini-plates**, allowing the islands and mountains located on those mini-plates to move hundreds of miles from their original locations.

These are the events as outlined so far. How do these events connect to the rest of the Seals? Remember that the Seals are both **sequential** and **incremental.** What do I mean by incremental? After the 1st Seal has opened, it **continues to function** throughout the rest of Seals. The same holds true for the 2nd Seal and all the others. So by the time we hit the Mega-Quake, we are experiencing World Wars based in the Northern Hemisphere, Ethnic Genocide in the 10/40 Window, Wheat and Barley crop failures in the Northern Hemisphere, Plague and Famine in the Southern Hemisphere and Persecution of all Christians and Jews through the entire world. Pretty ugly, huh? I tell Christians that the final checkpoint for all believers before it will be too late is the Mega-Quake. Unlike the first five Seals, which can effectively be explained away by unbelieving rationalists who refuse to see the hand of God in anything, the Mega-Quake is another matter altogether. An earthquake of such magnitude will be unprecedented in recorded human history and undeniable in impact. At that point in time, if you have any friends, relatives or children who refuse to believe in the Gospel or repent of their sins, go to them, read them this article, and show them the Scripture quote at the top of page one. If they turn you down at that point in time, they will probably fall into the category of the Five Foolish Virgins, the half of the unrepentant, unbelieving church which will be left behind after the Rapture at the end of the

6th Seal. Since they refused to **live** for Christ, they will now have to **die** for Christ as part of the 7th Seal Martyrs. The only other option will be to bail out, give in and take the Mark of the Beast and be eternally condemned to the Lake of Fire.

As we look at the events surrounding the seven Seals, another characteristic begins to manifest itself. It appears, and I cannot prove this, but strongly suspect it, that the deeper we go into the first six Seals, the **more rapidly** events begin to take place. In short, the **Seals accelerate as they move along**. I also see the same pattern inside the 7th Seal itself. After a lagely inexplicable 20-year pause in the entire process before the 7th Seal begins (I will deal with this in a later *Episode*), the 7th Seal will begin slowly, and then both **accelerate** and become **increasing more complex** as it goes along. This is also true of the 6th Seal. Although the first five Seals have taken a considerable amount of time to develop, it is entirely possible that the events encapsulated in the 6th Seal will take place in rapid-fire succession. Knowing what we know about geology, and having analyzed the chain of events in the 6th Seal, it would be logical to assume that once the Mega-Quake takes place, all Hell will literally break loose on this planet. Try to imagine in your mind what kind of global chaos will reign after the events we have been discussing take place. For this reason, I strongly suspect that all of the events contained in the 6th Seal could easily take place within the span of no more than two years, and possibly a single year. I say this because I know from research how long it takes for the winds of the upper atmosphere to move pyroclastic material across the globe. When Krakatoa erupted, it took a full year for the pyroclastic ash and dust to reach Europe. But there is a caveat in what I just said. It could be less than a year, in fact, **much** less. When perhaps as many as **three thousand** volcanoes begin erupting **all over the world**, it will not take very long at all for the entire planet to be covered with a stratospheric covering of reflective ash and dust, thus throwing the entire globe into a planetary blackout.

Having said all that, we now have to deal with the **when** of all these events. In order to establish that **predictive** date, I have to draw from a number of sources, some extra-Biblical, for my information. The reason I have to step outside the boundaries of the Holy Scriptures is that they do not speak of exact dates except on rare occasions such as Gabriel's detailed conversation with Daniel in Chapters 11 and 12. With that in mind, let me begin with something that the Lord showed me in a vision not too long ago.

We tend to go to bed late and get up late in our household. I often find that the best time to write is between midnight and 2:00 AM because I am not being continually interrupted for one reason or another. There is also no background noise or disruptive conversations to leech the anointing to write off of me. Chaos and disruption block the creative juices badly. I have had to learn to block out everything around me in order to get these books done. Once I hit the sack around 2:00, I tend to sleep soundly until about 10:00 in the morning, unless interrupted or awakened for some reason. One of the primary reasons for the interruption of my sleep is an appointed meeting time that the Lord and I have, 3:33 AM. You already know about God's phone number. Some time ago, the Lord began waking me up at or around 3:33 in the morning. When that happens, no matter how tired I am or how little sleep I have had, I suddenly find myself wide awake. I will turn and look at the clock. If I see it's "Conference Time", I roll out of bed, grab my Bible and a notepad and head for my Lazyboy. Once there, I will open my Bible and my notepad and begin to pray in tongues, building up the anointing and thus increasing the connectivity between my little pea brain the the realm of the Spirit. Eventually information will begin to pour in, and I start making notes as fast as I can write. One morning, the Lord awoke me and simply said, without any preliminaries, "*I need to talk to you.*" He doesn't often say things like that to me, so He immediately had my attention. I hurried into the family room and sat down in the Lazy Boy. After a few minutes of prayer, a series of open visions began to appear to me. I will relay them to you just as they came to me. The first Holy Ghost video clip I saw was a picture of North and South Korea. Then, I suddenly saw nuclear war erupt between the two countries. I saw the lunatic regiem of Kim John-g-Il hit Seol and one other city in South Korea with nuclear warheads. Both cities were instantly destroyed, and South Korea was destroyed as a nation. Immediately thereafter, I saw another limited nuclear war start in the Middle East. A four-nation Pan-Arabic confederacy made up of Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Syria launced a four-pronged attack against Israel with nuclear weapons. Somehow, Israel was able to circumvent the attack, and launched a counter-strike against both countries, leveling Tehran, Baghdad, Riyahd and Damascus into piles of smoldering, radioactive

ruins. Seeing these two nuclear actions run back-to-back caused me to ask the Lord a question. "Lord," I said, "I know that North Korea has nuclear weapons and I know that Israel has nuclear weapons. I have no doubt that Iran will have nuclear weapons in the near future and I also know that Iraq was working on nuclear weapons during the reign of Saddam Hussein. But I don't understand Syria. What is the connection here?" The Lord gave me no reply at that time, but three days later His answer literally arrive on the evening news. I was working at the computer, typing another article, when my wife began to shout from the family room, "Omigosh! Ray! Come quick! North Korea! Syria! Come quick!" Once I realized what she was saying, I quickly went into the family room where our TV is located. There, on the evening news, a TV anchorman was telling us about how Israeli jets had flown a stealth mission into Syria just a few days before and blown a North Korean freighter to kingdom come in the harbor of the Damascus River. Even though such an action should have triggered World War III and caused both Russia and the United States to launch military incursions into the region, mysteriously no one was talking about the incident or even acknowledging that it had even happened. Even top ranking State Department officials, including the President himself, were not commenting. The anchorman continued, citing circumstantial evidence that the North Koreans had been secretly selling nuclear armament to the Syrians, and that this freighter contained the first shipment of the weaponry to the Syrians. The Israeli pre-emptive strike sent a very clear message to both Damascus and the surrounding region: **no one but Israel would be allowed to possess nuclear warheads without paying a terrible price for them.** Even though others had questioned my vision when I had shared it with them over the two previous days, this was clear-cut vindication of what I had been shown. Sooner or later, Damascus would find a way to get North Korean armament into their country. North Korea's action against its companion nation to the south would be the signal for the Arab world to also strike, or, perhaps, seeing the North Koreans act, it emboldened the Arab world to do the same. Either way, the actions were in rapid-fire action, back to back. This counter-strike by Israel will also mean the end of Daniel's Third Beast, the Leopard with Four Wings and Four Heads, and usher in the time of the 4th Beast, the Terrible Beast which will become the world empire of the Anti-Christ. This action by the Israelis will be a major trigger causing the rise of a One-World Government, because the whole world, even the Israelis themselves, will clamor for a strong central government which will usher in and enforce world peace. A three nation confederacy headed up by Germany, Austria and probably Russia will begin the process. That three nation confederacy will soon grow to ten nations. From there, global dominion will only be a matter of time. I outline this process and the correct interpretation for Daniel's Dream of the Beasts in Daniel Chapter 7 in *Episode Five – The Time of the Beast*. Please be sure to pick it up if you do not already have it. It explains what will happen from Revelation 8:1, at the beginning of the 7th Seal, the Wrath of God, through Chapter 13, at the end of which the Anti-Christ has finally achieved global dominion. Even though those of us who are prepared will **not be here** when that time comes, many of our friends and relatives **will be**, and they will need to have that book and the others in this series in their possession so that they will know what they need to do so as to not lose their eternal salvation.

By this time in the vision, five nations had attempted to use nuclear weapons, and five nations now lay in ruins as a result of it. But the carnage wasn't done. Shortly after the abortive attempt by the Muslim world to "*drive the Zionists into the sea*", as Iran has often stated, several nuclear devices exploded in our own United States. Three explosions rocked the shores of America, first in New York, then Atlanta and finally in Minnesota, I assume in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. The Lord did not specify where in the vision. None of the three devices were major nuclear devices, but rather suitcase bombs of limited destructive power. Nonetheless, the damage was staggering, as well as the loss of life.

At that time, **President Hillary Clinton** (yes, Hillary! Don't ask me how! Right now Barack Obama seems guaranteed to win the Democratic nomination and is a slight favorite to win the general election in November. How Hillard could come to be President just a few years later is beyond me. I don't make the messages up. I just deliver 'em!) declared a state of national emergency and invoked severe restrictions on everyone in the country, not just those of Arabic descent. At the same time as those events were coming to pass, the homosexual and lesbian alliances in our country clamored for "equal rights" and shockingly were granted not only "equal" rights but also preferential rights in our nation.

Needless to say, I was very troubled by what I saw. "Lord," I said, "When will all these things take place?" Gosh, I'm sounding more and more like Daniel as we go along, aren't I? The truth is that any prophet worth his or her weight in Bibles would ask the same question. If bad times are coming, I want to know when, so that I can prepare myself and be ready. The Lord's answer? **2 0 1 4 !!!** As I write these words to you, it is 2009, only **5 years away** from that date. Think I am troubled? You betcha! Worried about the salvation of my family? And how! Warning everyone I can? That's what these books are all about. As a result, we have one date to zero in on: **2014**.

The second date came to me as a result of 15 years of investigation into world and national economic cycles. I have also written a book originally entitled "*Biblical Biorhythms and the Coming Crash*". We have since retitled the book as "*How to Survive the Coming Crash*". In the book, I point out first that all of life involves the use of cyclical time. Even though we are moving from one starting point in time to a predetermined termination point, God uses cycles to help speed the entire process up. This "*Double Helix DNA of Time*", as I have labeled it, allows God and man to use repeating patterns to create things. When I get up in the morning, I usually have a predetermined pattern I go through. I don't have to think much about it, freeing my brain to focus on other more important things, like whether the Cubs won or not! Just kidding, folks, just kidding!

As I continue on in the book, I show how the United States could easily have been the Un-United States of America and our North American Continent, instead of consisting of three countries of significance; Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, could actually be as many as nine different nations, split up into constantly quarrelling factions, just like Europe. I outline how the hand of God has moved in our history to bring us together for His purposes. Having established all of this, I then begin to analyze economic cycles, also known as "K-Waves". In the 1920's the Communist regime of Russia decided to "prove" that Capitalism was fatally flawed and would pass away, leaving a perfect classless Communist society. In order to do so, they employed a brilliant Russian mathematician and economist named Nikolai Kondratieff. Kondratieff began to do research into economic patterns all over the world and came to a disturbing conclusion: despite all of Communism's best efforts, a free economy was not only the best way to achieve economic parity, economies renewed themselves **automatically**, rising and falling in what look for all the world like giant sine waves. These cycles involved time spans of approximately 50 years, almost identical to the Biblical Year of Jubilee. It would seem that if men do not reset their economies in a controlled fashion every 50 years, nature does it for them in an uncontrolled fashion called a crash every 53 to 56 years. Kondratieff had gone back over 200 years in his research and found this pattern at work everywhere he looked. The Russian government's response to his revelation? They "rewarded" him by packing him off to Siberia, where he died in exile sometime in the 1930's. Fortunately for us, his work survived him and lives on today. Most of us are aware of the Great Depression of the 1930's and early 40's, caused by the Great Stock Market Crash of 1929. But most of us are not aware of the fact that this pattern of crash and rebuild has occurred not **once** in the United States, but **three times**, always in repeating patterns spaced about 53 years apart. Based on this model, the United States should have experienced a crash in **1980**. That crash was averted by a series of events that reset the 50-year timer during the period of time following World War II. As a result, a brand new wave was started **on top of the previous wave**. That turned a typical 50-year economic cycle into a **Mega-Cycle of about 100 years**. This meant that the new wave was not only **larger** than the previous one, but also **bigger**. Greater prosperity has been achieved in this country than in any other country in the history of the world. But the higher the peak goes, the deeper the trough will be when the economic cycle reaches its peak. It reached its peak around the year 2000, and the U.S. economy has been in a gradual downward slide ever since then, following the standard pattern to the "T". Normally there is a 7 to 10 year period of gradual downward slide until the bottom falls out and we experience a dramatic crash. In this case, we are dealing with a wave almost **double** the size of a normal one, so the preliminary gradual slide period is extended to **14-20 years**. If we peaked in 2000, that would put our next economic crash in a window sometime between **2014 and 2020**. Do we have your attention yet? Yes? Good! As you can tell, we are clearly looking at some really bad economic, political and military events coming up within a **very short period of time**. Now, if these two items were the only two pieces of proof I could offer, you could simply discard them as subjective nonsense on my part. But I have some more circumstantial evidence, and it carries a lot more weight than I do.

Hint #3 about our dating for the 6th Seal comes from **the Sun itself**. We already know that the Sun does a magnetic flip-flop of its poles every 11 years or so. When was the last time that the Sun reversed its poles and threw off significant numbers of CME's? **2001**. Let's see now...if we take 2001 and add 11 years to it, we get, ummm....**2012 !!!** That means that the next time the Earth will be bombarded by a significant number of high strength CME's is very close to the time that the Lord told me limited nuclear wars would break out in three places on the globe. It is also very close to the time that our economy is set to crash in an unprecedented scale. Don't like where this is going? It's gonna get worse, friend, it's gonna get worse.

Our next hint about dating the 6th Seal comes, of all places, from the ancient **Mayan** civilization of Central America. As we have studied the Mayan and Aztek civilizations, we have been amazed at their technical knowhow. They rival, in many ways, everything that ancient Egypt had to offer, including the building of pyramids using the same techniques as the Egyptians did. But when it came to studying the stars, **nobody** could hold a candle to the ancient Mayans. The Mayans did not have **one** calendar, they had **three**. One of their calendars was a solar calendar called the Haab, similar to the annual calendar we have today. The second was a ceremonial calendar called the Tzolkin, based, amazingly enough, around a 260-day cycle, or roughly the amount of time that it takes a human to be conceived, formed in the womb and birthed. The third calendar was called the *Long Count*, and was based on cycles of 5,125 years. Why such a strange number? Hold that question for just a few moments, and you will be astounded by the answer. These three calendars were indexed to one another using a three-cog mechanism to illustrate their points of convergence. The Mayans accurately predicted all manner of solar events, including eclipses, far into the future. In fact, the Mayan's mastery of mathematics and astronomy was superior to our own. Through the power of extraordinary powers of observation and interpretation, the Mayans locked onto the principle of repeating economic cycles long before Kondratieff did. In fact, there was a great Mayan prophet named *Chiliam Balam*, who studied these wheels or cogs of cyclical time and made a number of extremely accurate economic and political predictions which influenced and anticipated critical events on the North American continent, including a startling prediction made 1,200 years ahead of time that on March 5th, 1519, white-skinned gods would appear and change everything. It was on that very date that Cortez and his men landed in America. The Mayans predicted many detailed events far into the future, but one prediction should send chills down our spines: **The Mayan calendar predicts the ebb and flow of time until it reached their date for the end of the world, which they called *Hunab Ku***. What is that date? Are you ready for this? **December 21, 2012 !!!** Yikes! This is getting scary! But we're **still** not done! *Chiliam Balam* (and don't think that the similarity of his name to the Old Testament false prophet *Balaam* hasn't escaped my attention!) said this about that date: "*The Supreme Deity will return to earth, heralding the start of a **new age***". Now, before you start to link this statement to the return of Jesus Christ, you must also know that this supreme deity was a **flying serpent** named *Quetzalcoatl*. Could this actually be a reference to the advent of the Anti-Christ? Only time will tell.

One thing is certain: no culture in the history of the world has had the analytical and astronomical know-how of the Mayans. Their science was second to none. It so happens that the earth has a slight wobble in the rotation of its axis, something which our scientists call **precession**. The rotation is extremely slow. So slow, in fact, that it takes almost 26,000 years for the wobble to make one full rotation. We have just recently discovered this fact. But the Mayans, whose culture flourished between 300 and 900 AD, roughly 1,500 years ago, knew. In fact, their *Long Count* calendar, based on that odd 5,125 year figure, is actually 1/5th of a rotational wobble. If I take 5,125 years and multiply it by 5, it comes up exactly to the amount of time required for a full rotation. At the same time, a remarkable alignment also occurs. The earth, sun and the center of the Milky Way galaxy all line up. Einstein himself postulated that the gravitational influences in operation at such a time would cause a dramatic **pole shift**, with the North and South poles dramatically and suddenly shifting places. Now, what have I been talking about endlessly for the last few days??? Could it be this unique gravitational alignment that caused the Flood and will cause the Mega-earthquake of Revelation? The circumstantial evidence is certainly piling up, isn't it? Maybe old Pastor Ray is quite as craaaaazy as he sounds!

For our 4th and final clue, we have to go halfway around the world to ancient China. The Chinese also have a Holy Book similar to our Bible, but instead of being a religious and spiritual book of prophetic revelation, it is an analysis of the patterns of what most scientists would call random chance. This book

is called the **I Ching**. While most Chinese use it to try and determine the most fortuitous time to do something, a Western researcher named Terence McKenna decided some years ago to see if it contained any linkages to the past, present or future. Much to his shock, the I Ching, which graphed out, formed an incredible map of time, matching the 4,000 years or recorded human history and accurately predicted a number of major events in world history. Much to his dismay, the I Ching also clearly pointed to something else: The end of the world, or some equally traumatic and catastrophic event on, as you ready for this? **December 21, 2012 !!!** Interesting enough, the I Ching, which provides the foundation for his research, is itself made up of hexagrams, 64 of them, repeated 64 times. What's the big deal with that? Well, as a former computer guy, I happen to know that there is a perfect numbering system, and it's not base 10. It's actually base 8. Without going through the lengthy process of explaining the difference between the two, just suffice it to say that there are no infinite fractions in base 8. In base 10, $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ is .333333..... $2/3^{\text{rd}}$ is .666666..... And the value of π is 3.14..... But in base 8, all fractions resolve themselves within about four decimal places. Eight is considered the symbol for either eternity or infinity, and is reserved for God in most earth cultures. Wonder why? And it so happens that if you multiply 8×2 , you get 16, the number system for all advanced computers, an extension of binary math. If you multiply 8×8 , you get 64, the core number of the *I Ching* and the base of all the mathematics done by the Mayans as well.

Is the world going to end in 2012? Probably not. Is Jesus coming back in 2012? C'mon! You know me better than that! There is absolutely **no way** that I am going to try to assign a date to Christ's return. In the under 2000 years since He airlifted off of the top of the Mount of Olives, over 2,000 dates have been set for His return. Guess how many of them have been wrong? Duh! Yet each year, some well-meaning but Scripture-ignoring "expert" will come up with his or her perfect formula for the return of Jesus. None of them are going to be right. Jesus specifically said that **no man** knows the hour or day for His return. If no man knows it, then, dear friends, no man knows it, nor ever will, until, of course, it actually happens.

What all of the indicators say is that something terrible is going to happen during 2012 or the years surrounding it. I think that the "something terrible" is going to be the Mega-Quake that launches the 6th Seal and triggers all of the events that follow it. Only time will tell, but time is running out. Now would be as good a time as any to cleanse yourself of anything that would hold you back from going. As one precious saint said to me several years ago, "**If you got mo' Holy Ghost than flesh, you's going up! If you got mo' flesh than Holy Ghost, you's staying down!**" I can think of no better way to close today's article. Come back tomorrow, when we will meet **The 144,000**.

Day 24- The 144,000



“³ Saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’⁴ And I heard the number of those who were sealed, One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed.” – Revelation 6:12-14

As we move past the initial, traumatic, physical events that begin the 6th Seal, we encounter some very interesting responses to what is happening. Up until now, all of the events of the first five Seals could very easily be explained away by unbelieving rationalists as just a series of random occurrences, not associated with Biblical prophecy and certainly not proving that there is a God or that He has a Son named Jesus. As usual, humanity is in a state of extreme denial until they have the very ground they stand on taken out from underneath them. Then they begin to sing a different tune, as evidenced by the following passage:

“¹⁵ And the **kings of the earth**, the **great men**, the **rich men**, the **commanders**, the **mighty men**, every **slave** and every **free man**, **hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains**,¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from **the wrath of the Lamb!**’¹⁷ **For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’**” – Revelation 6:15-17

It is fascinating to note the kinds of men included in this list. We start out with the **kings of the earth**. That means that every single world leader, even leaders from Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu nations will have to acknowledge that **Jesus and Jesus alone is the only begotten Son of God**. Now, this does not mean that they will **accept Him as Lord and Savior**. It only means that they will finally admit that He is Lord, but not their Lord. This passage begins a very disturbing trend that will quickly develop during the rest of the End Times. People will admit that there is a God. They will admit that He has a Son. And they will even admit that His Name is Jesus. **But they will not surrender to Him or submit to Him**. As such, it will quickly become **impossible for anyone to be saved**. In fact, at the end of the 6th Seal, and possibly at the end of this article, the Holy Spirit will be withdrawn from the Gentile world and focused exclusively on Israel so that “all Israel shall be saved”, just as Paul said. When that happens, salvation will become impossible for any Gentile, since it is only through the wooing of the Holy Spirit that men are saved, sanctified or filled with the Holy Spirit. For the remainder of the Book of Revelation we will see a recurring theme: **men acknowledging that Jesus is not only the Son of God but very God Himself while steadfastly refusing to submit to Him**. The judgments of the 7th Seal are well deserved for this final faithless and perverse generation.

The next group to acknowledge His supremacy are the **great men**, men who carry political power in the world. They are used to giving orders. Now they find all the orders they give to be utterly meaningless as God carries out **His** plan for the End of the Age.

Next the **rich men** acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ. Up until now, men of wealth and power have pulled the strings behind the scenes, using the governments of the world as puppets on a string. Now their strings have been cut and they find themselves on strings of their own, woven by the Divine Hand. All along they thought that **they** were in control. Now they finally realize that the Hands that shaped the entire universe were in control all along.

Up until now, this list has consisted totally of civilians, but that changes as the **commanders**, the military leaders of the world, capitulate. Generals, majors, corporals, lieutenants and the like all fall

down and admit that Jesus is Lord. Even during His earthly ministry, there were men like the Roman Centurion who recognized that no matter how much earthly power they commanded, there was someone in their presence who was **under the authority of a higher power than theirs**. This was the Centurion's confession. He did not say that he was a man who **exercised or wielded authority**, he stated that he was a man **under authority**. It was his submission to an authority higher than him that gave him his power, and it was considerable. He immediately recognized in Jesus a man much like himself, under an authority greater than His own, and totally yielded to that authority. The Centurion immediately recognized the awesome power and authority that Christ walked in, without Him having to announce who He was or what He could do. Wisely, the Centurion submitted himself to an authority even higher than the one he served. This submission brought to play an even greater power, that of healing the sick, and his servant's life was spared. Later on Cornelius, who may be the same man, would become the first Gentile to be filled with the Holy Spirit as he submitted himself to the Angel who had appeared to him and given him instructions about what town to go to, what street to walk down, whose door to knock on, and what name was to be asked for. Following his exact instructions, the servants found one Peter, who, having been instructed by a vision about unclean animals and sheets, also submitted himself to a higher authority and went with them. When Peter arrived at Cornelius' home, he found an entire household submitted to authority and waiting for further instructions. Peter, also following orders, preached to them the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, also following orders from the Father and under the direction of the Son, was poured out on the eagerly anticipating crowd. There is a lesson to be learned here by the selfish, carnal, rebellious church of America: **only in obedience is there to be found blessing**. After all, didn't Jesus say, "*If you love Me, you will **obey my commandments***." (John 14:15)? Let he who has ears hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Next on our list of notables are the **mighty men**. These are the studs, the weight lifters, the professional wrestlers, the men of great physical strength and stamina. In the natural world, no one can challenge them or defeat them. In the spirit realm, they are as weak as a kitten, for they have concentrated on strengthening their **flesh**, and not their **spirit**. They do not realize that since spirit came first in the creation of all things, and the natural world only later, **spirit is always stronger than flesh**. Many years ago, a professional wrestler of great strength and skill was saved under the ministry of Kenneth Hagan Sr. "Pop" Hagan was nothing to look at when it came to the physical world. He was just an ordinary man. But in the Spirit, he was like Samson. Hagan came to the great wrestler and said simply, "*You think you're pretty strong, huh?*" Before the wrestler could answer, the Holy Spirit picked the giant man up and held him suspended several feet above the ground. Then, without warning, the man was hurled violently against the back wall, cracking his skull up against the drywall. He dropped the floor stunned. Almost immediately, the Spirit picked the man up again and hurled him across the room into the opposite wall, this time smashing the man's face into the wall. Again he was unceremoniously dumped to the ground and lay there in a stunned heap. Then, he was lifted up once again and carried back in front of the Man of God, where he was dumped to the ground one final time. "*Nothing is too difficult for God*", muttered Hagan, who then simply walked away from the barely conscious hulk and continued ministering. All of these men, most of whom are considered to be heroes in their own rights, will bow and admit that there is One who is stronger than they could ever hope to be.

Having taken care of the top of the social order, we now plunge to the bottom. Every **slave** will admit that Jesus is their ultimate Lord and their ultimate Master. Right after them will be a group of men who were relatively small in John's day, men who are **free**. When questioned by the Centurion at Ephesus about his citizenship status, Paul affirmed his own citizenship and status as a free man. When the Centurion boasted about how much he had spent in order to obtain his citizenship, Paul coldly replied that he was **born** a citizen! (Acts 22:28) In the Roman world, even though all citizens were technically supposed to have equal rights and authority, there was a clear predisposition to favor those whose citizenship had been **inherited** rather than **acquired**. This put Paul in a favored position in the transaction, and placed both the Centurion and the town fathers in a very uncomfortable position. Although you could pretty much do what you wanted to a slave or someone who was free but not an official citizen of the realm, when it came to a citizen, and particularly a naturally-born citizen, any breach of their civil rights was considered to be a very serious offense, technically capable of being brought directly before Caesar himself. This is how Paul managed to escape the plot formed by the Jews from Thessalonica, who wanted nothing more in the world but to kill him. This is also how Paul

finally managed to extricate himself from two years of illegal imprisonment, while being held without charges ever formally being presented against him (Acts 25:9-12).

There is one final topic which we have to discuss before we move on to the next passage, and that is the placement of the **Wrath of God**. There is an enormous amount of confusion regarding the naming and placement of the various aspects of the Book of Revelation. I have presented this outline in many other places in the series, but, for the sake of clarity, we need to look at the structure again. Everything in Revelation centers around **The Scroll**, a document written **on both sides** which is a legal indictment of mankind based on the two fundamental sins of **lying** and **stealing**. The document is handed down from **The Father** to **The Son** so that the Son can open it and begin the extensive process of judging mankind and bringing this universe to a close so that a new, sin-free one can be constructed. As Jesus begins to open the Scroll, one **Seal** at a time, some new major event occurs. The first four Seals are what are historically referred to as **The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse**. The first horse is **The White Horse of War**. The second horse is **The Red Horse of Ethnic Genocide**. The third horse is the **Black Horse of Wheat and Barley Crop Failure**. The fourth horse is **The Pale Horse of Plague and Famine**. By cross-footing the Revelation text to a matching passage in Zechariah, we also find that the **1st Seal** occurs in the **Northern Hemisphere**, the **2nd Seal** occurs in the **10/40 Window**, the **3rd Seal** occurs in the **Northern Hemisphere** and the **4th Seal** occurs in the **Southern Hemisphere**. After the first four Seals, the events are no longer restricted to a single region of the earth, but are global in nature. The **5th Seal** is what has been frequently referred to as **The Tribulation**, a global persecution of Christians and Jews. The **6th Seal**, called the **Great Tribulation**, is hard to typify with a single phrase because so many events occur. But since almost all of the physical events surrounding the Seal originate from **The 1st Global Earthquake**, we will, for sake of argument, use that phrase as our reference point. The first half of the 6th Seal is totally physical, with a series of events cascading from that earthquake. In the second part of the Seal, however, spiritual events take the forefront. As we will soon discover, God will anoint and appoint **144,000 male, virgin Jews** to proclaim the Gospel to Israel and perhaps also the world, pull the Holy Spirit off of the Gentile world and focus it entirely on Israel so that all Israel can be saved. Having completed His involvement with the Gentiles, God will then **Rapture the Bride Portion of the Church**, the event all of us have been so earnestly anticipating. Once the Rapture of the Bride has been accomplished, there will be no further need for God to protect anyone on this planet and in Chapter 8 **The Wrath of God** will begin. It is God's wrath that this passage is announcing. The Wrath of God will not begin immediately, but the stage is set and only a few events need to take place in order for it to do so. This is why all of the different types of people are crying out that His Wrath has come and are fervently seeking to avoid that wrath.

There is another issue that must be discussed, and this one is fairly unpleasant. The church has lived for quite a long time laboring under the false assumption that it will somehow magically escape the Tribulation. Nothing could be further from the truth. As we have already amply demonstrated, there is no escape from the persecution that will erupt across the globe. Pre-Trib advocates vainly point to Jesus' analogy of Noah and the Ark, trying to say that just as Noah escaped the Flood by being protected by the Ark, so Christians will be protected from the Tribulation by the Rapture. Unfortunately, the analogy breaks down very quickly when you look closely at the Scripture involved. I have discussed this problem at great length in *Episode Four – The Crucified Bride* in an article entitled *They Never Knew What Hit 'Em!* Without stealing that article's thunder, let me help you to understand why their argument breaks down.

Let's begin by analyzing what Jesus actually said in that analogy. If you read it carefully, you will find that His point was that **they never knew what hit them!** The protection of Noah and his family was a secondary issue in the story line. Jesus was talking about the people of the sinful world of that time, who were busily engaged in business as usual, buying and selling, giving and being given in marriage right up until the last moment before the Flood came. Except for perhaps 100 years of futile preaching on the part of Noah, the Flood came upon rebellious mankind in a moment of time. The rupturing of the Tectonic Shell occurred at near-supersonic speed. Once the initial breach of the shell had happened, the rip spread down what we now call the Atlantic Ocean at hundreds of miles an hour. The water that came rushing out of this breach was also traveling at hundreds of miles an hour, reaching so far up into the stratosphere that it destroyed the water/ice "bubble" that surrounded the planet. Before

people could react, towering walls of water were coming at them from all directions, not only from all sides but from above, as rain fell from the sky for the first time in human history.

Not only does the Pre-Trib camp completely miss the point of the story, they also use a faulty analogy in trying to link the Flood to the Tribulation. Let me explain why. In the reference that Jesus makes to the Flood, you have to understand what the Flood represents. It is **God's judgment on mankind**. There is absolutely no way that mankind could have created the cataclysmic events that almost wiped him from the face of the earth. This was truly **Divine retribution**. Now, let's look at the Seals of Revelation. War and ethnic genocide have nothing to do with God, they are human inventions. The crop failures of the 3rd Seal may well be part of a cascade effect put into operation by the fact that people are trying to blow one another up. It's hard to put out a crop when people are shooting at you, and combines don't run very well either if they are riddled with bullet holes. The plagues and famines of the 4th Seal are also a logical consequence of the events of the previous three Seals. When we reach The Tribulation, where the Pre-Trib Camp attempts to draw the parallel, we find ourselves out of sync with what Jesus said. If ever there was an event **initiated by man and spurred on by Satan**, the Tribulation is that event. There is absolutely no way that anyone can realistically say that the Tribulation represents **Divine retribution**. Divine retribution is not the same as **Demonic persecution**. Do you see the point I am trying to make? In the Flood, we find an event **initiated by God**. In the Tribulation, we have an event **initiated by man**. When you see this critical distinction, suddenly the whole Pre-Trib argument begins to break down. Is there a point where what Jesus said about Noah and the Flood **does** interface with Revelation? Absolutely! **The Wrath of God**, as contained in the **7th Seal**. The Flood is God's punishment of rebellious mankind **after** the few faithful ones have been safely removed from harm's way by placing them in an Ark. The Wrath of God is God's punishment of rebellious mankind **after** the few faithful ones have been safely removed from harm's way by Rapturing them out of the Earth. Get the picture? Good! I hate to belabor the point, but what Jesus said has been used so out of context for so long that it is absolutely necessary for you to understand how badly it has been misused. Now it's time to move on to the rest of the events of the 6th Seal.

Before we can actually get to the 144,000, we need to pay a little visit to one more very interesting Scripture passage, which connects logically to the partial blow-off of the earth's atmosphere. Technically, this passage should belong to yesterday's discussion, but that's not where the Bible places it, and, just as with golf, we will "play it as it lies".

*"¹ After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, **that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.**"*
- Revelation 7:1

Why on earth would four angels hold back the wind? Well, when you think about it, it's really pretty simple. With the removal of perhaps 25% or more of the earth's atmosphere, all of the weather patterns across the globe would be enormously disrupted. The jet stream would vanish. At high altitudes, people would begin to black out and die for lack of oxygen. And with the disappearance of the wind, another terrible blow would be dealt to the planet. There are several repeating cycles involving the earth, the sea and the trees that keeps all land animals alive and well. The first is known as the **Oxygen Cycle**. In it, plants release Oxygen (O₂) into the atmosphere through photosynthesis. Then, UV Radiation from the sun converts Oxygen (O₂) to Ozone (O₃) and creates the protective Ozone Layer. In addition, lightning also produces Ozone. In fact, Ozone cleans the air during thunderstorms. Finally, the rainwater bring Hydrogen Peroxide (H₂O₂), Water (H₂O) and Ozone (O₃) to the ground, and the process begins all over again. Take away a significant portion of the atmosphere, and this entire process grinds to a halt. In addition, the Ozone Layer begins to deteriorate rapidly, allowing even more lethal UV radiation to hit the surface of the planet, causing more cancer and abnormal mutations. The trees are **making** the oxygen, but it never gets distributed where it needs to go. In addition to that, the carbon dioxide being generated by the animals as part of their respiratory cycle never reaches the trees, who need it for their own photosynthesis, so that they can make the oxygen that the animals need for their respiration. It's almost like a chain-reaction accident on a busy freeway. All it takes is for one car to suddenly stop in the middle of the road, and heaven help us all!

There is another cycle that is also disrupted by holding back the wind, and it is called the **Water Cycle**. Water is stored in massive quantities in the oceans. Evaporation takes water from the ocean and puts it in the atmosphere. Condensation then forms clouds which carry water all over the world, where rainfall distributes it on plants and animals alike, allowing "*seed for the sower and bread for the eater*", as Isaiah 55:10-11 says. In fact, the rain is so necessary that God even likens His Word to the rain, because it never returns to Him empty handed, but accomplishes what He sent it to do. Water is also stored in the form of ice and snow in mountainous regions for later runoff. That runoff and discharge send water back to the oceans, where the process begins all over again.

Both cycles are critical to supporting all life on our planet, and both cycles are themselves critically dependent on **the wind**. With the loss of atmosphere comes the loss of the wind, and with it the eventual loss of the planet's ability to support life. This is why, in the very next verse, a second angel appears, ascending from the east with the seal of the living God, granting him authority over the other four angels, who have been commissioned to make sure that the atmospheric patterns of our planet cannot assert themselves. But before they can do their job, he needs to do his.

"² Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the **seal of the living God**. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³ saying, '**Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.**' " -- Revelation 7:2-3

Who will be sealed? And how many will be sealed in this very special manner? The answer to those questions is announced in the very next verse.

"⁴ And I heard the number of those who were sealed. **One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:**" – Revelation 7:4

When this sealing occurs, it raises two questions, one obvious, one not so obvious. The obvious question is, "*Why are they being sealed? What purpose does God have for them?*" Let's pursue that question for just a few moments. Revelation is never clear about God's intentions for those who have been sealed, so anything we say will fall into the realm of speculation. One thing about them, however, is very clear: they are precious and special to God. A second thing is equally clear: they are **all guys!** Sorry, ladies! I didn't write it, I just interpret it! A third thing is also very clear: they are **virgins!**

Now, I know that the passage in Chapter 7 doesn't say this, but remember that the Lord loves to hide His secrets scattered across multiple locations, just to see if there is anybody who is willing to do their homework and do the digging required to bring diamonds out of the earth. The "*rest of the story*", as Paul Harvey used to say, is found in Chapter 14, after the 144,000 have been sky-lifted from the earth in what appears to be their very own mini-Rapture.

"¹ Then I looked, and behold, **a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.** ² And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ³ They sang as it were a new song **before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.** ⁴ These are the ones who were **not defiled with women, for they are virgins.** These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being **firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.** ⁵ And in their mouth was found **no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.**"

– Revelation 14:1-5

There is some controversy even in this small passage, at least regarding **where** the 144,000 all are at the point that this is happening. Some scholars try to say that this event is occurring **on earth**, since it mentions the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, upon which Jerusalem is built. I can see their point. But they need to read further into the text. In this case, as always, the **full counsel** of God is required. Verse 3 goes on to say that they were standing **before the Throne**, in the presence of the **Four Living Creatures (seraphim)** and the **Twenty-Four Elders**. We already know from our article on

the Throneroom of God that the Throne, the Seraphim and the Twenty-Four Elders are clearly **in heaven**. That should be sufficient to prove that this event is taking place in heaven, not on earth. But just in case anyone still is not convinced, Verse 3 concludes by saying that the 144,000 were **redeemed from the earth**. This is almost too obvious, but I am forced to point this out for those who are stubborn: someone redeemed **from** the earth cannot possibly be **on** the earth. They must be **somewhere else**. And in this case, that somewhere else is in the very Throneroom of God Himself, side by side with the Seraphim and the Twenty-Four Elders. Wow! What a privilege! But that privilege has been acquired at a price. These men have made it a point to remain virgins all their lives for the sake of the Gospel. In our sex-saturated culture, this is a rare trait indeed. The next question that arises is this: have they died and then been escorted into heaven, or have they been Raptured in a mini-skylift of their own. Based on what Verse 4 says, I have to say that these 144,000 male virgin Hebrews who are totally sold out to Christ have not been killed during the Tribulation, but rather caught up by the mighty Hand of God, just as Elijah and Enoch were. Verse 4 says that they are **firstfruits to God and to the Lamb**. Now, what that statement means is clearly up to subjective interpretation. I take it to mean a Rapture, not a Resurrection on their part. If I learn differently, I will let everyone know. But for right now, this is my best take on the matter.

We also know that they are **totally truthful**, because Verse 5 says that **no deceit was found in their mouths**, and that they are **faultless before God** (without sin). It is very clear that they are special to Jesus for a variety of reasons. But do they have any other purposes, other than to sing the new song that they have been given to sing? I suspect so. Let me explain why.

One of the keys to the 6th Seal is that it marks not only the Rapture and the Believer's Resurrection (a General Resurrection will occur at the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ), but also the end of God's involvement with the Gentile world for the sake of salvation. I am going to make a very controversial statement in this article which I will back up to the hilt in subsequent *Episodes*. **Once the Rapture has occurred, there will be no further Gentiles saved**. The Holy Spirit will be withdrawn from the Gentile world and focused on the full salvation of all Israel. Paul documents this in the letter he wrote to the church at Rome.

*"¹¹ I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But **through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles**.¹² Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!¹³ For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,¹⁴ if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them.¹⁵ **For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?"***

-- Romans 11:11-15

Folks, the only reason that you and I are saved is that God was angry with his natural child, Israel. Because of His anger, He went out on the street and found the scruffiest, most pathetic creatures He could find, the Gentiles. He brought the little ragamuffins home, cleaned them up, put beautiful clothes on them, anointed them and showed them favor, while making His natural child stand in a corner and watch. When Paul was in the presence of his fellow countrymen, he deliberately bragged up all the cool things that God had been doing with the Gentiles, in hopes that the Jews would become insanely jealous and want to get in on the party themselves. All of this is interesting, but in Verse 15, Paul drops a bombshell, one of those "mysteries" that he is so fond of referring to. Because the Jews have been temporarily rejected by God, it means that the doorway to salvation and eternal life has been opened to the Gentiles. But when the time comes for them to be accepted back into the arms of their loving Father and God, **the Resurrection of the Dead will happen at nearly the same time!** As we continue on with our analysis of the 6th Seal, you will see this to be absolutely true. First, global earthquakes. Then, global blackouts, atmospheric loss and other nasty things. But then, after all that, the sealing of **144,000 male virgin Jewish evangelists who will be responsible for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Israel**, who will finally be ready to believe. Paul goes on to say that **all Israel will be saved**. Even though other prophets tell us that 2/3rd of the people of Israel will be killed by the Anti-Christ before Christ returns, **none of them will lose their salvation**. We have already established that when Christ appears, they will mourn for Him as a **first-born Son, an only Son**. They will realize that they have had to wait an extra 2,000 years for their Messiah because they

did not know the time of their visitation when it occurred the first time around. All of the suffering, the persecution, and needless deaths, all because when the true Messiah first appeared, they hardened their hearts against Him and would not even grace Him with the standard greeting that one godly Jew gave another when they met: "**Baruch Havah Bashem Adonai!**". "Blessed in He who comes in the Name of the Lord!". At the temple on that fateful day, Jesus had warned them they they would not see Him again until they were willing to provide Him with that simple dignity. Their next action was to crucify Him. He has been waiting for them to simply say the word all this time. "Jesus, we believe in You! You are our Lord and Savior! You are the Messiah! Baruch Havah Bashem Adonai!" Please, dear friend, don't be stubborn when it comes to the Lord. You may well be blocking incredible blessings that the Lord has for you, simply because you will not open up your arms and your heart and let Him come in and take control of your out-of-control life in order to save it, bless it, purify it and make it fit for habitation in the Holy of Holies, in Heaven itself. Please say to Him what Israel has been unwilling to say for almost 2,000 years.

Once the 144,000 have been sealed by the angel, they have a task to perform. Israel is about to witness the splitting of the eastern sky as the Rapture/Resurrection take place in just a few verses. We'll get to that event in a few articles. These men are made ready by God in order to teach them how to live as Christians and to lead them to Christ after they witness untold millions of Gentiles across the globe suddenly shoot skyward, glowing brightly as they go. They will also witness untold millions of good Jews and Christian Gentiles come exploding up out of the ground at the same time, clear evidence of the Believer's Resurrection. To continue to deny that Jesus is the Christ would be beyond insane. Jews all over the world will drop to their knees and weep openly because they will realize what they have missed and what they had to endure unnecessarily for their hardness of heart. Now those hearts will be open to the Holy Spirit and willing to accept Him as their Lord and Savior. Someone will have to be there to teach them. And you and I, dear reader, will be absent from this planet. At least I **hope** you'll be with me. You are ready, aren't you??? Hello? Not sure? Skating too close to the flames? Then maybe you'd better **make sure** that you are ready by surrendering everything in your life to Him. Let there be no deceit on your lips. Let your hearts and actions be pure before Him. Love Him so much that He cannot help but to draw you to Him to embrace you and hold you tight. Be ready. Half the church will **not** be ready. We will document this extensively in *Episode Four – The Crucified Bride*. Once you are done reading this series of seven books, there will be no doubt in your mind as to what will happen, when it will happen and why it will happen. Just keep reading. Everything will be explained at the proper time. And everything will fit together perfectly. Not because **I** am perfect, but because **He** is perfect, and so is His **Holy, revealed Word**.

Paul now has one more mystery that he wants to let us in on, and so we must move just a little further on in his conversation with the church at Rome.

"²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be **ignorant of this mystery**, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that **blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.**²⁶ And so **all Israel will be saved**, as it is written: 'The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; ²⁷ For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.' " -- Romans 11:25-27

This is one of the most blockbuster statements Paul will ever make in all his letters. Understanding this statement will also explain another mysterious statement that Peter makes in one of his two letters. Let's take a very close look at what he just revealed to us. He just told us that **blindness (hardness of heart, an unwillingness and inability to see the obvious) in part has happened to Israel until the fullness (full quota, census) of the Gentiles comes in (is saved)**. What on earth did he mean by **that???** In order to answer **that** question, we have to introduce another Scripture, this one by Peter, and ask yet **another** question.

"Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God**, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

– II Peter 3:11-13

Now please look very carefully at the word underlined above. What does it say? That we can **HASTEN** the day of His appearing, the coming of the Day of the Lord, the RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST! Now, **how in the world can we HASTEN the day of His appearing???**

We have finally come to the crux of the matter. Remember what Jesus said back in Luke 21:24? -- "*And Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until **the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.***" When will they be fulfilled?

The times of the Gentiles will be **full-filled** when the full **number, quota or census** of the Gentiles to be saved comes in. The Greek word that the KJV and NKJV translate as *fullness* is **pleroma**. To further strengthen my case, it just so happens that this Greek word is used to describe the **contents of the hold of a ship, i.e., its cargo**. How appropriate, since the New Jerusalem is actually a ship in its own right, a **spaceship!**

Now, in the light of what Peter says about hastening the day of His appearing, it becomes obvious that God has assigned a mathematical equation, a **number** to the **quantity of Gentiles** which He will allow in the New Jerusalem. Wow, Pastor Ray, how many is that??? Sadly, it is impossible to tell. Obvious, the New Jerusalem is huge, massive beyond our imagination. It is 1,500 miles high, 1,500 miles wide and 1,500 miles long. That's a staggering number of square miles. We have a dear friend in the Lord who is a member of our church. He is also a bona fide genius. Here are his numbers regarding the potential population of the New Jerusalem.

Assuming that the New Jerusalem is in the form of a Borg-style cube, which Scripture suggests that it is, and allowing approximately 20 foot ceiling heights, and 7 feet for the thickness of floors between levels, that would yield **280,000 levels** of **1,960,000 square miles each**.

Now, that alone is almost incomprehensible, but remember, should the New Jerusalem land in the United States, it would stretch from **Canada to Mexico**, and from **Ohio to Nevada**. **One single building / starship**. Imagine. It would also extend 1,500 miles into the atmosphere. By comparison, our own atmosphere extends only about 350 miles into space, and the breathable portion of that atmosphere extends only 5 to 7 miles. Again, stop for a moment and try to imagine.

But if you thought those numbers are mind-numbing, let's talk body count for a second. Allowing **6.4 acres per person**, the New Jerusalem can support a population of **54,880,000,000**. To help you out with zeroes, that's almost **55 Billion**. Yes, that is **Billion with a "B"**.

Where the Lord is going to get 55 billion saved or anywhere near that number is a puzzle, since we know that most of those who lived before the flood were not "In the Book" or they would not have needed to be drowned.

How many Gentiles would it take to fill up the New Jerusalem, adding in Israel plus the Gentiles who will be added in at the Great White Throne Judgment? Who knows? It's certainly not a mere 144,000. That number is ludicrous, in the light of the super massive dimensions of the Eternal City. Yeah, you could probably find a parking space there. But, nonetheless, there is a **fixed number or census of Gentiles assigned by God**. When that count is reached, it is endgame for the Times of the Gentiles. They will have been fulfilled. The fullness of the Gentiles will have come in. And we will have massively squandered our opportunity to **hasten** the day of His appearing. Peter made that statement almost 2,000 years ago. When comparing the church throughout history with the initial condition of the New Testament, Pentecostal, Spirit-filled, tongue-talking, signs, wonders and miracles, apostle-driven and directed 1st Century Church, it becomes painfully obvious that we have squandered the vast portion of those 2,000 years. By 300 AD, the church had already been seriously compromised. World evangelism ground to a halt. For the next 1,200 years, the church was effectively a total waste. Based on the expectations outlined in Ephesians 4:11-13, the church should have taken its anointed start and then **gone on** into the **fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ**. Instead, it **went backwards** after the 3rd Century and degenerated into a poor copy of Judaism, with priests, ceremonies and ceremonial trappings galore, endless sets of laws and observances and absolutely no

anointing or power. Then, starting around 1500 AD, a slow but steady awakening began to occur. But even after 500 years of Reformation and restoration, the vast portion of the church today is still a waste. As a whole, the church is bound in sin, powerless and compromised. Jesus had anticipated that with his parable about the 5 Wise and 5 Foolish Virgins. Everyone fell asleep when the Bridegroom was delayed. It wasn't until about the 1800's before the church began to regain even a small portion of its evangelistic zeal. And Pentecostal power was not restored to the church until the early 20th Century, and then only to a small portion of the church. A realistic estimate is that we have **delayed** the return of Christ by our slothfulness by at least **1,500 to 1,800 years**. **We could have hastened the day of His appearing.** Instead, we sank back into legalism. How many souls are in Hell today because of our failure? The numbers must be staggering. There is one small ray of light in all of this. If we had not so totally messed up, neither you nor I would have ever come into existence, nor had a chance to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior of our lives. There would have been no need for us to ever have been born. Aintcha' glad?

At the very beginning of this article, I said that there were at least two questions that had to be asked, one obvious and one not so obvious. We have very thoroughly answered the obvious question. That leaves the one that is so unobvious that you probably have no clue of what that question is. Both the question and the answer will have to wait till tomorrow, but I will give you a hint: in selecting the 144,000, it says that 12,000 were sealed from each of the **12** tribes. That's fine, except for one minor detail: there are **13 tribes, not 12!** Huh? What, Pastor Ray? **Thirteen???** Having driven you crazy, I will now make you wait until tomorrow (unless you cheat and read ahead, which is the only time that cheating is OK) to find out who was left ***Sitting on the Bench.*** Until then, may God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him!

Day 25~ Sitting on the Bench



“³ Saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’ ⁴ And I heard the number of those who were sealed, One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:”

– Revelation 7:3-4

What a wonderful and glorious thing it would be to be among the 144,000! These male, virgin Jews have a closer relationship with Christ than all other humans who have ever lived except the 24 Elders. They get to sing a song that no one has ever sung before. Imagine how beautiful that song will be! Accompanied by harps, imagine a male choir of 144,000 men, all singing in beautiful harmony to the glory of God. I’ve always been involved in music, both vocally and instrumentally. Vocally, I am a baritone. I can’t get quite low enough to be considered a true bass. My dad, on the other hand, could rattle the plates on the table with the notes he could hit. One of the great highlights of my young life was when both dad and I were selected to sing in a regional choir for a performance of Handel’s *Messiah*. I can still remember the thrill I felt standing next to my father, singing God’s praises. I became the first person in our school’s history to make both All-State Band and Choir in the same year, although I was suspended from school at the time the award was announced! That’s another story for another time. As you already know, I gotta million of `em! Ha-cha-cha-cha-cha! Later on, in college, I would participate in the University of Evansville’s *A Capella* choir. *A Capella* means to sing without instruments. Speaking of instruments, I played the baritone saxophone in high school, mainly because I was the only guy big enough to lug it around on the field! Other kids had to have a little platform with wheels on it to rest under the base of the sax when they marched. Not me! My football background gave me the strength to do it with relative ease. I enjoyed band, but always enjoyed singing in choirs more, because of the greater challenge of producing a pure note using the human voice. Singing in the university’s *A Capella* choir was my greatest joy. There is something almost supernatural about a group of skilled vocalists singing in harmony without accompaniment. Imagine then what it must sound like to listen to a 144,000 man choir!

Before we become too enraptured, though, with the thought of a 144,000 man choir, we have to take a very close look at just **who** is represented there, and we ain’t talking about tenors and basses! When most people read their Bibles and they encounter a list, their minds just sort of check out, much like Adam Sandler in the fascinating movie *Click*, where a demonic sales clerk gives Sandler a mysterious remote that allows him to fast-forward through portions of his life that he doesn’t necessarily enjoy. But it is in those lists that God has hidden some of His most amazing mysteries, and there is one hidden in the list of the **12** tribes who are included in the 144,000. What’s so big a deal about 12 tribes? That’s because there are actually **13** tribes! What? Didn’t know that? Actually, I’ve dealt with this issue elsewhere in this series, but it’s vital to understanding a great mystery about the 144,000, so let’s examine the data involved to gain an understanding of what happened all the way back in Genesis with Father Abraham. Most Christians and almost all Jews are familiar with the genealogy of Abraham. He produced eight sons, (Yes, **eight!**) not two, through Sarah, Hagar and eventually a younger lady named Keturah, who bore him six sons in his old age. Our primary concern, however, must be with Isaac, the child of promise. From Isaac came Jacob, and from Jacob, 12 sons born out of what I jokingly call “*The Battle of the Babies*”. Jacob had the misfortune to end up married to two sisters, Rachel and Leah, one of whom has a name meaning “*Little Lamb*” and the other whose name means “*Cow*”. Guess which name is associated with which wife? As is so often the case, the pretty wife

couldn't have children at first, but the more homely wife, who is also accused of having "*weak eyes*" by Scripture, could have them at a moment's notice. When Rachel found that she was losing the Baby Battle, she gave her handmaiden, Bilhah, as a sort of substitute or subordinate wife, in order to have children vicariously through her. That ploy worked for a while. Then Leah also hit the wall on baby production, and so she followed suit, giving her handmaiden, Zilpah, as a substitute wife to poor Jacob, who now had not one, not two, but **four** women to whom he had to say the words all men dread, "Yes, dear, no, dear, of course, dear!"

By the time the smoke had cleared, Jacob was the sometimes proud father of twelve sons. In this matriarchal war, Leah had borne him four sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah. It's interesting to note that Jesus' lineage comes directly from the unloved wife, illustrating how great God's mercy really is. There is always a concession from God somewhere for the things that we have to endure. Once Rachel realized how far behind she had fallen, she quickly gave her servant girl, Bilhah, to her husband. From Bilhah came two sons, Dan and Naphtali. Leah countered by giving Zilpah to her husband as a substitute wife, just as Rachel had done with Bilhah. Confused yet? Don't worry. It gets worse. Zilpah managed to produce two additional sons, Gad and Asher. Leah then resorted to some herbal medicine, and "hired" her husband from Rachel's bed into her own with some mandrake roots. I had always wondered about that little episode, so I decided to do some research. It seems that not only do mandrake roots bear some resemblance to a human figure, they also contain some hallucinogenic properties as well. As a result, they have long been used in various fertility rituals. Ironically, the Hebrew word for mandrake is **dudaim**, which means "*love plant*", and the plant is supposed to ensure conception. In fact, it is actually mentioned in the Song of Solomon in Chapter 7, Verse 13.

Whatever the reason, Leah soon bore two additional sons to Jacob, Issachar and Zebulun, boosting her personal total to six children. Finally, to close out the scoring, Rachel herself was able to bear two sons, Joseph and Benjamin. Since her two children were the last of the twelve and since she had always been the one that Jacob really loved, it only stood to reason that both boys, especially Joseph, would occupy a special place in his father's heart, since Joseph was the first-born son of the woman he loved. It also automatically guaranteed jealousy and rivalry among all the sons, and a great deal of resentment toward Joseph, the favored one among the group.

I can't really criticize Jacob, because I have a similar story to tell of my own. No, I didn't have four wives concurrently, like he did! But I do have one son that I love more than all my other children. Now, please don't get me wrong. I love all my children deeply. I would do anything in the world for them. I pray for them constantly. Each one of them is separate, unique and distinct. Am I happy with where they all are in their relationship with the Lord and in their personal lives? Hardly. I have to keep reminding myself that God isn't done with them yet. I was a bad character from about the age of 18 till the age of 25. I have to keep reminding myself of that fact when I look at them. In many ways, they are doing better than I was at that age. So, in many ways, I have every right to be proud of them at this point in their lives. We all do the best we can given the circumstances. What about your kids? Are they everything you hoped and prayed they would be? No? Well, welcome to the club. Hint: this is where that thing called **Mercy** comes in.

Even though I love all my children, I love my son Benjamin (Hebrew for **Son {ben} of my Strength {ja-min}** or **Son of My Right Hand**), more than the others. Why? Because I literally received him back from the dead when he was born. Wanna know the story? No??? Gonna tell you anyway! Nya! Nya! Nya!

Actually, it's a tale well worth telling. When Ben was born, he was a large baby, exactly ten pounds. Everything about his birth seemed to go well, but when he was born, the doctors discovered that he wasn't breathing. His umbilical cord had wrapped itself around his neck during the birth process, and it was choking him to death. As the doctors began to work feverishly on him, I began to pray just as passionately for him. Some years before, when I wasn't walking with God, I had lost twin boys at birth. One of them had been still-born, and the other, prematurely pushed out by his fraternal twin's miscarriage, was only 6½ months into term, and his lungs were not developed sufficiently to breathe on his own. I watched him struggle for life for 8 hours, only to lose the battle. As I stood over their graves, I made two vows: First, that I would never turn away from the Lord again and second, that

the devil would never take another child from me. As I prayed, I rebuked satan and the spirit of death and told them that they could not have him, not this child, not any child of mine, ever again. I did war in the spirit, praying constantly in unknown tongues and also in my own understanding. Finally, after ten minutes of feverish work that seemed like an eternity, I heard my son cry for the first time. I began rejoicing. But even as I did, our family doctor, who was also a Christian, came up to me and gave me some potentially bad news. It seemed, he told me, that my new-born son had been without oxygen for too long, ten minutes in fact. And although the child was alive and seemed to be normal in every way, it was almost certain that there would be brain damage, possibly severe because of the deprivation. What I said next determined for all eternity what the outcome of the matter would be. Had I agreed with the doctor's opinion, there is no doubt in my mind that my son Ben would have grown up with severe mental retardation. Instead, a holy anger rose up inside of me. I had already lost two sons to the devil, and I had vowed that he would never take another child from me again. When I had lost the twins, I had turned back to the Lord, returned to church, and began to grow rapidly in the Lord. Several years after that, I had been filled with the Holy Spirit and then began to fill myself with the Word of God. Now that process would produce a victory so marvelous that I remember it to this day. When the doctor informed me of his medical opinion, my response was immediate and nearly violent.

"No!", I literally shouted in response. *"The Word of God says that we have not inherited a **spirit of fear**, but of love and of power and of a **sound mind!** Not only will my son **not** be mentally retarded, but he will have a **superior intellect** and be **well above average** in his intelligence!"* My words startled our doctor and he literally took a step back. Without saying another word, he resumed working on my son.

Did my stand on the Word of God during a time of crisis make a difference? Let me tell you the rest of the story and then you tell me. Ben turned out to be a healthy, vital, energetic child with the ability to throw a baseball into the catcher's mitt at enormous speeds. In his first little league game, he threw a no-hitter. Not only did he not give up a single hit, but he also struck out the side in all six innings of the game. Eighteen strikeouts. No hits. No runs. No errors. No 'nuthin! What about his academics, you might ask? Well, even though he loafed through classes in high school, he still graduated with honors, and a grade point average above 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. In addition, he lettered in baseball and made All-State Choir three straight years. Now, **you tell me.** Was it worth it to stand on the Word of God???

For this reason, Ben is special to me, just as Joseph and Benjamin were special to Jacob because they were the only two sons of Rachel, the woman he truly loved and for whom he labored 7 years, not counting the 7 years he had to endure because of Laban's deception with her older sister, Leah. Picture a large, homely woman who squinted a lot. Poor Leah! No wonder daddy had to use a little slight of hand and some homemade squeezin's to get her married off!

Finally, when all the smoke had cleared, and poor Jacob had been worn to a frazzle by the machinations of the two sisters and their servants, he had twelve sons. *"But Pastor Ray"*, you might counter, *"I thought you said that there were **thirteen** tribes!"* Ah, yes, dear friend. And this is where the plot gets interesting. I'm sure that you are familiar with the story of Joseph, and how he was sold into slavery in Egypt by his insanely jealous brothers. How he rose to a place of prominence in Potiphar's household, only to be set up by Potiphar's wife, who was outraged that Joseph, a mere slave, would refuse to sleep with her in her husband's absence. How he was cast into prison, yet somehow managed to rise to the most trusted position within the prison itself. How the two servants of Pharaoh were cast into prison with him. How he interpreted their dreams and suddenly became the #2 man in all Egypt, second only to the Pharaoh himself. And while we're thinking about such things, consider this: Potiphar was one of Pharaoh's most trusted officers. How would you have liked to have been Potiphar, or better yet, his wife, and have to stand in the Royal Court in the presence of the man whom you falsely accused of attempted rape? It is to Joseph's eternal credit that he did not have both her and her husband executed on the spot. That was the way it was back then, and still is today in many places in the "civilized" world. Finally, we come to the confrontation by Joseph of his brothers and the tearful reconciliation, followed by a quick trip back to Canaan and the astonished Jacob, who had thought that his favorite son was dead for 15 years. All 66 remaining members of his clan, decimated

by the terrible drought, entered into Egypt. Joseph wisely settled them in Goshen, the most fertile region in Egypt, where they prospered. Finally, Jacob was old and near the end of his life. And it is here that we allow the Bible to pick up the story once again.

"¹ Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, 'Indeed your father is sick'; **and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.** ² And Jacob was told, 'Look, your son Joseph is coming to you'; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. ³ Then Jacob said to Joseph: 'God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, ⁴ and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.' – Genesis 48:1-4

Jacob's time on this earth was almost done. Now it was time for him to recount the promises which **El Shaddai (God Almighty or the Mightiest God)** had made to him. These promises were to be passed down to his twelve sons, but notably to Joseph, since he had proven to be the instrument of God's delivering hand during the time of the terrible famine. Joseph was now the undisputed leader of the twelve, and rightfully deserving of the position of **first-born son**. Technically, Reuben, the first-born son of Leah should have been the inheritor of the title and position afforded the first-born, but he had disqualified himself by a careless and stupid little affair with one of his father's concubines.

"² Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel your father. ³ **Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.** ⁴ **Unstable as water, you shall not excel, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it – he went up to my couch.**" – Genesis 49:2-4

Who was it that Reuben slept with? The answer is also documented in the Bible, earlier in the Book of Genesis.

"²² And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with **Bilhah his father's concubine**; and Israel heard about it." – Genesis 35:22

The most likely candidate for Reuben's indiscretion would certainly had to have been a handmaiden. In this case, both girls would probably have been younger than their mistresses, and closer to the age of Reuben. And because they were technically still servants, and thus second-class citizens in the world of the Middle East, Reuben might have even thought that it was his privilege and uncontested right as the first-born son to take whatever servant he wanted to for a sexual union. This was often the case in our own South before the Civil War. It was common practice for slaveowners to pick out the prettiest slave girls and separate them from the rest of the slaves, primp them and then use them as in-house prostitutes for their sexual pleasures. Even the great Thomas Jefferson, who freed all his remaining slaves at his death, succumbed to that temptation and eventually ended up falling in love with Sally Hemings, one of his house slaves, to such a great extent that after Jefferson's wife died, Sally became the de-facto lady of the plantation and bore several children to Jefferson, remaining his steadfast helpmeet until the day of his death. However, even if Reuben slept with a handmaiden, she was still the legal wife of his father, thus making Reuben guilty of fornication and his sexual partner guilty of adultery. However, poor Bilhah may not have had much say in the matter, since Genesis 35 refers to her as a **concubine** and not a **wife**. She had been given to her mistress by her father, Laban (Genesis 29:29), so it would not be unreasonable to consider her more of a slave than a servant. In our own culture, a servant is so by personal choice or by economic necessity, but not as a result of being forced into servitude as a result of the laws of the day.

Nasty stuff, isn't it? Unlike other "religious" books, the Bible makes no attempt to hide the abject humanity of its heroes. Instead, they are shown with both their strengths and weaknesses, warts and all.

Reuben, with everything in the world to gain, managed to throw it all away in one senseless act of passion. With Reuben's self-disqualification, the next in line would have been Leah's son Simeon, followed by his younger brother Levi. But they, too, had successfully disqualified themselves through an act of senseless mass murder, all over their sister's moral honor, kind of a reverse of the action of Reuben (Genesis 34:1-31). Jacob and his family had been camping near the Canaanite city of

Shechem. Dinah, one of Leah's daughters (yeah, he had daughters, too!) was visiting with the young girls of the city when Prince Shechem, son of King Hamor of Shechem (they apparently liked to recycle names back then!) saw Dinah, his youthful passion was aroused, and, like any good Canaanite lad would, proceeded to rape her. Shocked! Don't be. This kind of thing still goes on in the Middle East and the Far East on a regularly scheduled basis. Without the Holy Spirit to rule and reign in men's hearts, they are unmitigated monsters. However, after the passion of the moment ran its course, Shechem actually found that he liked Dinah and was strongly attracted to her so he went to his father and asked that a marriage be arranged. Hamor approached Jacob and his sons with an attractive proposal: settle down with us, trade with us, prosper with us, intermarry with us and become one with us. It seemed like an attractive enough offer. The Biblical prohibition against intermarrying with the Canaanite people would not go into effect until after the Children of Israel would come out of Egypt some 400 years later. On the face of the matter, it seemed like a pretty good deal. But Jacob's sons would have none of it. Instead, they insisted that in order for any covenant to be made between them and the inhabitants of Shechem, all of the men of the city would have to enter into the same covenant with God that they themselves had: circumcision. Surprisingly enough, once the gory details of the matter had been explained to the men of Shechem, they were all more than willing to go along with it! I've always wondered about that. Circumcision as a small child of only eight days is one thing. None of us remember the pain of the knife because we were so very young. But to do it as a full-grown man? Ah, that, dear friends, would be an entirely different matter! Either Jacob must have represented a real economic boon to the city or he must have had a whole crop of really pretty gals as daughters! Yee Ha! The accord was signed, and all the men of Shechem dutifully went under the knife (gasp!). But while they were all still in extreme pain, Simeon and Levi took swords and went through the city, killing every single male, both men and boys. The fact that two armed men were able to accomplish the murder of all the men of the city tells you that the "city" of Shechem must have been little more than a village, otherwise the two brothers would have been overwhelmed and disarmed. It also helps to explain why the "city" had been so eager to form an alliance with Jacob and his tribe. There is a strong possibility that Jacob had more men in his traveling retinue than there were in the entire community. After all, his grandfather Abraham had been able to muster a fighting force of 318 trained soldiers from among his servants when he went to rescue Lot from the Five Kings at Sodom (Genesis 14:1-24).

When Jacob discovered what his two next-in-line sons had done, he was utterly distraught. There was no doubt that there would be some sort of reprisal for the action from the neighboring cities and nations. Even though the rest of his sons had followed up in a mop-up operation, ransacking and looting the city and taking all the women and children prisoner, there was no doubt that someone had seen what had happened and managed to escape. Word would spread quickly, and Jacob knew that even though his clan was fairly large, it was no match for most of the surrounding peoples. He and his family would meet a quick, certain and disastrous end. Jacob confronted his sons and told them that they would all have to flee from the area.

"³⁰ Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, 'You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and **since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I.**' ³¹ But they said, 'Should he treat our sister like a harlot?' " – Genesis 34:30-31

Jacob would never forget this act of violence, nor would he forget the one stupid act after another committed by the sons of Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah. No doubt at some point he despaired of ever finding someone to whom he could entrust the rights of the first-born son. Even after Joseph had revealed himself to his brothers and sent them back to their father with the good news that he was still alive, he had to warn them not to fight amongst themselves along the way back (Genesis 45:24). On Jacob's deathbed, he would castigate Simeon and Levi for their act of treachery and violence.

"⁵ Simeon and Levi are brothers; instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. ⁶ Let not my soul enter their council; let not my honor be united to their assembly; for **in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they hamstringed an ox.** ⁷ Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel! **I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.**" – Genesis 49:5-7

There is something fascinating about Jacob's final statement. One of the oddities of the tribal allotments given out by Moses was that the tribe of Levi was given no particular piece of ground to which they could lay claim. Instead, they were to be "scattered in Israel" as priests and rabbis to teach the people of God the laws of God. Almost as unusual was the allotment given to Simeon. Their territory was the only plot of ground completely surrounded by someone else's plot of ground. The tribe of Judah and their holdings completely encircled the assignment given to Simeon. By the time of Christ, Simeon's claim to the land had largely disappeared, and all of the land in the southern part of the country was simply referred to as **Judea**, a derivative of Judah. Just as his grandfather had been, Jacob also finished his life as a true prophet of God, and in saying that "**I will divide them**" he was no longer speaking for himself but rather speaking in what I call **First Person Prophetic**, a condition in which the prophet or prophetess becomes so consumed with the Spirit of the Lord that they become a totally transparent mouthpiece for God Himself. No longer is the individual saying "*Thus says the Lord*". Instead, they are speaking directly **as God Himself**. In a situation like this, the Lord **asserts Himself in and through them, taking them over completely with their willing cooperation and using their mouth as if it were His own**. This is a rare and precious privilege for the man or woman of God. Short of the resurrection itself, it marks the highest possible level of interaction between man and God. Jesus did something very similar in the Gospel of Matthew when He finally lost all restraint with the Scribes and Pharisees and launched into them in what I call the **Divine First Person**.

"²⁹ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,³⁰ and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'³¹ Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt.³³ Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?³⁴ Therefore, indeed, **I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city,³⁵ that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.**³⁶ Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation." – Matthew 23:29-36

Notice that Jesus did not say that **God** or **the Lord** would send them prophets, wise men and scribes. He said that **He Himself** would send them. This particular passage fulfills the qualifications for **First Person Prophetic**, but it also is a clear evidence of His own Divinity as the Only Begotten Son of God, also making it a **Divine First Person** statement.

Now, the intention of this article was to discover the identity of the missing tribe in Revelation. We have truly gone far afield from that intent, haven't we? Yet how can we not stop from time to time to take a deep drink in the cold, deep, refreshing waters of the Word of God and to follow that Scriptural stream upriver for a while before returning to the path we are traveling? How rich and boundless is the marvelous, revealed Word of God! Now we will return to our investigation, a little wiser for the side trip.

Once all of these things were said and done, Jacob's mind was firmly made up: it would be Joseph, not any of his other older brothers, who would receive the right of the first born. And with it came a very unusual ceremony that probably neither Jacob nor Joseph anticipated.

"⁵ And now **your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh**, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, **are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.**⁶ Your offspring whom you **beget after them shall be yours**; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance." – Genesis 48:5-6

In so saying, Jacob effectively **adopted** Ephraim and Manasseh, converting them from **grandsons** into **sons**, thereby modifying the number of **legal inheritors** that he had from **12 to 13**, since both of Joseph's sons would receive a portion of Jacob's estate equal to that of any of his naturally born sons. This also effectively bestowed on Joseph the right of the **double portion**. The Law of the Double

Portion was a common part of Middle Eastern tradition, but the Bible made it official in the Book of Deuteronomy.

"¹⁵ *If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, both the loved and the unloved, and if the firstborn son is of her who is unloved,* ¹⁶ *then it shall be, **on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, that he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the true firstborn.*** ¹⁷ *But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife **as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has,** for he is the beginning of his strength; **the right of the firstborn is his.***"

– Deuteronomy 21:15-17

To help you understand this rule, here's a simple illustration: if a father had **two** sons, he would divide his estate **three** ways. The eldest son would receive **two** portions, and the youngest son **one**. Hence the term **double portion**. As the number of sons increased, so did the number of pieces of the pie, but each individual share would logically **decrease per son** as the number of sons **increased**. If a father had **four** sons, he would divide his estate **five** ways, always with the eldest son receiving the double portion. In the New Testament parable which we refer to as the Prodigal Son, the younger son demanded his **one-third** of the estate from his father. That is why, when the prodigal returned, the father received him back and the elder son was outraged, the father could rightfully say, "**Son, everything I have (left) is yours**" (Luke 15:31). Since the younger son had already wastefully spent his one-third of the estate, the remaining two-thirds, or double portion, rightfully belonged to the older brother.

This also brings up a fascinating misunderstanding about the events surround the mini-rapturing of Elijah into heaven and his final dialogue with his chief disciple and ministry inheritor Elisha. After doggedly trailing Elijah from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho to the banks of the Jordan itself, matters finally came to a head. At the Jordan, Elijah had taken off his cloak and struck the river, causing it to suddenly stop flowing upstream and creating a dry riverbed for the two of them to walk across on. Once on the far shore, the water had suddenly begun to flow again, isolating the two great men of God for a very private conversation. It was time for the changing of the guard, and one of the most momentous occasions in the history of the world. Elijah, one of the three greatest men in the history of the world, was about to depart from this earth, but not through death. Just as with Enoch, who lived prior to the Flood, Elijah was about to be **translated**. Today, we would use the word **raptured**. Regardless of the word used, Elijah was about to move from earth to heaven **without passing through physical death**. In doing so, he, along with Enoch, would be the only two human beings who could once again return **to** the earth. Hebrews 9:27 says that it is appointed for a man to die **once, and then the judgment**. That means that there can be no such thing as reincarnation, because that would mean that vast numbers of human beings would experience both death and rebirth again and again and again. The Bible clearly teaches that a man **lives only once, dies, and then awaits final judgment at the Great White Throne Judgment**. There is, however, one exception to the rule. Someone could return from heaven to the earth **if they had never experienced physical death**. Such would be the case with Elijah. His translation was about to occur. But there was one problem. As far as we know, Elijah had never married, choosing rather to focus his entire life on service to the Lord, just as Paul recommended in I Corinthians 7:32-35. This meant that he had no **first-born son** to whom he could give the **double portion**, which would signify that this individual was entitled to inherit **everything that he had, including his anointing and ministry!** Now, with those thoughts in mind, let's look again at that fateful final conversation between the two:

"⁹ *And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, 'Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?'* Elisha said, 'Please let a **double portion of your spirit be upon me.**' ¹⁰ *So he said, 'You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, **if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so.**'* ¹¹ *Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and **Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.***" – II Kings 2:9-11

A couple of quick notes are necessary here. I have heard it taught and preached innumerable times that Elijah went up into heaven in a chariot of fire. That is **not** what the Bible says. Go back and read

that passage a little more carefully. It says that a chariot of fire appeared, **separating the two men**, but it also says that Elijah **went up into heaven by means of a whirlwind (tornado)**. See the difference? It is this carelessness with the Word of God that bothers me so much. I see it all the time in preachers and teachers of the Word. No wonder the Jews became outraged when Peter announced that the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles! They knew what careless, sloppy individuals we tend to be, and they further knew that we would invariably be careless with the Word of God.

More germane to our topic, however, was the conversation between Elijah and Elisha. Elisha is the closest thing to a son that Elijah has. As a completely itinerant, prophetic ministry, Elijah apparently never bothered to accumulate any material wealth. All that he had was invested in heavenly stocks and bonds, the very individuals like those found in the various Schools of the Prophets that he had established throughout the land, and a few notable men like his spiritual son Elisha. Now it was time to ask Elisha, who had faithfully poured water on the hands (been a faithful servant and disciple) of Elijah what **he** wanted. Ever since Elijah had thrown his mantle over the shoulders of Elisha while he was busily plowing his father's ground (I Kings 19:15-21), Elisha had done nothing but see to needs of the prophet. Payback had finally come, and Elisha knew **exactly** what he wanted. Material things meant just as little to him as they did to his mentor. What he wanted from his spiritual father was the **double portion** rightfully given to the **first-born son**. What Elisha wanted more than anything else in this world was to **be the rightful inheritor of Elijah's ministry and anointing**. And that is **exactly** what he asked for, to the very phrase required! I have heard it preached and taught that he was asking for **double the anointing**. That is simply not true. Although Elisha did approximately **twice as many miracles as Elijah**, what he was nonetheless asking for was the right to **carry on with Elijah's ministry as if he were his own rightful son, employing the legal precedents of their time**. Did that happen? Well, Elisha **did** see Elijah taken up into heaven, which had been the prerequisite so that Elisha would know for sure that his prayer had been heard and answered. And there was further proof, sitting right on the spot where the translation had taken place. **Elijah's mantle** was still there! The mantle has always been symbolic of the power and authority of an individual. Elijah had been permitted by God Almighty to leave that symbol for his spiritual son and rightful inheritor to use. Elisha walked respectfully to the spot where the mantle lay. Then he picked it up and strolled over to the Jordan River. With all the sons of the prophets watching on the far shore, he shouted, "*Where **now** is the God if Elijah?*" (II Kings 2:14) and struck the water with the mantle using all the force that he had. Sure enough, the waters of the Jordan parted for him just as they had for Elijah. He then crossed back over the Jordan to shouts of "*The spirit of Elijah now rests on Elisha!*" from the Sons of the Prophets, who had been watching the whole thing transpire. Technically, they weren't quite correct. It was not the **spirit of Elijah** that rested on Elisha, but rather the **Holy Spirit of God** which had rested first on Elijah and which now rested on Elisha and had been the source of all the miracles which had accompanied Elijah's ministry and would now accompany his own.

Finally, after all that research and all those side trips, we have successfully established how Jacob could have **12 sons** but end up with **13 tribes**. Technically, there is no tribe of **Joseph**, but rather **two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim**, representing the **double portion inheritance** of the **first-born son**. Now, having established that fact, the Scriptures will attempt to cross us up again very shortly, but not today. Instead, we will have to hold that discussion until tomorrow, where, just as in baseball, it's one, two, **Three Strikes – You're Out!** Until then, pray that you don't get **left out** when the Rapture occurs, and always keep our **Triune Lord #1** in your life. Amen and Amen!

Day 26 – Three Strikes, You’re Out!!!



“⁵ of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand *were sealed*;¹
of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand *were sealed*;
of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand *were sealed*;
⁶ of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand *were sealed*;
of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand *were sealed*;
of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand *were sealed*;
⁷ of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand *were sealed*;
of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand *were sealed*;
of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand *were sealed*;
⁸ of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand *were sealed*;
of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand *were sealed*;
of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand *were sealed*.” – Revelation 7:5-8

Yesterday we drove you nearly crazy explaining how Jacob could have twelve **sons**, yet end up with 13 **tribes** out of the whole deal. Today, we’re going to spend our time explaining how in the world **13** tribes could end as **12** tribes near the end of the 6th Seal. In order to do that, we are going to have to turn our attention once again to a dreaded **list**. One of the reasons that lists in the Bible turn people off so badly is that the Chroniclers, usually Scribes who spent their whole lives doing this, were inherently manic-compulsive micro-managers of detail. They had to be. Even the Hebrew word for Scribe doesn’t mean **writer**, it means **counter**. Scribes today are the kind of people who can tell you every single sports stat about their favorite team: how many at-bats, hits, runs, singles, doubles, triples, home runs, slugging percentage, on-base percentage and every other imaginable piece of mathematical information that can be know about each and every player on the team. I had a good friend in college who was a statistician for the university basketball team, and he loved the job. If you are a Scribe at heart, it not only changes **what** you talk about, it even changes **how** you say things. For example, if a regular person like you or me wanted to express the list above, we would say it like this: “*Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin each had twelve thousand sealed*”. ‘Nuff said! Not so for a bean-counter. For someone with a Scribe mentality, it is necessary to **repeat** the phrase “*of the tribe of (fill in the blank) twelve thousand were sealed*” over and over and **over** again. While this approach gives a great sense of peace and security to the Scribe mentality, it drives the rest of us nuts. And remember, dear friend, that God entrusted the transcription of the Bible to bean-counters. Slobs like us would forget details, make mistakes and generally mess things up. No, this particular project had to be perfect **each and every time it was recreated**. Only bean-counters can do that. So, even though they tend to be geeks with crooked glasses and pocket pencil holders, God still loves them and has a perfect place in His universe for them.

Once we get past the list, however, it seems as if someone or something has been forgotten by these masters of detail. Given that Jacob had twelve sons that turned into thirteen tribes, it should only stand to reason that in the end times **each of the thirteen tribes** should be assigned a certain number to be sealed in that anointed band. If I take 144,000 and divide it by 13, I get 11,076.92. That means that we would have to divide up the total positions available unevenly. Some would get 76, some would get 77. Or, if you prefer, you could stick with the 12,000 per tribe figure of Revelation Chapter 7 and come up with a total of 156,000 instead of 144,000. The Lord, however, does neither. Instead, He **excludes** one tribe from involvement in the End Times, and, as it turns out, for a very good reason. Let’s take a quick look at that list again.

Judah, the Lion, is there, still leading the way just as he did all through the desert and in times of war. **Reuben**, the unstable and sometimes sexually immoral brother follows next. **Gad**, whose name means "Troop", is listed third. **Asher**, whom Jacob prophesied in Genesis 49 would produce bread and "royal dainties" is fourth. **Naphtali**, of whom Jacob prophesied that he would be a "deer let loose", using "beautiful words", comes next. **Manasseh**, one of Joseph's sons and one of the half-tribes is 6th in the list. After him comes **Simeon**, who, along with his brother Levi, decimated the town of Shechem over the rape of their sister Dinah. God promised to scatter him across all Israel, and He did just that. In 8th place is **Levi**, whose violent start is belayed by his devotion to Yahweh in the wilderness. As a result, his descendants are granted the right to act as priests unto the Lord. 9th in the list is **Issachar**, whom Jacob prophesied would become a "band of slaves" because of his choice of land to settle in. This proved true when the Assyrians carried the Northern Kingdom off into slavery. In 10th place is **Zebulun**, who has a more positive prophecy regarding him. Jacob said, through the Holy Spirit, that he would dwell by the Mediterranean Sea and would become a "haven of ships", located next to Sidon. This also proved to be true in latter times.

So far, so good. But when we come to the 11th position, the Lord throws us a curve ball. Having already listed the half-tribe of Manasseh, God then lists **Joseph** as the next in the list. What on earth is He talking about? By process of elimination, it must by necessity refer to the **other** half-tribe, **Ephraim**. Why on earth does the Lord do it this way? Frankly, I have no clue. I have tried to come up with a valid answer for a very long time, and I am still as far from an answer today as I was when I began this journey through this final Book in the Book of Books 15 years ago. Perhaps just as with the green rainbow around the Throne of God, the Lord will provide an answer for me soon. I certainly hope so. I want to know just as badly as you do why this is so.

Last but not least, we come to the tribe of **Benjamin**, completing the list of the twelve tribes to be included in the spiritual revitalization of Israel during the Wrath of God. Now, if you have been following our documentation thoroughly, you should be able to tell me immediately who is the **missing tribe**? Yes? I see that hand. And the answer is... **DAN!!!**

OK. Well and good. Now we know **who** is missing, but we still don't know **why**. That topic will consume us for the rest of this article, and it will open up to us a **one, two, three strikes, you're out** timeline revealing the sorry, violent and compromised past of a group of people who, even though they were blood-related and blood-bought through the covenant which God Almighty had cut with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, nonetheless managed to drop deeper and deeper into personal sin, rebellion and depravity as time went on. Let's begin our journey at the point where Jacob utters his prophecy over him.

"¹⁶ Dan shall **judge his people** as one of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁷ Dan shall be a **serpent** by the way, a **viper by the path**, that **bites the horse's heels** so that its rider shall fall backward."
– Genesis 49:16-17

What a terribly conflicted prophecy! Jacob starts out by referring to the meaning of Dan's name, "A Judge" and says that he will **judge his people**. That sounds pretty good. But what follows next doesn't sound so good. He will be a **serpent**, a **viper** that bites the heels of the horses so that their riders fall off. That seems to speak of a deceitful, sneaky, violent nature that would want to wait and prey on those who pass by. And even though Dan's **name** speaks to a noble future, his **nature** points to an altogether different one instead, one laced with violence and deceit.

The next time we encounter Dan, one of his descendants is receiving a very great honor and responsibility: the assignment to share in the design and manufacture of the Tabernacle and every item that would be found in it.

"⁶ And I, indeed I, have appointed with him Oholiab the son of Ahisamach, **of the tribe of Dan**; and I have put wisdom in the hearts of all the gifted artisans, that they may make all that I have commanded you: ⁷ the tabernacle of meeting, the ark of the Testimony and the mercy seat that is on it, and all the furniture of the tabernacle — ⁸ the table and its utensils, the pure gold lampstand with all its utensils, the altar of incense, ⁹ the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base — ¹⁰ the

garments of ministry, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests,¹¹ and the anointing oil and sweet incense for the holy place. According to all that I have commanded you they shall do.” – Exodus 31:6-10

Bezalel and Oholiab did a tremendous job, creating the most beautiful mobile worship center in the history of the world. The Ark of the Covenant, hidden in the Holy of Holies, was probably the most beautiful and most powerful item ever created. So far, so good. Dan was upholding his part in the Plan of Redemption.

It wasn't too long, however, before that mean streak mentioned in Genesis began to manifest. In fact, it was a Danite that was first stoned to death for blaspheming the Name of the Lord.

*“¹⁰ Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp.¹¹ And **the Israelite woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD and cursed**; and so they brought him to Moses. (His mother's name was Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, **of the tribe of Dan.**)¹² Then they put him in custody, that the mind of the LORD might be shown to them.¹³ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,¹⁴ 'Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him.¹⁵ Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin.¹⁶ And **whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the LORD, he shall be put to death.**' ” – Leviticus 24:10-16*

Wow! Talk about serious stuff! Can you imagine how polite **our** profane and increasingly vulgar society would be if **that** were the punishment for taking the Name of the Lord in vain? As radical as this punishment was, and as seemingly unnecessarily violent as we might think it is, it was nonetheless absolutely necessary. How can I say that? Let me explain. I can't count the number of times as a pastor that I have heard someone say, "Boy if God were here right now I'd really give Him a piece of my mind!" Uh huh. Right. Sure. Friend, you'd be darned lucky if you **had** a piece of your mind left to give Him if the Eternal One appeared in front of you right now. We simply cannot comprehend the incredible amount of radiant energy that pours out of His very being. Power is simply not an adequate description for Who He is. Based on a rather remarkable personal experience I had with the Lord when I was 16, I can firmly tell you that being in His Presence is like being at ground zero of a thermonuclear blast. If not for His grace and love which extended some kind of bubble shaped force field around me and my friend, surely both of us would have perished in the blink of an eye, our molecules simply **scattered**, not destroyed, in His awesome presence. Not only is He unthinkably powerful, He is also indescribably **holy**. He is so holy, so pure, so undefiled that anything unclean which comes into His presence is **instantly destroyed**. Remember Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's two unruly sons? They decided to get a little drunk, then don their priestly garb and come into the presence of the Pillar of Smoke and Fire, where dwelt Jesus the Christ in His awesome resurrection body. When they came into the proximity of the Cloud, fire from the Lord came out and consumed them where they stood, thus making them their own Sin Offering (Leviticus 10:1-10). Given the extreme proximity in which all of the Children of Israel lived constantly to that cloud, anything profane or unclean could easily be the cause of many innocent people dying. It would be kind of like walking around near a leaking gas pipeline or a shed full of C4 explosive with a lit flare. Something's **gonna** happen, like it or not! Plus, Israel had spent 430 years being carnal and backslidden in worldly Egypt. If God intended to make them into priests and kings, telling the whole world about the glory that is Yahweh, they would have to be pure as the driven snow. This is what we would call ultimate sanctification. We have lost all concept of holiness and sanctification and price you must pay in crucifying the flesh in order to obtain it. Our worldly, all-grace based church can hardly wait to get out the front door of the church so they can resume their sinful ways. As long as God stays distant from us, we can get away with this kind of nonsense, at least for a while. God is merciful, says the Bible, and is not willing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth. However, just because it is God's perfect will that no one should ever die and go to Hell, and then, worse yet, slide right on into the Lake of Fire at the Great White Throne Bema Seat Judgment, it is nonetheless an equally absolute fact that at this present time the perfect will of God is hardly **ever** done on the Earth. That's why Jesus, in what

we call the Lord's Prayer, had the disciples pray **specifically** that His will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. If it were automatic and happening right now, we would not have to pray fervently for it to happen. A casual glance at the headlines screams out at us that God's perfect will is not being done on Earth as it is in Heaven. We pray for revival, but we really don't understand what that means. Yes, it means that someone like Peter will raise Dorcas from the dead. But it also means that same person will also consign Ananias and Sapphira to their graves. The glory of God has both the power to send people from death to life and from life to death.

The next time we encounter Dan, there seems to be a distinct drift toward disobedience, this time by the entire tribe. It all centered around the whole plan of tribal allotments that were given to the Children of Israel by Moses. Their land allotment was relatively small in proportion to some of the other tribes such as Judah. It connected to an equally small portion given to Benjamin on their eastern border and ran to the Mediterranean Sea on its western side. It was parallel to the northern tip of the Dead Sea and included the seaport of Joppa, the very place where Jonah ran from the Lord and Peter raised the above-mentioned Dorcas from the dead.

*"⁴⁰ The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. ⁴¹ And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, ⁴² Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Jethlah, ⁴³ Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴ Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵ Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, ⁴⁶ Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region near Joppa. ⁴⁷ And the border of the children of Dan went beyond these, because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it; and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it. They called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father. ⁴⁸ **This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan** according to their families, these cities with their villages." – Joshua 19:40-48*

Now, this was the territory assigned to Dan to **conquer and occupy**. Just remember, dear friend, whenever the Lord gives you a **promise involving prosperity in your future**, there will always most certainly also be a **project involving work in your present**. The Lord always says, "Go and do it! Be brave! Be strong! I will be with you. **But I won't do it for you!**" Now, to be equally fair, there are some times when God will do it all for you. But there is a two-fold catch: you must have already **done** everything that God had already told you to do, and there must be **nothing else** you can do, just as the Children of Israel found out when they finally came to a screeching halt at a watery dead end by the Gulf of Aquabah (Red Sea) with a bloodthirsty Egyptian army close on their heels.

Conquering and occupying, however, was not a high priority on the Danite list of things to do. Instead, when the going got a little rough, the not-so-tough got going in another direction.

*"³⁴ And the Amorites **forced the children of Dan into the mountains**, for they would not allow them to come down to the valley; ³⁵ and the Amorites were determined to dwell in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim; yet when the strength of the house of Joseph became greater, they were put under tribute." – Judges 1:34-35*

Lacking the gumption to stand up to the Amorites, the descendants of Dan then set about to find some other place where they could settle. Finally they found a place, but there was a little catch: the land was in the territory assigned to Ephraim, their neighbor to the north.

*"¹ **In those days there was no king in Israel.** And in those days **the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for itself to dwell in; for until that day their inheritance among the tribes of Israel had not fallen to them.** ² So the children of Dan sent five men of their family from their territory, men of valor from Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out the land and search it. They said to them, 'Go, search the land.' So they went to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there. ³ While they were at the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite. They turned aside and said to him, 'Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What do you have here?' ⁴ He said to them, 'Thus and so Micah did for me. **He has hired me, and I have become his priest.**' ⁵ So they said to him, '**Please inquire of God, that we may know whether the journey on which we go will be prosperous.**' ⁶ And the priest said to them, '**Go in peace. The presence of the LORD be with you on your way.**' ⁷ So the five men departed and went to*

Laish. They saw the people who were there, how they dwelt safely, in the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure. There were no rulers in the land who might put them to shame for anything. They were far from the Sidonians, and they had no ties with anyone. ⁸ Then the spies came back to their brethren at Zorah and Eshtaol, and their brethren said to them, 'What is your report?' ⁹ So they said, 'Arise, let us go up against them. For we have seen the land, and indeed it is very good. Would you do nothing? Do not hesitate to go, and enter to possess the land. ¹⁰ When you go, you will come to a secure people and a large land. For God has given it into your hands, a place where there is no lack of anything that is on the earth.' ¹¹ And six hundred men of the family of the Danites went from there, from Zorah and Eshtaol, armed with weapons of war. ¹² Then they went up and encamped in Kirjath Jearim in Judah. (Therefore they call that place Mahaneh Dan to this day. There it is, west of Kirjath Jearim.) ¹³ And they passed from there to the mountains of Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah." – Judges 18:1-13

I know that's a big chunk of Scripture to read at one time, but there are soooooooooo many things wrong with this whole scenario that we've got to look at them one at a time in context with the situation.

First of all, the Danites were not **where they were supposed to be**. They were **supposed** to be battling the Amorites for the right to the land that God had promised them. To go anywhere else, particularly into territory belonging to their neighbors, was a direct violation of God's perfectly revealed will for them. Not that this is anything new, of course. Most of us do our level best **not** to know the will of God for our lives. That way, we can do whatever we darned well please. But when those unfortunate circumstances arise where the Lord makes it clear exactly what He wants us to do and where He wants us to go, our natural, rebellious inclination is go and do **just the opposite**. I can assure you from painful personal experience; it is **never** a good idea to disobey God. The Bible describes His will as "*good, acceptable and perfect*" (Romans 12:2). In obeying His will for your life, He thus guarantees that He will fill in the **G**(ood), **A**(cceptable), **P**(erfect) **between your needs and your resources**. Pardon the acronym, but it is a wonderful way to remember a powerful Scripture. What most people don't know is that it directly follows Paul's admonition to the church at Rome not to be **conformed to this world** but to be renewed by the **transforming of their minds**. The only way to get what God has promised you is not only to obey God grudgingly but to also have your mind transformed so that you begin to think like He thinks and see things as He sees them. Once you come to that point, suddenly things will begin to flow together for you in a way you could not possibly have imagined. Most of us feel like we are fighting uphill in a blizzard against an avalanche, losing more ground than we are gaining. Perhaps it is because we cannot **resist the devil** until we first **submit to God** (James 4:7).

Secondly, **they tried to get a "Word from the Lord" to confirm their rebellious actions**. If you study this whole incident involving the young, inexperienced and easily influenced Levite, you will see that he was **strictly for hire**. Want an encouraging "Word from the Lord" through one of His "prophets"? Just increase the **profit of the prophet**, and most so-called "Men of God" will sing like a sparrow, promising you Cadillacs and swimming pools that can be used as witnessing tools. Now, for those of you who have read any of my writings, you know darned good and well that I strongly believe in prophets and prophecy. I've been in this painfully prophetic business for over 15 years now. As a general rule, however, **true** prophets of God are called to be agents of balance and correction, comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable. It is critical for a true Man or Woman of God to **NEVER** allow money to influence what comes out of their mouths. It is a guaranteed short trip to Troublatown to prophesy **good news** over **bad character**. That's exactly what this young Levite was doing. Micah had hired him as his personal priest. Now, don't get me wrong. The pay wasn't all **that** bad. Why, he even got a new preaching suit each year, along with all the food he could eat and a nice little salary to boot! In fact, the pay was good enough to overlook the fact that Micah, his boss, had set up his own personal little **idol** that they all worshipped in front of. Getting good enough for you yet? Not? Don't worry, the tangled mess of Dan will get worse. **Far** worse. It also turns out that the idol in question had a highly corrupt past in and of itself. According to Judges 17, the 1,100 shekels of silver that were used to make the idol had been **stolen by Micah from his own mother!** Furthermore, she had placed a **curse on the money**. Now, when crooked little sonny boy 'fessed up to his evil ways, she blessed her suddenly repentant son to cancel the curse she had put on him, **but the curse which**

she had uttered over the silver remained in place, uncanceled by the worlds of her mouth. That meant that since the **silver that was used to cast the idol was cursed, the idol cast out of that silver would also, by definition, be accursed.** Now, let's take it a step further, shall we? If a **priest for hire** were to lead worship **to the Lord** in front of an **idol that was cursed, what on earth could be the only logical outcome?** Clearly, **nothing** that this young man would say could be in any way construed as an accurate Word from the Lord.

All of that, of course, meant absolutely nothing to the Danite spies. All they wanted was a blessing to go and do whatever they wanted, and this weak-willed, spineless and gutless Levite was not about to warn five heavily armed men that they **just** might be out of God's will a teeny, tiny bit! Now, encouraged to continue on in their sinful ways, they found just what they were looking for, **a nice, easy unarmed target that they could make mincemeat of.** When they brought back their report to their brethren, they said that the land was large and peaceful and lacked for nothing found on the face of the earth. That part of their report, at least, was true. According to Wikipedia, the wonderful online encyclopedia, "*To the west of Dan are the southern mountains of the Lebanon range, while to the east and north were the Hermon mountains. Melting snow from the Hermon mountains provides the majority of the water of the Jordan River, and **passes through Dan making the immediate area highly fertile.** The lush vegetation that results makes the area around Dan seem somewhat out of place in the otherwise arid region around it.*" Not only was the place a veritable paradise in relationship to the surrounding territory, the people of the area were peaceful, defenseless and had no one to come to their aid in a time of trouble. In short, **sheep for the slaughtering.**

Third, they compounded their sin **by slaughtering innocent people and stealing what belonged to another Israelite, including his private, for-pay priest.**

¹³ *And they passed from there to the mountains of Ephraim, and **came to the house of Micah.***
¹⁴ *Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish answered and said to their brethren, **'Do you know that there are in these houses an ephod, household idols, a carved image, and a molded image? Now therefore, consider what you should do.'***¹⁵ *So they turned aside there, and came to the house of the young Levite man—to the house of Micah—and greeted him.*¹⁶ ***The six hundred men armed with their weapons of war, who were of the children of Dan, stood by the entrance of the gate.***¹⁷ *Then the five men who had gone to spy out the land went up. Entering there, they **took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image.** The priest stood at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men who were armed with weapons of war.*¹⁸ *When these went into Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image, the priest said to them, 'What are you doing?'*¹⁹ *And they said to him, **'Be quiet, put your hand over your mouth, and come with us; be a father and a priest to us. Is it better for you to be a priest to the household of one man, or that you be a priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?'***²⁰ ***So the priest's heart was glad; and he took the ephod, the household idols, and the carved image, and took his place among the people.***

– Judges 18:13-20

Words almost fail me in trying to describe the unthinkable corruption and evil involved here, and by now you know that it takes quite a bit to find Pastor Ray at a loss for words! Consider what has been done here. The five spies have returned, leading a heavily armed platoon of some 600 soldiers, ready for destruction and mayhem. But, while we're at it guys, there's a little booty to be had along the way. Now, I know that he's a brother Israelite, but, as they say, "*All's fair in love and war!*" So while we're at it, **let's steal that solid silver idol made out of those cursed 1,100 shekels so we can worship it all to our selves!** My stomach turns as I think about what they had just bought into. Little did they realize that that uncanceled curse on the **silver**, on the **idol**, on the **priest** and on the **household of Micah** would now **come on an entire tribe of rebels.** The lust for idol worship would so permeate the children of Dan that it would be their undoing at the End of the Age. But we are not there yet. There is still much, much more to the story to be told. It didn't take a Weatherman to tell this Prophet-for-Pay which way the wind was blowing. With 600 hostile men armed to the teeth waiting hungrily to slaughter everyone in sight if even the teensiest thing seemed to go wrong, and with his five "buddies" urging him on, he **stole his boss's belongings all by himself, and did so eagerly!** After all, this **had** to be from the Lord! He was getting the biggest pay raise and promotion in his

whole short life. He was moving from preaching to a single family to top religious leader and "bishop", if you will, **to an entire tribe!** Halleluia! Praise the Lord! Ain't God good, brother???

Now, lest you think how terrible those wicked, evil people were way back then and how wonderful all we "Spirit-filled" Christians are today, let me tell you an equally chilling tale involving your author. Back in 2004, I was pastoring a Spirit-filled, Black United Methodist Church located in Milford, Ohio, a suburb of Cincinnati. Now, I won't tell you the name of the church, but if you really wanted to know, it wouldn't be hard to find out. I had come to the church in 2002, as a fiery, Holy-Ghost filled preacher who galvanized the church and set them on fire for the Lord. Church membership had doubled in the next two years, the church had set all kinds of modern giving records and we were seeing an unending stream of signs, wonders and miracles. A woman who had fallen down a flight of stairs and was in such excruciating pain for months that she could only move a few inches at a time using her walker was so powerfully healed that she began **dancing** up and down the center aisle of the church. Another woman had suffered a near fatal heart attack and was laying on the gurney in the ER when the power of God came on her, she stood up, pulled out the IV's, declared herself healed in the Mighty Name of Jesus and strode out of the hospital, completely well. God delivered not one, not two, but **six** miracle cars for folks who loved the Lord but had no transportation of their own, including my precious '94 Lincoln Town Car and my wife's '94 Lincoln Continental, all in mint condition. We drive them both to this day. God was pouring out his blessings on an unprecedented scale. And then, true to form, the enemy struck at the shepherd, so as to scatter the sheep. I began to experience severe earaches in my right ear. No matter what kind of treatment was used, it seemed to make no difference. Then, one Sunday evening after church, I was suddenly gripped with a terrible pain and tightness in my chest. I was rushed to the hospital, where an angioplasty was performed and a stent inserted into the artery which had clogged to 80% shut. While I was recovering, I asked my heart doctor if he knew of a good ENT (Ear-Nose-Throat) specialist, since the doctor I was currently seeing wouldn't even return my desperate phone calls from my hospital bed so that I could resume taking the pain medication for my throbbing ear. He did, in fact, and within a few days, I was seeing Dr. Mark Deutsch, a young Jewish ENT with a real genius glow about him. God used that fine young Jewish man to save my life. What was causing my earaches was a malignant, inoperable tumor pressing up against the Eustachian Tube which led from my throat to my middle ear on the right hand side. The next two years would prove to be the worst two years of my life. I would undergo over 35 radiations treatments that scarred my upper palate and severely damaged my throat and my salivary glands. Chemotherapy would cause such a violent reaction that I would throw up as many as five times a day, losing 80 pounds as a result. The church leaders, fearing that I would die, would concoct lies about me and have me fired behind my back while I lay in a hospital bed recovering from the latest bout of uncontrolled throwing up. The District Superintendent would calmly assure me that all was well and that I should concentrate on my recovery at the same time he was holding meetings with the leadership of the church to remove me. But none of that was the worst. **It was the young Levite preacher that was the worst betrayal.**

About a year before I had accepted the pastorate in Milford, moving from the metropolitan Louisville area and giving up a \$53,000 a year position as a staff programmer and analyst at a local hospice, I had encountered an anointed, called young man named Derrico. Our first encounter had been truly remarkable. Bev and I had just finished an incredibly anointed service at Ammons United Methodist Church on a Saturday night. We had run out of room in the aisles to put the bodies of all the people who had been slain in the Spirit. A woman with a breathing tube was running over and around the bodies stacked like cordwood, praising and worshipping God for her miraculous healing. The church was awash with the power of God. Later on, as we were finishing a late supper at a Frisch's restaurant along with some close friends, a young Black man dressed in FUBUs (For Us, By Us) came up to me and said, "*Sir, I don't know who you are, but God just told me to come up to you and have you pray for me!*" I was dumbfounded. I have seen a lot of things in my years as a Full-Gospel Minister, but never anything like that. I laid hands on the young man and prayed for him. The power of God came over me, and I prophesied accurately and powerfully into his life, both regarding his future and his current shortcomings and liabilities. He was deeply impressed and thanked me profusely. We traded contact information and he went his way, rejoicing. I felt oddly like Stephen fresh out of the Samaria revival talking to the Ethiopian eunuch.

We didn't hear any more from Derrico for quite some time. Then, he showed up again, this time playing keyboard and leading worship for a largely Black woman's ministry in the area. It was there that he met a lovely young Spirit-filled girl who would later become his wife. Again we lost contact with him. Things took off at Milford, and then, in the midst of the greatest revival in my life, I was struck down. As the radiation therapy and chemotherapy drained all the energy and strength from my body, I was faced with a crisis. On Sundays we had taken the single morning service at 9:30 and broken it out into two services, a traditional one at 9:30 and a "contemporary" one at 11:00. The traditional service was fairly sedate, with very few bumps in the road for the older members. I think what scared them into two services was when people began to be slain in the Spirit as they knelt to take communion and demons began to come out of young inner city Black children in the services, causing their precious red carpet to need cleaning when the young man began vomiting out the demons. Shocked? I haven't told you the **good** stuff yet! That "contemporary" service would often run for four or more hours. Sometimes the anointing would be so strong that I would never even get to preach, like I really cared!

Even when I was healthy, that kind of work schedule would wear me out. But battling cancer, losing 80 pounds via projectile vomiting and having my very life force being drained out was too much for me. I knew that I couldn't handle both services, yet I knew we couldn't condense the two back into one. I was on the horns of a dilemma. Then, one day as I was pondering and praying about what to do, I got an unexpected phone call from an equally unexpected source. Derrico was on the line. It seemed he had had either a dream or an open vision about me. In this revelation, which, in and of itself, really was from God, he had been in one of our worship services. He had been sitting up front, behind the pastor who was preaching from the pulpit, as is common among many Black churches. Then, suddenly, the Pastor stopped in the middle of his sermon and turned around to speak to Derrico. That Pastor was me, and I said two simple words: "*Help Me!*" Driven by the urgency of that plea, Derrico contacted a mutual friend and a great mentor in the Lord, Dr. Frederick Heath, Jr. of Ammons to see if "Doc" knew where I was pastoring. Doc Heath gave him my contact info, and he called me. Rejoicing at the phone call, I felt that the Lord had truly sent Derrico to help me with the contemporary service, while I preached in the morning service to keep the regulars satisfied. That worked for a while, until my condition worsened. I became so weak that I couldn't preach in **either** service, and so Derrico was pressed into action for the older crowd as well. What followed then was a terrible period in which I was hospitalized for about 30 days and wasn't even able to attend church. Previously, I had been at least monitoring the situation to make sure everything was working out as planned. I tried to protect Derrico from some of the leadership of the church. We even paid Derrico out of our own personal funds because we were told that the leadership wouldn't pay out any extra salary. It turns out that Derrico was not only being paid by us, he was double-dipping, being paid by the leadership of the church privately, behind my back. When I got back from the hospital, I knew that something was terribly wrong. The Lay Leader of the church and the head of the Pastor-Parish Relations committee practically fawned over the young preacher. Yes, Derrico was an excellent preacher. Yes, he could also play the keyboard and lead praise and worship. And, yes, there was an anointing on him during the services. But it was after the service was over that he was doing his dirty work. In my absence, he had ingratiated himself with the current leadership. Some of them were convinced that I was going to die, and were hedging their bets **against me** and **for him** to ensure that **they** got the best of the deal. In the meanwhile, he had been contacting others, including people who later became our close friends and still are to this day. In fact, one of the ladies called my wife from Cincinnati just this evening as I was writing this article, thanking her for mentoring her and helping her to get her start in the ministry. What was Derrico seeking prayer for? **That the church in Milford be given to him, and that I might be dismissed to go and die! Anathema! Ichabod!** The young Levite had shown his true colors. He was a Prophet for Hire. Most of you already know the rest of the story. I was betrayed and abandoned at the worst time in my life by people who were **supposed** to be leaders in the Christian community. Derrico got his prayer answered, praise the Lord! Pastor Ray, sick and unable to preach or work, and two hours from family and friends, was calmly kicked to the curb to die. Unfortunately for Derrico, our young Levite without integrity or morals, it didn't quite work out the way he planned it. Oh yes, he ended up pastoring the church for four years. But every single person who had been saved, healed and delivered under our ministry left the church, never to return. The church shrunk back to its original size of about 25, back to one service, and with no anointing. The Holy Spirit had been grieved and wounded beyond belief.

I cried out to God to vindicate me, but no answer seemed to come. Finally, I resolved to put the matter behind me and put it in God's hands, where it rightfully belonged. And then, recently, word began to reach us unbidden about the goings-on at the church. The District Superintendent? Nowhere to be found in the state of Ohio, either in leadership or in a pastorate. The Lay Leader? Forced into "early retirement" at the company where he worked as a supervisor. They used to call that "fired" in the old days. The leader of the Pastor-Parish Committee and her husband, the Church Historian and the true power broker behind the church? Well, it seems that this 80-year old man was found fooling around with young girls. **Very** young girls. Not just once, but in an on-going pattern that went back decades. The two were forced to leave the church in disgrace and as far as I know, he is currently serving time in jail and will probably never leave prison except in a pine box. And the young Levite? Seems it wasn't enough to have **one** beautiful, devoted, godly young woman at his side. Seemed he needed a few extra women **on the side** himself. Also seems that one of those young ladies became enraged at him and **hid a tape recorder under her pillow as they engaged in sex**. She then sent that tape to the new District Superintendent, who removed him from the pastorate within a matter of days. And his pretty, young, devoted wife? Left him at first, and then filed for divorce.

Today, as far as I know, he is no longer in the ministry, disgraced, self-destructive, untrustworthy, and willing to do anything for 30 pieces of silver. His end will be commensurate with the quality of his character. **His means will truly be his end.**

Why have I told you this tale? Because America today is no better and no different that Israel was in the time of the Judges. There was no King in Israel during those days, not physical and not spiritual. And there is no King in America today, because Jesus Christ has been once again rejected by the very people He died for. **Our means will truly be our end.** As the world says, "*what goes round, comes round*". Perhaps, to make our more spiritual readers feel more comfortable, I should express it as Scripture does: "**Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.**" (Galatians 6:7).

The church in America is filled with young Levites just like the one in Judges. The church is like an iron cauldron, cracking open under the pressure inside of it, ready to spill its contents down on the ground. In 2007, the Lord spoke to me about the shepherds and the sheep in America. He told me that during the years 2007-2009, there would be a terrible time of judging against the shepherds of America. What has happened since then? Would it be enough to mention Ted Haggard, Juanita Bynum and Timothy Weeks, Paula and Randy White of Church without Walls, Richard Roberts and one notable minister after another who has been exposed as a pervert, adulterer, thief or liar? And how can we ignore the worst of all? "Bishop" Earl Paulk, who for decades had sexual encounters with one young woman after another, who led his entire ministry team in wife swapping, and whose "nephew" and assistant pastor actually turned out to be his own son! The self-same "nephew" now pastors his "uncles" church, the Cathedral at Chapel Hill. Attendance dwindled from 10,000 to 1,000 but the young pastor, trained up in the ways of his "uncle", has now found a new way to revitalize the flock and refill the coffers. How, you might ask, has he done it? By embracing "Radical Inclusiveness". What does that mean? That **everyone** is saved! That includes adulterers, fornicators, lesbians, homosexuals, sinners of all manner, unrepentant just like the Tribe of Dan, hell-bent to do what **they** want to do, regardless of the consequences! Ah, but God loves them, you see! And I am sure that they can get a "Word from the Lord" from **that** pulpit blessing their unholy unions, just like the men of Dan received **their** word from the ungodly young Levite. This, dear friends, is the moral condition of the church in America today. How long will it be before **we** are taken into captivity, and led off naked and in chains to other lands as slaves of a new world empire?

There are two more chilling aspects to the true Word which the Lord gave me, and I am compelled by the Holy Spirit to share these with you as I write these lines in February of 2009. The Lord had told me that He would begin to judge the **leaders** starting in 2007 and running through 2009. But in 2010 the Lord will begin to judge the **church** on an individual basis, and events like Ananias and Sapphira will begin to happen all over the globe. God will not catch up a dirty, filthy, unclean Bride. No, dear friends, she will be **pure, spotless and without sin**. And finally, God will begin to judge America in 2014 in a series of limited nuclear incidents across our country that I have spoken of elsewhere in this series.

We have run out of time for today, but not out of story. For all of this perversion and filth, there is still more yet to come. And so, as the infomercials are wont to say, ***But Wait, There's More!***

Day 27 ~ But Wait, There's More!!!



“³⁰ Then the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. ³¹ So they set up for themselves Micah’s carved image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh. “

— Judges 18:30-31

Several years ago there was a wonderful cartoon series by Steven Spielberg called *Pinky and the Brain* about two genetically altered lab mice, one of whom was a total idiot and the other a deranged genius bent on taking over the world. Night after night, Brain would plot and scheme, making up various bizarre plans to become ruler of our planet. And night after night, Pinky, for all his idiocy, would prove to be right and Brain’s carefully crafted plans would fail. I am admittedly a huge fan of theirs, and have many of their episodes on videotape. Some night soon we’re going to have a Pinky and the Brain Marathon, and spend the evening laughing our heads off. In one of my favorite episodes, Brain links into a supercomputer to capture all the mailing addresses in the world. How will he gather the information? By staging a huge fake infomercial for a non-existent product which promises to do everything from eliminating fleas on dogs to eliminating the national debt. At the end of each segment of the infomercial, Brain adds dramatically “*But wait, there’s more!*” It is an easy thing to parody modern infomercials. They follow an appallingly standard routine where a revolutionary new product unlike anything ever introduced is offered to the viewing audience at a ridiculously low price. And just as the temptation to make that phone call begins to rise, the announcer dramatically announces “*But wait, there’s more!*” We then learn that we can get **two** of this wonderful thing instead of one if we will just call in the next eighteen minutes. It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to quickly figure out that you could probably purchase four or five of these wonderful things at some discount store, and that since the ad runs at various times during the day and night, the eighteen minute deadline is a lie, pure and simple. As a result, the phrase “*But wait, there’s more!*” has become a term of derision in our culture.

Yesterday we took you through some pretty heavy stuff, particularly near the end of the article. I hate to be all gloom and doom. I feel like Brain, saying “*But wait, there’s more!*” time and time again in our study of Revelation. Unfortunately for all of us, there really **is** more! Not only are there more disastrous events to take place, but also more insane decisions by the rock-headed tribe of Dan. In yesterday’s article, they had managed to put themselves in a place of open rebellion to the Lord. One would think that what they had already done would be enough. They had failed to take the land promised them by God through the Prophet Moses. They had scouted out property belonging to their tribal neighbor, Ephraim. They had hired the young Levite away from his previous employer and enticed him to steal his employer’s idols, including a large idol made out of pure silver with a curse attached to it. As I said, one would think that would be enough trouble for the time being. But wait, there’s more!

As we left poor Micah yesterday, the young gun-for-hire Levite had just gathered up all of Micah’s idols and was headed out the front door, humming cheerily, eager to get on with his new position as spiritual leader of the tribe of Dan. Stop and think for just a second. Would **you** want a thief and a traitor as **your** spiritual leader? And if you really did, **what would that say about you?** Micah pursued the 600 man strike force for a bit, but their open threats of bodily harm convinced him that being alive

minus the idol made out the silver that he had stolen from mommy dearest was better than having a dozen swords stuck in him at the same time and being really, really dead. Having dispensed with Micah as a minor distraction, the assassins then proceeded on to the unsuspecting town of Laish to destroy it and every soul that lived there.

*"²⁷ So **they took the things Micah had made**, and the **priest who had belonged to him**, and went to Laish, to a people quiet and secure; and **they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city with fire**. ²⁸ There was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth Rehob. So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there. ²⁹ And they called the name of the city **Dan**, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel. However, the name of the city formerly was Laish." – Judges 18:27-29*

Once they had finished their destruction, they rebuilt everything and renamed the city after dear old dad. I would imagine that it was kind of like George Foreman naming all of his ten sons George Forman, Jr. Somewhere a note had gotten stuck on the keyboard. Now that the Danites were on a roll, they quickly established yet another abomination to God and added to their already illustrious track record.

*"³⁰ Then the children of Dan **set up for themselves the carved image**; and **Jonathan the son of Gershom**, the son of Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan **until the day of the captivity of the land**. ³¹ So they set up for themselves Micah's carved image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh." – Judges 18:30-31*

How sad! Yet how appropriate, too. Actions begun in rebellion always result in more rebellion. Motives laced with deception will always yield more deception. The deceiver will find himself deceived by another. And a man who will steal **for** you will doubtless steal **from** you. Having stolen the silver idol from Micah, it seemed such a shame to waste it. It was so pretty, you know! Oh, yes, brother. We still worship the Lord. We just set this here pretty thing up in front of the church so it will remind us of Him, yup! That's why we put it there! Don't you worry none that there's folks praying to it and prostrating themselves in front of it. Why, they're just trying to get ahold of God, brother! It doesn't take long for demonic deception to take hold of a situation like that. Many years ago we visited a fringe Full-Gospel church which many people rightly classify as a cult. We were going through a difficult time in our ministry and a friend of ours who attended there invited us to the service. I went with serious reservations, but still hoping to hear from God. And I did hear from the Lord, but not in the way that I expected. We had a friend with us who is a physically huge man and who is mildly mentally retarded. Everything went fine through praise and worship, but I sensed that things had taken a nasty turn for the worse when the aging female leader of the cult singled out our mentally retarded friend and began to humiliate him in front of the entire church. Anger raced through me, but I held it in check. After a pathetically weak sermon suitable for a five-year-old, a period of "intercession" began. There were a large series of long, flat steps that led up to the main platform. Many of the ladies there wore all white, signifying in their minds that they were part of the Bride of Christ. As the period of intercession began, many of these white-clad older women, all with their hair tightly wound around their head, prostrated themselves at various places on the steps. Clearly the steps had been designed for this very purpose. But then, instead of crying or praying quietly or even interceding in unknown tongues, each of the women began to scream at the top of their lungs. The sound was deafening and unnerving. Nonetheless, I was determined to hear from God, so I made my way to an open spot on the steps and knelt down to pray. Before I closed my eyes, I looked slowly over the scene. Dozens of white-clan women were prostrating themselves on the steps, each one screaming and groaning. Shaking my head, I closed my eyes, hoping to hear from the Lord. The moment I closed my eyes, I was utterly astonished. Despite the fact that my eyes were closed, **I could see perfectly around the room!** I could see the steps in front of me. I could still see all of the women there, doing what they thought and had been taught was travail. But what I could see **with my natural eyes closed** made my blood run cold and the hair stand up on the back of my neck. You see, when I closed my **natural** eyes, God let me see with my **spiritual** eyes. What did I see that so terrorized me? As I scanned across the room, natural eyes still closed, in every place where a woman dressed in white lay prostrate, instead there was a **horrible black, living thing of some sort**. My eyes jerked open in shock. Could I be imagining things? I closed my eyes again and looked over

the platform area. Again, dark, evil things lay scattered across the platform and stage at **precisely the same spots as the screaming women in white were!** It took me only a second to make a quality decision. Standing quickly to my feet, I took my wife by the hand and said "*Let's get out of here! **Right now!***" When Bev gave me a puzzled look, I quickly added that I would explain it all to her later. We gathered our friends and beat a hasty retreat out of the place.

Now, do I have something against wearing white? Absolutely not! What about what some folks jokingly call "Bun-ticostals"? Nope! I have a number of good friends who are Oneness Pentecostals and whose wives wear their hair in just that fashion. In fact, we just received word today that the most godly woman I have ever known, Sister Morrow of Huntingburg, Indiana died today. She was a Oneness Pentecostal all of her life. I have never seen a more beautiful woman than precious Sister Morrow, her face lined with years and tears but glowing with the joy of the Lord. As Paul explains in great detail in Romans 14, what they are doing, they are doing **for the Lord**. Neither they nor anyone else should be judging other Christians when they are legitimately doing what they believe pleases the Lord from a pure heart. And God **does** know our hearts. He knows when we are doing the wrong thing for the right reason. He also knows when we are doing the **right** thing for the **wrong** reason. His preference, of course, is that we do the **right** thing for the **right** reason.

What I **do** have a problem with is when a leader deliberately guides their people into a position of compromise or deception. It is almost automatic that the disciples of that twisted shepherd will take his or her doctrines and bend them even more out of shape than their predecessor did. In this case, the cult was an offshoot of another twisting of doctrine by a previous cult within the Pentecostal camp itself. What happened at the newly rechristened city of Dan was no different than what had happened within that Pentecostal denomination. One deception leads to another, even greater deception.

Once established, the cursed silver idol of Micah became the cursed silver idol of Dan. It began to exert its demonic hold not only over a household but over an entire city and then a region as the descendants of Dan began to multiply and spread out over the landscape. Soon, the city of Dan became the political, cultural and spiritual center of the tribe, equivalent to what we would call a state like Ohio or Indiana. And at the heart of all of that activity lay a **curse**, encased in silver and looking just as pretty as those deceived ladies dressed in white.

There is yet another aspect to the story that very few people know about. It seems that the part of the text that deals with the ancestry of Jonathan the son of Gershom the son of Manasseh may not be accurately translated. There is an alternate, ancient portion of text that refers to "*Jonathan the son of Gershom the son of **Moses***". Could this self-serving, corrupt, deceiving young Levite actually be the **grandson of Moses???** At least part of the genealogy supports this premise.

"²¹ Then Moses was content to live with the man, and he gave **Zipporah his daughter** to Moses. ²² And **she bore him a son**. He called his name **Gershom**, for he said, 'I have been a stranger in a foreign land.' " -- Exodus 2:21-22

The Bible establishes that Moses had a son named Gershom by his first wife, Zipporah. And even though he later divorced her, Gershom would nonetheless remain a descendant of Levi, just as his father was. Later on, Gershom would marry and have children of his own. We have a clear record of at least one son carrying on in the ministry in Jerusalem.

"²⁴ **Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was overseer of the treasuries.** ²⁵ And his brethren by Eliezer were Rehabiah his son, Jeshaiiah his son, Joram his son, Zichri his son, and Shelomith his son." -- I Chronicles 26:24-25

Was Jonathan perhaps a younger brother of Shebuel who decided to strike out on his own, just the like the Prodigal Son? We will probably never know in this lifetime, but it would be consistent with human nature for such a thing to happen. Regardless of whether Jonathan was a grandson of Moses, he led the Danites into active idol worship, a practice that became so persistent that many years later it resulted in the final breach between God and Dan.

The final break centered around the transition of power from Solomon to his benighted, arrogant son, **Rehoboam the Retarded**. I can assure you that wasn't his **official** title, although his actions certainly warranted it. Any time that an old king is ready to die and there are multiple sons, there will be a scuffle for power. Eventually, one son will gain dominance over the others and either kill them or drive them off. Unfortunately for David and his own sons, he had sown deadly seeds of destruction into his life by sleeping with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Although Uriah was not a Hebrew, he was nonetheless totally devoted to David, was a member of the highly select Mighty Men and lived in an impressive house **right next door to David's castle**. That's how the whole problem with Bathsheba began. It was spring, the time when the ground finally dried up enough for nations to go to war. Normally, David would have bravely led his troops into battle, but he was getting older and didn't have the physical strength and stamina he used to. In fact, some years later in the springtime battles he nearly lost his life when one of the descendants of Goliath tried to even the score for the death of his father by attempting to kill David.

*"¹⁵ When the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David and his servants with him went down and fought against the Philistines; and **David grew faint**.¹⁶ Then **Ishbi-Benob**, who was **one of the sons of the giant**, the weight of whose bronze spear was three hundred shekels, who was bearing a new sword, **thought he could kill David**.¹⁷ But **Abishai the son of Zeruiah came to his aid, and struck the Philistine and killed him**. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, '**You shall go out no more with us to battle, lest you quench the lamp of Israel.**' " – II Samuel 21:15-17*

Perhaps David was feeling his manhood threatened a little or perhaps he simply had too much time on his hands that fateful spring day when he spied a beautiful, naked woman performing the standard ritual cleansing required after her monthly flow was over. Satan slyly introduced the idea into David's head that if he had yet **another** woman in bed he would feel good about himself again. Regardless of the reason, it was a disastrous decision. Soon, Bathsheba would come to David and announce that she was pregnant by him. David's awkward attempts to get Uriah drunk so that he would sleep with his wife and think the child was his failed miserably when Uriah fell asleep at his doorstep rather than break faith with the other men in the field, who were sworn to celibacy until they returned from battle. David then conspired with his General in the field, Joab, to bring about Uriah's death. No one was the wiser, David thought, until his good friend the prophet Nathan came to see him one day and told him a story about a mean man with lots of sheep who took the only little ewe lamb that his neighbor had and slaughtered and cooked it for a visiting friend's meal. David was outraged by the story. And then the prophet sprang the trap.

*"⁵ So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, 'As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die!⁶ **And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity.**'⁷ Then Nathan said to David, "**You are the man!** Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.⁸ I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. **And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!**'⁹ Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? **You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.**¹⁰ **Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.**" – II Samuel 12:5-10*

Be very careful who you travel with in the ministry. If you travel in prophetic circles and you have dirty little secrets hidden safely away like David, be very sure that your prophetic friends will find out through the Holy Spirit. David had not just one, but **two** close friends who were prophets, Nathan and Gad. David himself is considered a prophet, and the 22nd Psalm, which bears his name, is a graphic description of the detailed events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ Himself. Did David's decree as King and Prophet come to pass? The first child born to Bathsheba died shortly after childbirth, despite David's fasting to prevent it. Then, Amnon, one of David's other sons, raped his half-sister, Tamar. Her full brother, Absalom, as good looking as his sister, plotted revenge and two years later slaughtered Amnon and his friends. Two down, two to go. Later on Absalom, retuning from banishment by David, would begin to plot to overthrow his father. Joab and his strike force would find

Absalom hanging helplessly by his long, jet black hair from a tree limb and would turn him into a human pincushion. Three down, one to go. Then, as David drew near to death and was making arrangements for Solomon, the second son to be born of Bathsheba, to be his successor Adonijah, another of his sons, attempted a military coup and was thwarted by the quick actions of David's supporters. Solomon would soon thereafter put him to death over the rights to a servant girl who had slept with David in his old age to help keep him warm but never had sexual relations with him (seriously!). Four sons dead. David had paid four-fold, just as he had prophesied over himself. Hint: when you are in the prophetic ministry, be **very careful** what comes out of your mouth, particularly regarding yourself and your own ministry. I have had to repent on a number of occasions and retract and cancel word curses that I have uttered over myself during times of great discouragement and depression. Fortunately, God is merciful. But **keep a watch over your mouth if you are a prophet**. The power of **life and death is in the tongue** for all believers, but even more so if you walk in the anointing and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

After David came Solomon. Even though Solomon had 700 wives and 300 "porcupines", as one preschooler put it, he somehow managed to make sure that his son Rehoboam was the only rightful inheritor. But his wisdom in handling the matter unfortunately did not transfer into his self-indulgent son. When Rehoboam took the throne, the leaders of the various tribes came to him and asked for something any American tax-payer can readily identify with today. They wanted a tax break. Solomon had taxed the Children of Israel until their teeth hurt, gold or not, in order to build the Temple of the Lord over a seven year period and his own palatial estate, which took thirteen years all by itself. With all the major construction projects out of the way and the nation of Israel seemingly firmly established as the dominant power all over the region, the people rightfully wanted a little breathing room to take care of their own households. Rehoboam told them to come back in three days, at which time he would render a decision on the matter. When he discussed the matter with his father's old advisors, they gave him wonderful counsel.

"⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, 'How do you advise me to answer these people?' ⁷ And they spoke to him, saying, 'If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.' " – I Kings 12:6-7

What great wisdom! I don't think that there has been a presidential candidate in the last 50 years who hasn't run on a platform that included a promised tax break. Yet, mysteriously, year after year and term after term, we continue to have **additional** taxes imposed on us. Did you know that the Federal Income Tax and the associated Infernal Revenue Service (Omigosh! Did I just say that **out loud?**) were only supposed to be a **temporary tax** until the nation got straightened up again? I guess we're still waiting for that to happen, along with all the gold which the federal government impounded, often by force, from unwilling American citizens during the 1930's in what has been called **The Great Gold Robbery**. All of that gold was supposed to have been returned to the citizens of this fair country after the country recovered from the Great Depression. Yet here we are well on our way toward an even **greater** Depression and not one US citizen has ever had **one single ounce of gold returned to them. Ever.**

Unfortunately, as I said earlier, Rehoboam was a retard. Instead of taking the extremely wise counsel offered him by the advisors of the wisest man who ever lived, the dumbest son who ever lived decided to get a second opinion from his aristocratic, arrogant buddies.

*"⁸ But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. ⁹ And he said to them, 'What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten the yoke which your father put on us?'' ¹⁰ Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, 'Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us'—thus you shall say to them: '**My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist!**' ¹¹ And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, **I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!**' "* – I Kings 12:8-11

Needless to say, when Rehoboam the Retarded rolled out that little policy change, the entire kingdom erupted into civil war. Yes, dear friends, both Israel and the United States had Civil Wars. In both cases, it was the **North** against the **South**. Only instead of the nation's capital being in the North, at Washington D.C., it was in the South, in Jerusalem. Instead of the South attempting to secede, it was the Northern 10 tribes who pulled out of the Union, led by one of Solomon's supervisors, **Jeroboam the Jerk**. Israel and America are mirror images of one another in so many ways. Israel had 13 Tribes. America had 13 Colonies. America was established on the **Eastern shore** of a great body of water (the Atlantic) and told to expand **west**. Israel was established on the **Western shore** of a great body of water (the Mediterranean) and told to expand **east**. The huge difference between the two was in the **wisdom of the leadership**. Rehoboam's foolish pride caused the destruction of the Israelite Union. Abraham Lincoln's great wisdom and fearless leadership saved the American Union. As a result of the collapse of the nation of Israel into two warring factions, Israel's complete dominance in the Middle East was forever broken until this very day. As a result of America surviving its Civil War, we quickly expanded across the continent, pushed Spanish, English and French influences out of the country, and moved into a position of dominance in the Western Hemisphere, as exemplified by the Monroe Doctrine, which told the European powers to mind their own business and stay out of the Western Hemisphere. Had we then extended our dominance into Central and South America and expanded the nation to include those regions, we would have virtually none of the headaches we have today with such countries as Cuba, Mexico, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Chile. Imagine America in complete control of the entire Western Hemisphere except for Canada. Imagine oil at 12 cents a gallon, as it is in Venezuela! Think that might make a difference?

Once Jeroboam had led the ten northern Tribes out of the Union, leaving only Judah, Benjamin and the scattered tribe of Levi still in the possession of Rehoboam, he felt the need to consolidate the new 10-Tribe Confederacy. In particular, he knew that he needed to sever their emotional and spiritual connection to the Temple in Jerusalem. He knew that if his people continued to return to Jerusalem for spiritual reasons to worship at the Temple each year, it would only be a matter of time before they began to wishfully think about the "Good Old Days" when David and then Solomon ruled over a unified kingdom. And from that thought, it would only be a short emotional distance to a desire to reunite the kingdom once again and reclaim its former glory. If that every happened, Jeroboam knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that the head of that newly reunited union would certainly not be **him**. And given the penchant for political assignation in the Middle East even today, Rehoboam knew that if he **ever** returned to Jerusalem, he faced certain death.

With that in mind, Jeroboam made one of the most terrible mistakes ever done by a king of Israel or Judah. **He introduced active idol worship as a replacement for Yahweh!** And to make sure that none of his people ever wanted to return to Jerusalem, he established two **new religious centers** in the Northern Kingdom, one in the city of Samaria and the other **in the city of Dan!**

*"²⁵ Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and dwelt there. Also he went out from there and built Penuel. ²⁶ And Jeroboam said in his heart, 'Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: ²⁷ **If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.**' ²⁸ Therefore the king asked advice, **made two calves of gold**, and said to the people, '**It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!**' ²⁹ And he set up **one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.** ³⁰ **Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.** ³¹ He made shrines on the high places, and **made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.**" – I Kings 12:25-31*

Of all the things that the Children of Israel had done to defile their faith and trust in Yahweh, the One Who Is Who He Is, nothing was worse than this. Not only had Jeroboam broken faith with God's absolutely immutable command to worship in Jerusalem, the place of **His** choosing, he had once again established the **golden calf of Egyptian bondage** as the god that they were to worship. This marked a return to the very first rebellion of the Children of Israel when Moses had gone up on Mt. Sinai to talk with God and receive the Ten Commandments. No sooner had Moses gone out of sight than he was also out of the minds and hearts of the faithless, unbelieving people. As a result, they grew fearful and

put pressure on Aaron, Moses' brother. Interestingly enough, Aaron showed the same spinelessness and lack of moral fortitude that Jonathan would show two generations later. When pressured about the situation with Moses, Aaron made a fatal mistake.

" ¹ Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, 'Come, **make us gods that shall go before us**; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' ² And Aaron said to them, 'Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your **wives**, your **sons**, and your **daughters**, and bring them to me.' ³ So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ **And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf.** Then they said, '**This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!**' ⁵ So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, 'Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.' ⁶ Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." -- Exodus 32:1-6

What an abomination! The people could barely wait to return to worshipping idols once Moses had ascended out of sight into the cloud that surrounded the peak of the mountain. It is incomprehensible to me that, even with God's glory still resting on Mt. Sinai, they could turn away from Him while His power and majesty were continually before their very eyes. Perhaps it is just as well that that generation perished in the desert. They may have no longer been slaves physically, but they were and would remain slaves in their hearts until the day they died. Even more galling to the Lord was the fact that they made the golden calf out of the very gold that God had rewarded them with as back pay for all the unrewarded labor they had given the Egyptians as slaves.

" ²⁰ So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go. ²¹ And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, **when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed.** ²² But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, articles of **silver**, articles of **gold**, and **clothing**; and you shall put them on your **sons** and on your **daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians.**" -- Exodus 3:20-22

The gold that came from the Egyptians that went on the ears of the wives and children of the Israelites as a blessing from God Almighty was quickly taken back off and given to something that was not and never would be God. How shameful! And, to top it all off, Aaron built an altar for the darned thing and declared a National Party Day, which quickly turned into a full-scale orgy, right at the base of the mountain upon which rested the Glory of the Almighty. How awful! How perverse! How evil! Small wonder, then, that the Lord became angry with them and told Moses to step out of the way so that He could destroy them all and restart the process again with Moses' family. Had Moses not talked God out of it, a totally different timeline would have resulted for all of us, with totally unpredictable results down through history.

Now, Jeroboam had resurrected that great and ancient evil by casting golden calves. To place one at Bethel was logical, for the Ark of the Covenant had been housed at Bethel for some time during the administration of David. The people would naturally want to go there to worship anyway, since they were used to it. But Dan, ah, dear friends, that was a different story altogether. Yes, the descendants of Jonathan, the backslidden Levite/Priest were still carrying on worship there. But it wasn't the Lord that they were worshipping. It was that stupid, accursed silver idol. Now, just as with their ancestor, they saw an opportunity to upgrade their ministry. Now they would no longer be worshipping before a **silver** idol. Now they would be going first class. Now their idol would be made of **gold**. And, to boot, made by the new king himself as well! Golly, gee! Things couldn't get any better, could they?

Unfortunately, the evil which had begun as a simple curse over some silver coins had now mutated and grown just like the Andromeda Strain into some sort of horrible spiritual plague. The curse had traveled, uncontested, from the **coins** into the **idol**, then from the **idol** into the **tribe of Dan**. Now, finally, the curse was working exactly as Satan had designed it from the very beginning. Now the curse was impacting an entire **ten-tribe nation**. From that day on, no matter how long it took for idolatry to

completely saturate the Northern Confederacy, its fate had been sealed. It would only be a matter of time before the Assyrians, the new power in the region, replacing the now-shattered kingdom under Solomon, invaded and took each and every one of those ten northern tribes off into captivity. Tell me, was it worth the compromise that the young Levite made in order to accomplish his personal goals? You and I have no ability to see into the future unless the Lord permits us to do so. As a result, we have no ideal what the **long-term impact of our actions will be**. When an itinerant evangelist from Louisville, KY led a young lad named Billy to Christ in a North Carolina crusade, he had no way of knowing that this young man's last name was **Graham, Billy Graham**. How many untold millions of souls are in Heaven or on their way there today because of one man's actions? As I write this series of books about the End Times I often despair about the fact that so few people are willing to deal with what is coming upon the world very, very soon. I often feel that I am writing books that no one wants to read or believe. Yet prophecy after prophecy that the Lord has given me has come to pass exactly as He showed it to me. If I had a dollar for every time someone has come up to me, called me or emailed me and told me of a prophecy that I had given them "X" number of years ago which had, at that time, seemed impossible, but which was now coming to pass exactly as I said it, I would be a wealthy man, indeed! But **wealth** is not my objective. **Truth** is. When He speaks to me, I must say to individuals and nations alike what He has said, **not one Word less and not one Word more**. This is the burden of the prophet. The young Levite failed in his duty to uphold the Word of the Lord. Look at the long-term devastation that resulted. When Paul sat chained and under house arrest for two years, he must have chafed just as badly as I have about not being able to go out and minister in the power and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Once you have moved in that realm, you will never be the same again and you will never be satisfied with anything less. I am very sure that he would much rather been preaching at Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, Galatia and Rome rather than writing letters to them. I am sure he would have rather been training Timothy first hand rather than writing letters to him. Yet, had he not, where would the thing called the Gentile Church be today? Without the man who was **forced by circumstances over which he had no control** to write three-fourths of the New Testament, we would still be bound by Jewish rules and regulations, not walking by faith, justified by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. We would not have swept through the Roman Empire and transformed the world of its day. And we would not be poised at this very hour to usher in the return of our Soon and Coming King, eagerly awaiting the splitting of the Eastern sky by a rider on a White Horse leading a massive army of angels and believers coming for their resurrection bodies. Thank you, Paul! You had no idea what you were doing when you laid the plumb line of righteousness, sanctification, holiness, faith and love for us. You, inspired by the Holy Spirit, have made us who we are today, and untold billions of souls owe their salvation to the words of one solitary man who made a quality decision not to sell out on God, no matter what the circumstances and consequences of his actions were. Perhaps one day, perhaps even after I am gone, a group of disciples will pick up the "scrolls" that make up the body of my work for the Lord and find in them a source of transformation and inspiration, to help them to endure to the End so that they, too, may be saved. This is my hope, my confession and my plea to the Almighty. **Lord, I have never let Your Words fall to the ground. Do not let mine.**

As for you, dear reader, I fervently hope and pray that you take both **my words** and **His Word** to heart so that it transforms you into what He has wanted all along; a Bride worthy of His Glory, in the **fullness of the stature of the measure of Christ!**

We leave Dan with a heavy heart for the penalty he paid for his sins, paid at the end of the Age by the entire tribe, **excluded from harvesting the souls of Israel because they chose to worship something else and disobey the King of Kings and Lord of Lords**. But tomorrow we will move into something good, something wonderful, something marvelous. Tomorrow we will take a close look at the way Scripture is interpreted and often mis-interpreted when we learn to use **No Private Interpretation** in handling the Word of God. Amen and Amen!

Day 28 – No Private Interpretation



“²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.”

— II Peter 1:20-21

One of the great controversies that rages through and divides the Body of Christ pertains to the return of Jesus Christ. There is almost unanimous agreement among Christians that they **want** Jesus to come back, and come back quickly! No one who is suffering or in pain wants to continue on in that condition for one instant longer than absolutely necessary! Now, I am sure that there are some wackos out there who actually seek out pain and suffering, but most of us are firmly into pain avoidance. There are also a fair number of backslidden Christians who most certainly wish that Jesus would wait **just a little bit longer**, so that they can continue in the pleasures of sin for a while before giving them up at the last moment. Unfortunately, for virtually all of them, their last moment is never predictable. Anyone’s life can be snuffed out in a second, with or without the return of Christ.

Most of us, however, are eagerly awaiting His return. But that raises a question, a very serious question. **When will Christ return?** Also, **how will we know it’s really Him?** And perhaps a third question – **Who will be going with Him when He leaves again?** Leaves again??? What are you talking about, Pastor Ray? Doesn’t Christ split the Eastern sky and destroy the armies of the Anti-Christ and set up His Millennial Reign?

Well, yeah, sort of. You see, I thought the same way for most of my life, with all the End Times events all jumbled up in my brain in some kind of hodge-podge of loosely connected facts. It wasn’t until I began studying the Revelation of Jesus Christ in earnest that I realized how goofy my theology was and how marginal and pathetic my sermons on the subject had been. Oh, sure, I got the main points right. Yes, Jesus was coming back. Yes, He would sky-lift those who were prepared for His coming and eagerly awaiting Him. But beyond that, I didn’t get many of the details correct. As we near the End of the Age and His Imminent Return, we’d better start getting those details right, and getting them right in a hurry, lest we miss out on the wildest ride of all time.

There are even those who think that Christ will not come back, per se, but rather that the church will just get stronger and stronger until the Kingdom of God saturates and dominates the whole earth. Good luck with that one, guys! It takes tunnel vision and a terminal case of Polly-Anna-itis to think that in a world just seething with evil that is being pushed closer and closer to a nuclear war by such lunatics as Iran and North Korea that somehow, suddenly, everybody is going to start playing nice and we’re all going to put down our guns and pick up roses. When I was a part-time hippie in college with peace, love, flowers and drugs surrounding me, many of us thought that such a thing would come to pass. Witness the syrupy and naïve lyrics that we wrote. From Tommy James and the Shondells and their “Crystal Blue Persuasion” to the 5th Dimension, the Beatles and the Moody Blues, every rock group was predicting a glorious, drug-saturated world in which peace ruled the planet. Nah. Not gonna happen. Not without some definite clout to **make** people live right. You see, it’s all about that **sin nature** that pervades each and every one of us. You see, I’m not a **sinner** because I **sin**. I **sin** because at the very core of my unredeemed being I **am a sinner**. Jesus said that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The same can be said for your actions. Because, without

Christ, I am basically a selfish, evil person bent on getting what I want at the expense of others, that core nature causes me to act in a sinful, rebellious way. This is why most so-called "conversions" today seem to make absolutely no difference in the lives of the people who are supposedly converted. A two minute prayer will no more save you than two minutes in the shower will clean you forever. Unless that prayer of repentance is accompanied by a deep, clear-cut sense of just how sinful you are, there can be no regeneration. This is the great deception of the church in the 20th and 21st century. I, personally, have led many, many people to Christ, only to see them fall right back into the very sins that we were trying to lead them out of. If you study the great revival preachers down through the ages, they have stressed two very important points. The first point, and the one which has blithely been side-stepped by today's Evangelicals and Pentecostals, is that man is by nature a sinner, inherently evil, and cut off from God unless he is regenerated by forces outside of himself. No man has the power to save himself. We are born with a 100-pound weight around our necks and thrown immediately into the sea. Our trendy psychologists have filled our minds and hearts with feel-good, we're-not-so-really-bad claptrap for so long that our children no longer believe in absolute right and wrong. That belief is deadly. You see, if there are no **absolutes**, then everything is **relative**. That means that if **I think its right**, then **its right for me**. If I think it's OK to **kill** people, then it's **OK** for me to kill people. Moral relativism is tearing our culture apart. Children with no sense of right or wrong cannot be convicted of sins that they do not believe in. We have created a deadly monster, and it is only a matter of time until this **amoral** generation (not **immoral**, **amoral**, that is, **without morals altogether!**) decides that carrying we older folks is too great a financial burden on them and they begin to euthanize us by the tens of thousands. Paul talks about the Man of Lawlessness. It will take a world full of law-less, moral-less people to respond to such a leader, and we are well on our way there. The second point, the fact that God loves them **despite** their sinfulness and failure, is also lost on their ears because, after all, they're really not so bad anyway and plenty lovable just the way they are. Our schools and our culture have allowed our children to slide comfortably into a soulless, conviction-less state where they are neither fit for heaven nor hell. In C.S. Lewis' wonderful parody, *The Screwtape Letters*, one of the demons complains that the souls these days are hardly worthy devouring, so little depth of character have they. The demon goes on to say that he yearns for the good old days when saints were really saints and sinners were really sinners, with some crunch when you ate them.

If we then discard the notion of bluebirds and butterflies before Christ returns, and we must if we are to take the Sacred Scriptures at their Word, then it becomes clear that He will return in a time of great trouble, just as He repeatedly said. But what are the details of that return, and, more importantly, what is the timetable involved?

The idea that there was such a thing as a Rapture was expressed as far back as the American Puritans Increase and Cotton Mather. They held to the idea that **believers would be caught up in the air, followed by judgments on the earth** and then **the millennium**. They couldn't have been more correct. That is, according to the Book of Revelation, **exactly** what is going to happen, **in that order**. Later on, the term *rapture* was used by Philip Doddridge (1738) and John Gill (1748) in their New Testament commentaries, with the idea **that believers would be caught up prior to judgment on the earth and Jesus' Second Coming**. Again, correct. The word *rapture*, which critics are quick to say is not found in the Bible, is actually an English adaptation of a Latin translation of a Greek word. The Latin word in question is *rapere*, which means **"a violent and sudden snatching away"**. Just as with many Latin and Greek words, the word and most of the meaning associated with it passed blithely into English with just a minor amount of change. And, to be fair, it accurately describes the original Greek in the passages in question.

In almost all of the different views held, there was clearly going to be some suffering involved before the removal of believers from the surface of the earth, but the relationship between that suffering and the Tribulation was somewhat foggy and ill-defined. The concept of a **pre-tribulation** rapture wasn't introduced into American theology until **1788** by a Baptist preacher named Morgan Edwards in an essay published in Philadelphia. Once the idea had been advanced, however, other individuals were quick to jump on the bandwagon. After all, as I said earlier, no one likes to suffer, so when people began to hear that they might not have to suffer at all, they quickly began to embrace the new doctrine.

John Nelson Darby, considered to be the father of dispensationalism, first advocated a pre-tribulation rapture in **1827**. This view was accepted among many of the Plymouth Brethren in England. Although the Plymouth Brethren are no longer a factor in American religion, at that time they were very influential. Darby and other prominent Brethren were part of a movement which impacted American Christianity, primarily through their writings. Popular books also contributed to acceptance of the concept of a pre-tribulation rapture, including William Eugene Blackstone's book *Jesus is Coming* published in **1878** and which sold more than 1.3 million copies, and the Scofield Reference Bible, published in **1909** and **1919** and revised in 1967.

The Catholic and Orthodox churches as well as the Reformed denominations have no tradition of a preliminary return of Christ and reject the doctrine, in part because they cannot find any reference to it among any of the early Church fathers and feel that its biblical foundation is weak. However, advocates of a preliminary rapture believe the doctrine of **amillennialism** (no physical Millennial Reign at all, but rather symbolic) originated with Alexandrian scholars such as Clement and Origen and was later brought wholly into Roman Catholic dogma by Augustine. All three of these early theologians were heavily influenced by the Greek philosophy schools and were responsible for moving the church of their day away from Biblical Christianity and more toward empty human wisdom-based thinking. It is a standard rule that if the Bible says something that I don't like or agree with, that it must be symbolic and not literal. This rebellious distortion of the truth has permeated both Judaism and Christianity from time immemorial. Up until that time the church had held to pre-millennial views, which see an impending apocalypse from which the church will be rescued after being raptured by the Lord.

The rise in belief in Pre-Tribulation theology can partially be traced to a young girl named Margaret MacDonald, who in **1830** had a vision that was published in **1840** and again in **1861**. I personally find it curious that she would happen to have her "vision" only three after the famous preacher John Nelson Darby began to advocate it. In 1957, John Walvoord, a theologian at Dallas Theological Seminary, authored a book, *The Rapture Question*, that gave theological support to the Pre-Tribulation rapture; this book eventually sold over 65,000 copies. In 1958, J. Dwight Pentecost authored another book supporting the Pre-Tribulation rapture, *Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology*, which sold 215,000 copies.

Whew! Head hurt yet? No??? Wow! You **are** tough! Seriously, once all the smoke has cleared, there are only about five different views of when and how the Rapture will occur.

- 1, The **Pre-Tribulation** view, which states that the Rapture will occur **prior** to the beginning of a **7-year Tribulation** period associated with the Anti-Christ. This viewpoint is overwhelmingly held in Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic camps. I held this very viewpoint for over 15 years myself. Clearly, I no longer do, and as we go through this series of articles, I will explain why in great detail.
2. The **Mid-Tribulation** view, which states that the Rapture will occur **in the middle** of a 7-year Tribulation period associated with the Anti-Christ. The Mid-Trib camp has lost a great many supporters in the last few decades.
3. The **Post-Tribulation** view, which states that the Rapture will occur **at the end** of the aforementioned 7-year Tribulation. Clearly, all three camps center their theology around a **7-year Tribulation** period. They just disagree over **when** during the Tribulation the Rapture occurs.
4. The **Amillennialist** view which we mentioned earlier which states that the thousand year reign mentioned in Revelation 20:1-6 is **symbolic**, not **literal**. By now you know my three rules for interpreting Scripture **rightly** and **correctly**. Particularly when approaching Revelation, Scripture must be viewed as **literal, logical and chronological**. I am sure that you have already figured out that these guys are a lost ball in high weeds, and you're right! One of the more hilarious aspects of this theology is that the church during the Middle Ages espoused a skewed form of this doctrine. The Kingdom of God on earth, they supposed, had begun either at Pentecost or at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Many felt that the thousand years were already passing from that point on. Small wonder, then, that on the evening of December 31st, 999 A.D., a massive but short-lived revival occurred in Europe as drunkards sobered up and headed for a church pew, along with adulterers, thieves and liars. The confessionals did a huge overtime business and those who had not been living right hastened to "get right with God" before the clock struck midnight and the

date moved to 1,000 A.D., signifying the end of the millennial reign. Needless to say, when Christ did not split the Eastern skies as predicted the following morning, the exodus back out of the church was just as overwhelming as the exodus in the previous day.

5. The **Pre-Wrath** view says that the positioning of the Rapture has **absolutely nothing at all to do with the Tribulation**. They maintain, **as I do**, that the Rapture occurs **at the end of the 6th Seal, prior to the beginning of the 7th Seal, the Wrath of God**. To be perfectly honest with you, this is precisely what **I discovered ON MY OWN** in my study of Revelation when the Lord first challenged me to preach and teach from the book. I was appalled, astonished and felt deeply betrayed by the preachers and teachers who had taught me otherwise. Interesting enough, about six months after I made this shocking discovery, I received confirmation from a most unlikely place. Once I realized what was going to happen, and in what order, I began to aggressively share this newfound knowledge with all my friends, many of who elected to no longer **be** my friends, or began treating me like some sort of leprous pariah, crying "*Unclean! Unclean!*" in the night. I began to get very discouraged, and began to doubt what I **knew** to be true. Then, out of nowhere came a huge, very thick book in the mail. I have no idea who decided to send it to me, but it was a rescue of major proportions and the single event that helped me to stay on course so that I could learn more about the **correct** timing of the Rapture. The book was called *The Sign*, and it was written by a very devout, very thorough Christian scholar and Bible teacher named Robert Van Kampen. Although brother Van Kampen has since gone to be with the Lord, I owe him a great debt of gratitude that I can never repay. Someday, when my work here on earth is done, I hope to see him in Heaven and thank him from the bottom of my heart.
6. Finally, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, is the **Pan-Tribulation** view espoused by many of my friends from the backwoods country of Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee. "*Don't ya'll worry none 'bout it, Brother!*" they say. "*I'm sure it'll all **pan out!***" In a sense, they are correct.

From a practical standpoint, it really **didn't matter what theology you believed until this generation**. Why do I say that? Because no matter what you believed about the Rapture, the Tribulation and the Millennial Reign, it was all a moot point since you were going to die and be carried by the angels to Heaven to **wait in Paradise** for that time to come. As such, your battle would be over and the war for you would be won. All of this disagreement is relevant to only **one or two generations**, the ones that will actually **experience** these events. I strongly suspect that we are in the first of those two generations right now. And based on what I see going on in the church today, I fear that the loss of lives and souls within the church during the terrible times to come will be unthinkable. It is certain that at least 50% of the church will either not be prepared or will fall away when tested, in large part by the prevailing theology that informs them that they don't have to worry about all that stuff, since they are going to be raptured out before one tiny fingernail is broken. As a pastor, can you see my concern? I am painfully aware of the high level of compromise in the church today, including the so-called Full-Gospel segment. Too much has been done wrong, and too much wrong is still being done. The church is not clean and pure and her garments are stained filthy and dirty with the type of life that she is leading.

Laying that issue aside for a moment, we need to take a close look at what the Bible **actually** says, **in context**. The only way that any of this will **ever make sense** is if we stop skipping around in the Book of Books like some frenzied grasshopper and walk **step by step, line by line and precept by precept** through what the Bible has to say.

It is ironic that I am repeating here in Episode Three many of the principles found in Episode One. It is, however, necessary for me to do so. Remember the three cardinal principles of **literal, logical and chronological**? Add to that the **Doctrine of Progressive Revelation**, which states that God has been incrementally revealing His plan for mankind a little at a time **as we were ready** and willing to deal with it. That would also mean that **different sections of Scripture have differing levels of priority when interpreting passages**.

Let's begin with **literal, logical and chronological**. Why do I feel that these three principles are cardinal to understanding the Revelation of Jesus Christ? As I mention elsewhere in this series, it is important to remember that God is, among other things, a **mathematical genius**. Let's face it, He would have to be to create **the entire universe**, wouldn't He??? Everything in our physical world is

held together by **immutable, unchanging laws** (at least as far as we can tell!). Gravity, the speed of light, the various laws of Thermodynamics and all of the other rules and regulations are put into place with astounding detail. There are no loose ends in Heaven. When we look at the final Book in the Book of Books, it should therefore be no surprise to us that it is a **super-massive, eight-level deep mathematical outline**. To help you comprehend that fact, I have included at the end of this Episode my **Revelation Master Timeline**, which takes the entire book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ and breaks it out into a complex but highly organized outline. You might want to take just a moment and turn back to the outline and review it, just to get a grasp on how immensely logical, mathematical and organized it really is. That's what makes this Book of Books so very special to me. I have read excerpts from most of the so-called "holy books" of the other religions of the world. I can tell you that **nothing** compares to the Word of God, and **nothing ever written by man** can match the staggering complexity that is Revelation. When you factor all of the linkages to other passages in Scripture by symbol and phrase in, Revelation turns the entire Bible into the most sophisticated computer-friendly **matrix** of all time.

In addition, if I were God and I wanted My people to know about the end times, I would not **go out of my way to make it hard for them to understand**. I would make it plain and straight-up. But I would require my people to have a working, in-depth knowledge of **all** of Scripture. Revelation can't seem to make it through a single sentence without linking by symbol or phrase into multiple places in the Bible. I would want to make the **Master Outline for the End Times literally true**, so that there would be no confusion about **subjective interpretations**. This is precisely what Peter warns us about in his second letter.

*"²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any **private interpretation**, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."*
-- II Peter 1:20-21

It's always that **private interpretation** thing that gets us into trouble. Just remember, dear friends, **subjective interpretation** is always **private interpretation**. So when I take a symbol anywhere in the Bible that is **not explained** in the passage in which it is contained, and **make up an interpretation for it without FIRST seeing where else in the Bible it is contained**, I am doing **exactly** what Peter expressly forbid us to do. In fact, almost without fail, the reason a symbol or phrase is not explained in a passage is because **God already defined it for us earlier in His Book!** We do not have enough room in this book to document all the places, particularly in the New Testament, where so-called "scholars" have taken a symbol, like the fig tree in Matthew 24:32 and completely distorted what Jesus actually said, even though they have the correct interpretation **right in front of them!** I shouldn't take time in this article to explain that passage, but it will help you to understand why I become so overwrought when I see this kind of thing happening from the pulpits of America. Let's take a close look at the actual passage itself, and examine what Jesus said, point by point.

*"³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, **when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?**"*
-- Matthew 24:3

After the ugly confrontation in the Temple, Jesus had stormed out angrily. As He did, He encountered the disciples, who were busy sight-seeing instead of sitting at the Master's feet. When they pointed out all the tall buildings to Him, He told them that not one stone would be left on another and continued on His way all the way to Bethany. There, He climbed part of the way up the Mount of Olives, entered the Garden of Gethsemane, and sat down to cool off, both physically and emotionally. It was then that four of the disciples, Peter, Andrew, James and John, came to Him and asked Him about the prophecy He had uttered. Clearly, if Jerusalem was going to be destroyed so thoroughly, they didn't want to be in the neighborhood when it happened. Actually, they asked **three** questions, not one. Here they are:

1. **When will these things be?** (When will they happen?)
2. What will be **the sign of Your coming?**
3. What will be **the end of the age?**

I've discussed this at great length several times in other Episodes, so I'm going to give you the Reader's Digest version of Jesus' answer. First of all, He answers their **last** question **first** because it is fresh on His mind. That's just human nature, and Jesus was, after His birth and prior to His resurrection, totally human. Never forget that fact. Everything He did while here in Earth, He did as a **man filled with the Holy Spirit**. Verses 4-14 talk about the **end of the age**. Verses 15-20 answer the question about when the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple will occur and verses 21-31 answer the question about **the Sign of His Coming**.

Here's that breakout one more time, because it tends to get confusing:

<u>Question #</u>	<u>Question</u>	<u>Passage Devoted to Question</u>
1.	When will these things be?	Matthew 24:15-20 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Abomination of Desolations spoken of by Daniel in the Holy Place b. Those in Judea must flee to the mountains c. Don't take anything d. Pity on pregnant and nursing women e. Pray flight not on Sabbath or winter
2.	What will be the Sign of Your Coming?	Matthew 24:21-31 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. There will be (a) Great Tribulation b. Nothing like it has ever happened before c. Unless shortened, no life left on planet d. False Christs and false prophets will appear e. The coming of the Son of Man will be like lightning that is so bright it covers the whole sky (east to west) f. This will happen over Jerusalem (where the body [His own] is, dead, that's where the eagles (angels, perhaps?) will be g. The sun will be darkened h. The moon will be blacked out i. The stars (meteorites?) will fall from heaven j. The powers of the heavens will be shaken k. THEN the sign of the Son of Man will appear l. All the tribes of the Earth will mourn m. They will see the Son of Man coming on clouds with power and glory n. He will send His angels with the great sound of a trumpet o. They will gather together His elect
3.	What will be the End of the Age?	Matthew 24:4-14 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Don't let anyone deceive you b. Many will come in My name, deceiving c. You will hear of wars & rumors of wars d. All these things must come to pass e. But the end is not yet f. Nation will rise against nation

<u>Question #</u>	<u>Question</u>	<u>Passage Devoted to Question</u>
3.	What will be the End of the Age ?	g. Kingdom will rise against kingdom i. There will be famines j. There will be pestilences (plagues) k. There will be earthquakes in various places l. This is just the beginning of sorrows m. They will deliver you up to (the) Tribulation n. They will kill you o. You will be hated by all nations for My Name sake p. Many will be offended q. They will betray one another r. They will hate one another s. False prophets will rise up and deceive many t. Lawlessness will abound u. The love of many will grow cold v. He who endures to the end shall be saved w. This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world x. And then (and only then!) shall the End come!

Man! That's quite a list, isn't it? I count **five separate things to look for** regarding the literal fulfillment of **the destruction of the Temple** in A.D. 70 by Titus and the Roman legions. Did all those things happen? Yup! Then, when Jesus answers Question #2, He lists **fifteen things** that will precede the **Sign of His Coming**. But it is with Door #3 that Jesus really opens up the future, to show the disciples what is going to happen immediately before the **End of the Age**. By the way, did you happen to notice that the Rapture does not come until the **very end of all these things???** **Hmmm???** **I'm waiting to see that hand. Yes! Toldjaso!** A careful reading of the Olivet Discourse **in the correct order** almost immediately destroys any credibility that a Pre-Tribulation Rapture has. Go ahead. Go back and read through the list and tell me where the Rapture occurs. That's right. When He sends out His angels and they gather His elect from one corner of Heaven to another (one of the other Gospels adds **and the earth**) to the list, so we've got not only the dead in Christ returning with Him to receive their resurrection bodies (from one end of Heaven to another), we've also got the Rapture of the prepared portion of the church (5 wise, 5 foolish, 2 in a bed, 1 left, 1 taken). Bing badda bing, as they used to say in Philly!

Here's the sad part: I had to tell you all of **that** to tell you **this**. After telling His disciples **all of those things that are going to happen**, He then makes the following statement before He changes the subject slightly.

"³² Now **learn this parable from the fig tree**: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So you also, **when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!** ³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away." – Matthew 24:32-35

Now, what did Jesus just say? I have heard it preached from the pulpits of small and large churches. I have heard it preached repeatedly on TV. "**Brothers and sisters in Christ, Israel is the fig tree! Yes, saints of God, when Israel comes into the land, know that His return is right at the door!**" Wait just a minute! You say that **Israel** is the fig tree? Tell me, **where do you come up with that one???**

What did Jesus just spend **three answers** and **44 separate points** saying? Brace yourself, 'cause I'm gonna shout this out:

WHEN YOU SEE ALL THESE THINGS TAKE PLACE!

What things? Excuse me? Were you not listening? When all the events listed by Jesus in regard to the Sign of His Coming and the End of the Age come to pass, **then** His return will be at the very door! The parable of the Fig Tree has **absolutely NOTHING to do with Israel! Period!** Oh, yeah, it **sounds** good and preaches great, but it is 100% **subjective**, not **objective**. It is not an interpretation based on **Scripture interpreting Scripture**, or even taking the passage in totality and **in context**. It is an twisting of the Sacred Scriptures, based on someone's **PRIVATE INTERPRETATION** of the passage, **totally disregarding the interpretation ALREADY PROVIDED BY JESUS HIMSELF!**

This, then, is the moral condition of the church in America and the world today. We have teachers, pastors, evangelists, "prophets" and, yes, "apostles" who think absolutely nothing of twisting the Word of God, taking it out of context, and bending it to their own desires, to placate all of the people with itching ears who fill the pews of their churches. Simply put, it is an abomination. Jesus and his half-brother James both made it very clear what will happen to these kinds of teachers.

*"¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whoever therefore **breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.** ²⁰ For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."* – Matthew 5:18-20

*"¹ My brethren, **let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.** ² For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body."* – James 3:1-2

And finally, the dreadful punishment listed in Revelation for those who **add to** or **take away from** the precious, holy Word of God.

*"¹⁸ For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;** ¹⁹ **and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.**"
-- Revelation 22:18-19*

What horrible fates! Would you want all the plagues listed in Revelation tearing at your mortal body, or, worse yet, tearing at your **immortal** body in the Lake of Fire? And do you want to lose your share in the Eternal City, the New Jerusalem and have your name blotted out of the Book of Life? Dear friends, we simply do not take God seriously. He means **exactly** what He says. And all of these things will come upon those who play games with the Word of God and overtake them and consume them alive.

For you, dear friends, I have better hopes, as Hebrews 6 says. Because you are reading this book, you already hold a healthy reverence for **the** Book. Handle it carefully, my brother and my sister. It can give you life, but it can also bring you death if you mishandle it. It is dynamite in more ways than one.

Having established the **incorrect** ways to interpret Scripture, we now have to turn our attention to **rightly dividing** the Word of God regarding the End Times and the Rapture of the church. Alas and alack, we have run out of time today, so come back tomorrow when we encounter a huge group of people from **Every Nation, Kindred, Tribe and Tongue**. See you then!

Day 29 – Every Nation, Kindred, Tribe and Tongue



“⁹ 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, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “*Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!*” – Revelation 7:9-10

In positioning the Rapture accurately, it is important to remember a few key points that I made yesterday but did not expand on. If you will remember, I told you that the Bible is a clear illustration of a principle called **Progressive Revelation**. That means that as we move from, say, Genesis through to the end of Deuteronomy, we should expect to see God unveiling Himself incrementally to mankind. In the Garden, Adam and Eve knew virtually nothing of the Holy One except that He visited them each evening and talked with them, leading them step by step in their personal development. They were, after all, children in adult’s bodies, naïve and easily misled. It was that very fact that gave Lucifer his edge over us. He was millennia old, very wise and very good looking. I am sure that he could have talked anyone into doing anything. He deceived a full 1/3rd of the Hosts of Heaven, so Eve surely presented no challenge. After the Garden, man’s relationship with God completely collapsed. Granted, there were a few good men along the way, but by the time of Noah, a preacher of righteousness according to Peter, he and his family were the only ones left on the planet who had any relationship with God at all. Instead, mankind’s thoughts were continually on nothing but evil.

After the Flood, we find man’s relationship with God taking a major stride forward in the person of Father Abraham, the Father of Faith. It was Abraham to whom God spoke, identifying himself as **el Shaddai, God Almighty**, or, perhaps more accurately if we understood the times in which he lived, the **Most Powerful God**. In Abraham’s day, mankind worshipped a plethora of so-called deities and idols, trees, bushes and pretty much everything from rock to eternity. To say that mankind was confused about God would be the understatement of all time. From Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and the 430 years in Egypt, man’s understanding of Who God is stayed pretty much the same. Then, under the administration of Moses, our relationship with Him and understanding of Him took a quantum leap. The Lord informed Moses at the burning bush that although He had been known to Moses’ ancestors as **el Shaddai**, from now on He was to be called **Yahweh**, the **One Who Is**. Now the Lord began to reveal to His newly-selected people that not only was He the most powerful of all the gods, He was in fact the **One God**, and that everything that existed was because He had made it. For those of you who might say, “*But Pastor Ray, those kind of statements are made all the way back in Genesis!*” I must remind you who wrote Genesis. That’s right. It was Moses. During the 40 years in the wilderness, thanks to some good advice from his father-in-law Jethro, Moses finally managed to get free of overseeing fights over whose chicken had done what to whom and concentrated on writing down what God was telling Him for those who would come after him. There are times when I chafe under the burden of not being able to minister the way I want to, but because I am locked up with the Lord, I find that I have had time to put into writing all the things that He has shown me and the revelations about Revelation that He has given me. God willing, perhaps those who come after me will find that what I have written is a strength and encouragement to them, drawing them closer to God just as what Moses wrote has been a bedrock of faith for both Jew and Gentile alike.

The understanding of the Almighty stayed about the same through what scholars call the Verbal or Non-Literary Prophets; men like Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah, Jonah and others who prophesied on behalf of the Lord, but who did not write their words down. When we reached the time of the Literary Prophets, however, the revelation of the true nature of God and His relationship to mankind took another great leap forward. Men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel all were given astounding revelations about the future of our planet. They were shown that the Lord fully intended to include the Gentiles in His plan for salvation, that there would be a New Heavens and a New Earth and many, many more things about Who God is and what His plans were for the future.

With the death of Malachi, however, man's relationship with God came skidding to a halt for another 430 years until the advent of John the Baptist, a.k.a. the Elijah to Come. With John, a call to repentance went forth to all men. The reason? The Kingdom of God was imminent (at hand). Later on, Jesus would begin His own ministry by preaching the very same things that John had preached until his incarceration by Herod over Herod's live-in mistress, Herodias, the wife of Herod's brother Philip.

With Jesus, man's whole understanding of God suddenly lunged forward at high speed. God was not, He said, a terrible, angry, distant God. Rather, He was a loving Father, who desired that all should come to salvation and who was terribly grieved by the fact that so many of His children chose not to do so. Without Jesus, our religion would be all rules and laws, with no Holy Spirit to indwell us and be our friend and comforter. With all due respects to all the other world religions, none of them can hold a candle to the offer made by the followers of Jesus Christ. Not only does God love you, an astonishing revelation to people who have never heard the Gospel before, but He sent His only begotten Son to die for you in your place so that you might have eternal life with Him as an adopted son. America is so Gospel-saturated that we have lost the sense of shock and awe involved in finding out that there really is only **one** God and that He **loves** you with an everlasting love. To the vast majority of the people of the world, their god is just one of a multitude who cares nothing for them as individuals. Even Islam, which preaches that there is but one God, has nothing to match the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Ever wonder why they always seem so mad over there? **They feel unloved and unwanted by the very deity they claim to passionately love and serve.** There is no greater anger than the rejection which someone feels when their love has been ignored or rejected by a significant other. There is no more significant other than God Almighty. Not only do the descendants of Ishmael feel rejected by their **natural** father Abraham, they also feel rejected and ignored by their **Supernatural** Father as well. I suspect that most of their anger and aggression towards Jews and Christians in particular is because we claim that we actually get to spend time with our Father, and that He delights in us and wants us to come into His Company. That has to gall people who spend half their time face down on a prayer rug, crying out in futile pain to a "god" who does not answer them now or ever. I read recently of a former Hindu, now a powerful evangelist for the Lord in India, whose mother repeated the name of her god **one million times**, thinking that this act of devotion would bring her to his attention. When nothing happened, she became despondent and took her own life, convinced that her god did not care whether she lived or died.

Even as we walk through the Four Gospels, we see Jesus saying time and time again, "*You have heard it said...but I say unto you*", laying down a whole new foundation for interaction between man and God and man and man. Christianity is the most revolutionary step forward in the history of man's relationship with his Creator. But even then, the Lord was not done. The next major step would be to introduce the Gospel to the Gentile nations, a task which God ironically assigned to a militant, rigid Jewish theologian named Saul who later on became Paul the Apostle. His Gospel to the Gentiles, based exclusively on justification by grace through faith and not of works lest any man should boast rocked the early Jewish Christian church, steeped in Jewish traditions and legalism. If not for the fact that the Lord sovereignly poured out His Holy Spirit on the household of Cornelius while Peter and some of his friends watched on in amazement, Paul's theology might never have been accepted by the Jerusalem Council. But accept it they did, and as a result, the Gospel to the Gentiles has washed across every ocean until Christians account for 1/3rd of the Earth's population. Even now, major revival is going on in India among the "backward" castes, and some estimates say that India, once less than 3% Christian, is now over 25% Christian and moving forward rapidly.

Now we come to our own age and the rapid approach of the end of that age as we know it. Suddenly, the Lord is once again pouring out revelation about Revelation so that we can understand it fully and be prepared for the events it clearly warns will come. Line by line, precept by precept, God had carefully and methodically unfolded His Master Plan for Man to us as we were able to comprehend it and accept it. Even within the Word of God itself, there is a clearly established hierarchy which one must place Scripture into, particularly when trying to comprehend what is going to happen and in what order. Ironically, Jesus' statement about the **first being last and the last first** seems to have a second application above and beyond what I will share with you in another article. It would seem that those things which were written **last** about the End Times must be given **first** priority in understanding them, and those words which were written **first** must be given **last** priority. Let me explain.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ is exactly what it says it is: **a direct, personal revelation from Jesus Christ in His glorified, resurrected body as the Son of God**. There can be no higher form of revelation. In fact, Christ spends the first eight verses of Chapter 1 explaining exactly how awesome and wonderful He really is, now that the burden of mortal flesh no longer hinders him physically and clouds many things which He knew before He became flesh and now knows again once He has regained eternal, immortal status. Now He knows **everything**, from the beginning to the end because He **is** the Alpha and Omega, First and Last, Beginning and End.

Next in line in order of authority are the Four Gospels, where we get to meet Jesus as **Son of Man**. Wrapped in flesh, He was subject to all the limitations that we all have as human beings. He got tired. He got hungry. Even on the cross, He was thirsty. We don't like to think about this, but He also had to go to the bathroom just like the rest of us. Fortunately, Scripture wisely does not deal with that subject. He got mad. He wept. He was tempted in every respect like us **yet without sinning**. And the astonishing, seemingly impossible thing was that He did all of this **without sinning**. Yes, He was born sinless, without the sin nature which we have talked about over the last day or so. Since the sins of the **fathers**, not the **mothers** are visited on the children even unto the fourth generation, it was possible for a human being to be born without sin only if **no human father** was involved. The curse of the law of sin and death is a genetically transmitted marker found in the male "Y" chromosome. It has not been discovered yet as we decode the human genome, but when it is found, if ever, we will discover that it causes the mitochondria in our cells to wear out, fray and unravel, bringing about cellular death and with it the death of the body in general. Always remember that Jesus did **nothing** He did here on earth during His time of ministry as the Son of God. Had He done so, it would have instantly cancelled and defaulted His attempt to redeem mankind. **A man, Adam**, had thrown mankind's right to immortality away. Only **another man, a second Adam**, could rightfully reclaim that privilege.

As a human, Jesus was also subject to temporary limitations on His understanding of the will of the Father. His natural human brain was not sophisticated enough to wrap itself around the things that He understood as the Word of God before the foundation of the world. In order to become human, He had to divest Himself of His divinity and take on the form of a servant. That meant damping down His awesome power and anointing to a level that made him indistinguishable from another other human. He also had to let go of a vast amount of His infinite knowledge for a season in order to function within the parameters of the human intellect. We find Him making statements about how quickly He will return, only to retract those statements later on in His ministry when He realized that it was going to take much longer than He originally thought it would. Such limitations are not sin. God's definition of sin is **rebellion against the known will of God**. If you know what to do and don't do it, for you that is a sin. If you don't know or understand, you will still receive a beating, but it will be a mild one, not a severe one. The severe ones are for those of us who have walked down the road towards eternity hand in hand with Him and then done something frightfully stupid and rebellious. **That** kind of stupidity will get you a whuppin' behind the barn fer sure!

We also find him saying that neither He nor the angels in Heaven know the time of His return, but only the Father. Why? Because the Father is dwelling in full Divinity, revelation and power in that parallel universe we call Paradise or Heaven. As such, He is subject to absolutely no limits on His being, knowledge or power. But because His precious, only begotten Son had to pass from there to here, certain sacrifices had to be made, and certain limitations had to be imposed. Later on, after His

resurrection, when the disciples asked Him if He would now restore the Kingdom to Israel, He sidestepped the question, telling them that the information they sought was strictly on a **need to know basis**, and, frankly, **they didn't need to know!** Had they known that nearly 2,000 years later, the church would still be weak and compromised, having yet to fulfill the Great Commission and make disciples of all men, they would have become disillusioned and might well have quit, deeming the task impossible. After all, even Jesus Himself was initially convinced that the disciples would not be able to go around to all the cities of Judah before His return. As He matured in His ministry, He began to realize that this project was going to take longer, a **lot** longer. Again, this is not sin. It is simply the process of learning, growing and **making mistakes**, and even Jesus Himself made them. Now, I know that may sound like heresy to some of you, but consider the things I have just shared with you. I could take you to dozens of Scriptures that show the same pattern of trial and error, growth and understanding, growing in **wisdom and stature and favor with God and man**. Consider His ministry. When He first came out of the wilderness, He returned not only filled with the Holy Spirit, a condition He had been in when He was driven into the wilderness by the Spirit for the express purpose of being tempted by Satan, He also carried the **power** of the Holy Spirit. Most Christians never achieve this level of anointing. It requires absolute sacrifice and total devotion to God, a focus and a separation that very few of us are willing to give the Lord. He began His ministry with the miracle at Cana, turning water into truly outstanding wine, as documented by the wine steward at the gathering. From there, it was preaching in some synagogues, first in Capernaum and other localities. Immediately, people began to be healed and demons began to come out. The first time one came out, it occurred in the middle of a church service and let out the secret that He was really the Son of God incognito. From that point on, Jesus forbade any of the demons to speak until He encountered another demonic possession situation that He had never seen the likes of before. There were so many demons in the man that even through the gifts of the Holy Spirit were at work, discerning of Spirits in particular, Jesus could not properly identify the "Strong Man", the chief demon in charge of that poor man's life. So He had to ask a demon to provide information. Frankly, I have had to do the same thing on a few occasions. I also found that most demons are not particularly bright. I have some fascinating stories about that, but not today. Jesus had to learn how to exercise the power and authority that had been given to Him. He did not automatically know or understand how to wield this power that He possessed.

In His ministry techniques, He would begin ministering in home settings, something He tried to do even after His Name became so big that no town could hold the crowds that came to see Him, hear Him and be touched by His wonderful, holy hands to receive healing and deliverance. Soon it became obvious that He would have to move out of a home setting to a synagogue setting and finally to deserted places far away from metropolitan areas where large crowds of 20,000 or more could be accommodated. Even so, the press of the crowds was so great that He was literally forced into the water by the Sea of Galilee, and had to creatively recruit a fisherman named Peter. Shortly thereafter, realizing that it would be physically impossible for Him to complete this task by Himself, He spent an entire night in prayer, and then called 12 of His followers into a training center relationship with Him. After He had thoroughly taught and equipped them, He sent them out to see what kind of success they would enjoy. Frankly, He no more knew what would happen than you and I. Remember, He was operating under the restraints of being human. His singular advantage was the fact that He had an incredible relationship with the Father through the Spirit, something that most of us just dream of. When the 12 returned with a gloriously victorious report, He first calmed them down, then rejoiced Himself that it had worked, and then immediately appointed another 70 and sent them out to do the same thing. He had learned how to multiply His efforts through discipleship.

Many years ago the great German evangelist Reinhart Bonnke, who focuses on the African continent and has a powerful healing anointing, made a decision that he was going to lay hands on as many people as possible one night at a crusade. 10,000 people later, Bonnke was at the point of physical exhaustion. "Jesus!" he cried out. "What am I to do? There are too many of them and not enough me!" "Tell them to lay hands on **themselves**" the Lord replied. "It does not matter whose hands are used. They are healed by faith anyway." An astonished and relieved Bonnke tried the Divine recommendation the very next day. When it came time for praying for the sick, Bonnke instructed the people to lay hands on themselves and believe that God was able to heal them based on their faith right where they stood. The number of healings that day was more than double the previous high. Bonnke had learned a valuable lesson.

So it was with Christ. It is not blasphemy to say that He, too, had to struggle with His human limitations and learn as He went. It is only to His eternal glory that, despite all of the dead weight that He had to carry around in the form of the flesh and all of its desires, He walked pure, spotless and sinless until the very moment when He said, "*It is finished!*" **Before** He was born of a virgin, He was **the Word**, all God and not man at all, part of the Trinity, second in authority to the **Lord**, but in authority over the **Spirit**. While He was in human flesh, after His conception but prior to His resurrection, He was **fully human** and **not God at all**. Yes, Peter was right in that He was the Son of God. But He operated in **none** of the power and authority He might have commanded as such. He told the unruly mob sent to take Him prisoner that He could easily have commanded more than **12 legions of angry angels** had He chosen to. But to have done so, He would have violated the terms of the agreement. Everything had to be done **as a man to redeem man**. But after His resurrection, ah, dear friends, that was another matter altogether! Now He was both **fully God** and **fully man**, clothed in what would be the prototype for the resurrection bodies of all mankind, in His full glory and power once again, and now with full understanding and knowledge of Who He Was and What He Was About. Now He was untouchable, so full of radiant energy immediately after His resurrection that He had to caution Mary Magdalene not to touch him. Doubtless He would have had to heal her of radiation burns had she embraced his blazing hot flesh. In Revelation we see Him as He really is now, so full of radiant energy that His eyes look like flames of fire and His face is like the sun shining in full glory. Just imagine. And yet, while He was here with us, He was also gentle Jesus, meek and mild. How amazing!

So, in order of priority and authority, statements made by Jesus **as the Son of God** must take precedence over things that He taught and said **as the Son of Man**. Amazingly enough, if you use Revelation as a snap-down grid to follow the course of events and then add in all of the things that Jesus said and did in the Gospels, everything matches perfectly. There are a few seemingly minor discrepancies between the Olivet Discourse and Revelation, but those are easily explained and understood when you realize that He was speaking extemporaneously as the Son of Man on the Mount of Olives. In Revelation, He is unrolling an official edict, a detailed plan thought out to the most miniscule detail by the **Father**, who then presented it to **Him** so that He could present it to **John** who in turn could present it to **us**, so that **I** could present it to **you**.

After Revelation and the Gospels, the next logical step down in authority are the **Epistles** written by the **Apostles**, such as Peter, Paul and John, followed by other equally godly and anointed men such as Jude and James. Again, if you take everything written in their works and match it up by symbol and phrase to Revelation, everything matches perfectly!

The final pieces in the puzzle are the Old Testament **Prophets**, whom Jesus said longed desperately to look into the things which the Apostles walked in every day, but were not permitted to or perhaps able to. Again, when you take what Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Daniel, Zechariah, Malachi and all the others say back to Revelation by symbol and key phrase, every piece of the puzzle fits perfectly!

This, then, is the Doctrine of Progressive Revelation. I could have listed all of the hundreds of Scriptures that go into it, but I have confidence that you will be like the Bereans and search the Scriptures daily to see if these things are so. You will find, if you study and meditate on the Word of God as deeply as I have, that you will be forced to come to the same conclusions that I have, and those conclusions will not only set you free, but empower you and encourage you in your faith in a way you could never have imagined. Everything Jesus did, He did as a man. I am a man. You are a man. Elijah was a man of like nature to us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and not a drop fell from the sky for 3½ years. In 2007 I went to India and prayed a similar prayer. Granted, I had to pray it three times before it "took", but when it did, the rain stopped falling in the middle of monsoon season, the sun came out, the ground dried up and the workers were able to complete the construction of the orphanage we were building. For three weeks, there was a one-hour window around Narsapur in every direction in which no rain fell whatsoever. When we were getting ready to leave, some of the leaders came to me and asked me to remember to turn the rain back on when we left. Unfortunately, I was unable to do it by myself. It took an impassioned intercession period by my wife, who went storming about the house almost shouting in tongues to loosen the faucet in the heavenlies. Nonetheless, it was a human that stopped the rain and another human who started it again. Spend a

little time thinking about the things I have said in these first six pages. I have opened the door for you to a level of revelation that you might never have walked in unless I took you by the hand and led you there. Take some time and walk around inside this new revelation of Christ's power in you. Rejoice, not that the demons are subject to you, but rather that your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. And then absorb the concepts that I have unfolded for you. They will provide the foundation for both of us to proceed on this wonderful journey through the revealed Word of God.

With those foundations in mind, we can **finally** get to the theme Scripture at the top of this article. I know it probably drives you crazy when I spend half the article setting the stage for the topic, but, given the vast amount of bad teaching and bad hermeneutics (the principles of studying the Bible) out there, particularly among the Pre-Trib camp, I find that I have to spend as much time **un-teaching** as I do **teaching**. Simply put, as long as an **un-truth** (that's a nice word for a **lie**) is firmly established in the minds of the people, they will be unable to accept the **real truth** when it is presented to them. That's why I have to go to such great lengths on topics as elementary as the Fig Tree of Matthew 24. I first am compelled to show you why what is popularly taught and believed is completely untrue. Once that has been established in your minds as a fact, I can then present the real truth to you and you will be able to accept it. Sorry about having to do it that way, but Pre-Trib theology is so firmly embedded in the soul of American Christianity that we live in a state of constant denial about the things that are happening all around us.

If you look closely at Revelation 7:9, we are immediately (as always!) presented with a **list** of identifying characteristics and symbol and phrase links to other passages in the Bible. This list of items will, properly interpreted, anchor us firmly where and when in the timeline we are supposed to be. Let's review the passage and break it down.

"⁹ 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

Now, I rightfully claim, as do the others in the **Pre-Wrath** camp, that Revelation 7:9 clearly marks **the Rapture of the Church**. Can I support such a premise? Let's do the "list" thing and find out.

1. The group represents a **great multitude far beyond the ability to count it**. This is exactly what we would expect to happen at the Rapture, when believers from all over the world will be sky-lifted. Some years ago, I did a little experimental math to try and determine what might be a reasonable figure for the total number of people who will soar upward in the *parousia* (that is the Greek word I alluded to earlier that means the same as the Latin *rapere*). I began with the projection that there will probably be about 8 billion or so human beings on the planet at the time when everything really starts to get ugly and people start to die, first by the thousands, then by the tens of thousands, and finally by the millions. Incidentally, I also have calculated, based on information in Genesis and some Hebrew traditions about the size of Adam and Eve's family, that the population of the planet would have been about the same size at the time of the flood. There's a whole teaching there that I don't have time to get into today that I deal with in our college classes about the amazing relationship between Revelation and Genesis. Of that 8 billion, approximately 1/3rd of that is nominally classified as Christian. Notice I said, "*nominally*". We know from Jesus' teaching in Matthew 24-25 that **only half of the wedding party will be allowed in**. I've talked about that principle at great length elsewhere. But we are not ready to separate the sheep from the goats or the wise virgins from the foolish just yet. First, we have to whittle down the population of the earth a bit. Although the events of the first Four Seals will cause some attrition, it will only be minor compared to the events of the 5th, 6th and 7th Seals. As we have already discovered, the 5th Seal is the dreaded **Tribulation** which everyone is in such a hurry to avoid. If 1/3rd of the 8 billion people in the world at that time are nominally Christian, that would make the "Christian" population of the globe about 2.9 billion. The massive defection from the Church as men become offended, betray one another and hate one another for His Name's sake will drop at least 1/3rd of that number out, so let's say for arguments sake that defections alone will take our numbers down to about 2 billion. In addition, wide-spread violence and Muslim-inspired beheadings will probably account for another

500 million, taking our count down to 1.5 billion. The horrific physical events of the 6th Seal will wipe out a significant number of humans in general, further reducing Christianity to perhaps as little as one billion people. But despite all that, the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins clearly teaches that only **half** of the wedding party was actually **ready to go and had that extra supply of oil (the Holy Spirit) needed to carry them through till the Bridegroom returned**. If my understanding is correct, this could further decimate Christianity to only about 500 million souls, but each and every one of the individuals would be born again, filled with the Holy Spirit, on fire for God and willing to both live and die for Him regardless of the cost. Actually, I have a sneaking suspicion that 500 million may be a little too small. It is my personal theory that God is going to **tithe the Earth**. I strongly suspect that of the original 8 billion inhabitants of the planet, only about **800 million** will be raptured. That represents 10%, or a tithe, of the Earth's population. Only time will tell if my estimates are correct or not, but I suspect I'm not far off in my figures. Even so, John had never seen a crowd of 800 million people before. In fact, according to census estimates that I have seen, the **entire population of the Earth** in John's day was only about **200 million**. That fact makes John's prophecy about a **single army** of 200 million even more amazing or fanciful, depending on your point of view. Who knew, in his day, that the population of the planet would explode geometrically in the last 2,000 years, or that two nations, India and China, would both be able to boast a census **5 times the total population of the Earth when he lived?** Benny Hinn currently holds the record for single crowd attendance, having drawn **7 million** to a single service in India some years ago. Now, imagine a crowd **100 times larger than that!** The only way that anyone could assemble such an enormous group of people would be in the Rapture, when what I suspect are your guardian angels will swoop down from the upper atmosphere and catch you up, transmuting you as you go into your new resurrection bodies. Watching from above will be Christ, of course, and all of the saints who have gone before us and died in the Lord, along with the angels charged with gathering them up from the four corners of Heaven. Now, picture these **two groups of believers** gathered together in one place in Heaven. There's no telling what the total number would be, but there is no doubt that it would be staggering, and, as John put it so very well, "**a great multitude that no one could number**". Here is one final thought for those of you who support the Pre-Trib position that the Rapture takes place in Revelation 4:1 when the Lord speaks to **John and John alone** and tells him to "*come up here*" so that He can talk to him about "*things which must take place after this*". Now, knowing what you know about not taking Scripture passages out of context and not changing the clear and obvious meaning of passages under terrible Divine penalty, can you really support the theory that John represents the church? No? I didn't think so. It's all right, though. The important thing is that you now **know the truth**, and that truth will set you free.

2. This group of individuals is the most **culturally and ethnically diverse group of individuals ever assembled in the history of the Earth**. They represent, I suspect, a **perfect cross-section** of mankind. In America, we labor under the cherished illusion that Heaven is only for white, middle-class, upwardly mobile people located in the Midwest and the Deep South. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, while Christianity is largely moribund in Europe, which will aid and abet the rise of the Anti-Christ from the Germanic tribes, and in retreat in America, the Gospel is exploding at an enormous rate in South America, Africa, India, China and covertly among the women of the Middle East, who listen secretly to such sites as TBN over the internet while their Shi'ite husbands are rattling sabers and shooting Kalashnikov rifles into the air. Americans who make the Rapture are going to be astonished at the fact that us white folk are going to be **in the minority!** Red and yellow, black and white, we are **all** precious in His sight! In fact, I further suspect that if you took all the individuals who will be standing before that Throne and blended their skin colors together in a Sherman Williams paint can shaker, the color that would come out would be a light brown color, with the slightest tint of red in it, the same color as Adam and Eve, and, ironically, the same color as the red loamy soil by the River in the Garden from which Adam was formed. Everything in God's plan comes full cycle. Nothing is left to chance, and nothing is left undone. What an incredible, marvelous God we serve!

3. Lest there be any confusion about where this incredible event is taking place, John documents clearly that it will be **before the Throne** and **in front of the Lamb**. How will everyone get there? Allow me to give you a theoretical but highly probable scenario as to how it will happen. The Bible clearly says that "**the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout and with the voice of an archangel**" (I Thessalonians 4:16). Paul further tells us that "**God will bring with Him (Jesus) those who sleep (have died and gone to Heaven) in Him**" (I Thessalonians 4:14). How will He bring all the righteous dead whose spirits currently reside in that alternate universe called Heaven back to Earth? Well, Matthew then tells us that "**And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**" That means that the "strike force" approaching the Earth from outer space will consist of Jesus, the righteous dead who have been waiting patiently in heaven for the redemption of their bodies, and the angels assigned to gather them up and transporting them back to the edge of our atmosphere. After all, angels have wings and we don't. They can fly in ways that we cannot possibly imagine and we cannot. But accompanying this group will be another set of angels with a slightly different assignment. Mark adds that "**And then He will send forth His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven**" (Mark 13:27). Clearly, one set of angels has the assignment of gathering up everyone in heaven and returning them to the edge of the atmosphere. From there, they will plunge them back into our planet's ground and sea and the **dead in Christ will rise first**. (I Thessalonians 4:16). Once the **Resurrection** has taken place, Phase II of the **Swat Team Operation Skylift** will take place. The angels assigned to you and me, assuming that we are still alive and still faithful to the One who is always faithful to us, will then swoop down and pull us **bodily** up off the surface of the planet at an astonishing rate. Were our mortal bodies to remain the same, we would surely die as a result of the process. But, as always, the Lord has an answer. Paul further tells us "**Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (die and go to Heaven), but we shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed**" (I Corinthians 15:51-52). An amazing thing will happen as we rocket skyward. In some mysterious manner which we do not yet understand, but which must have a firm scientific basis, our mortal, frail bodies will **transmute** into resurrection bodies, eternal, immortal and indestructible. These bodies will match the kind of bodies that the dead in Christ had received in their Resurrection only minutes before. And all of us will match the One who is the first fruits from the dead, Jesus the Christ, the only begotten, living Son of the Eternal God! Paul deals extensively with this topic in I Corinthians 15, and I recommend it to you for your reading pleasure, along with I Thessalonians 4 and II Thessalonians 2. These chapters will bless your soul and give you hope and peace in a troubled time. Having then gathered everyone to be Raptured/Resurrected at this time (there will be others later on), the entire expedition then **pulls back from the front lines of the battle for a very special party in Heaven**. In the meanwhile on Earth, the heavy guns have been brought in and a **full scale assault on the planet** begins as the **7th Seal** opens and continues until Revelation 19:11-21, when Christ and the invading armies of Heaven return, ready to do battle with Satan and rebellious mankind and to re-take the ground originally held by Heaven during the Garden of Eden phase of the operation.

There is, of course, much more to this story, but we have run out of time again today! So please, "*packa your ladies and grabba your babies*" and **everyone come back tomorrow** when we will finally answer the question that Paul Newman and Robert Redford first asked in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*; **Who Are Those Guys, and Why Do They Keep Following Us?**

Day 30 – Who Are Those Guys, and Why Do They Keep Following Us?



¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. – Revelation 7:13-15

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid? What on earth do they have to do with Revelation and the End Times? Actually, the title of today's teaching is a tongue-in-cheek adaptation of one of the single best movie lines of all times, taken from *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, starring Robert Redford and Paul Newman. As Butch and Sundance are being pursued by a determined and talented vigilante committee, they try unsuccessfully again and again to throw them off their trail. Finally, as Butch and Sundance stand on top of a large rock outcropping looking down into the valley below, they spy the vigilantes hot on their trail once again. In exasperation, Butch turns to Sundance and says, "*Who are those guys, and why to they keep following us?*" That classic line is not dissimilar to the comment made to John by one of the 24 Elders. His question was "*Who are these arrayed in white robes and where did they come from?*"

Before we can answer that question, however, we have to backtrack just a little bit to finish covering our foundation Scripture from yesterday, Revelation 7:9-10. We had been analyzing the passage to make sure that it really and truly referred to the Rapture, and nothing else. We had first established that such a large group of people could only be taken out of the Earth in a single event by the Rapture, since it draws from those who died in Christ awaiting the Resurrection, righteous Israel who came out of Abraham's Bosom when Christ ascended, and the Bride half of the church who were ready when Christ finally returned. Secondly, we had determined that the ethnic composition of this great mass of humanity was evenly distributed and that they all had to be in Heaven, since they were standing in front of the Throne of God and in the presence of the Lamb, Christ Himself. There are those who argue that this event is taking place on earth, but there is no rational basis for that claim. Christ's Throne will not be established until Revelation 20, when He finally gets to sit on the Throne of His Father David for 1,000 years, and then sits in His Bema Seat during the Great White Throne Judgment between the destruction of this universe and the creation of a new one.

As we examine this scene, there are still a few symbols that deserve our attention, so let's take a look at them, continuing our numbering scheme from yesterday's writings.

"⁹ 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, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" – Revelation 7:9-10

4. It says that all of the people there are **clothed in white robes**. So what does that mean? Here is another place where careless scholarship might just invent something, but that is not how we or any other good Bible expositor approaches the matter. By rules of interpretation, the explanation for what a white robe symbolizes should first be looked for in the passage itself. Since there is none there, what is our next logical step? Another cardinal rule of interpreting Biblical passages is to look at the passage **in context**, to see if we can find the answer there. Often we can, many times within the chapter or circumstance that we are looking at. But again, no explanation is found. We have exhausted two checkpoints. What is our next option? The answer to that question is to **look for an interpretation of the symbol within the Book of the Bible in which it is found**. This makes both Scriptural and common sense, because God has been dealing with the human author of the Book, such as the Apostle John, and in a more general context, is likely to have covered the subject either before or after the passage in question, but still within the Book. It is at this 3rd level that we will find the answer we are looking for. Before we go there, it is appropriate to discuss the 4th option as well. Virtually none of the symbols found in the Book of Revelation have any explanations attached to them. This has allowed careless scholarship and wild speculation to take over the interpretation of this greatest of Books. If ever a book should **not** be handled carelessly, however, **this is the one**. God warns us specifically that if we **add to** the words of this Book, He will add the **plagues found in this Book into our lives**. He further warns that we **take away** the prophetic words of this Book, that He will **take away that person's right to have his name written in the Lamb's Book of Life, the Holy City and the things written in Revelation**. That prospect is even more frightening than the first. Unfortunately individuals and sometimes even denominations do this with a callous and casual disregard for the consequences they will face in the future. If we look closely at this warning, it becomes obvious that although God considered **adding to** His Word to be a great offense, He considered **taking away** to be **far more serious**. How can I say that? Because although having the plagues of Revelation added into your life and active in your body is a horrible thought, it is not nearly as horrible as **losing your salvation for all eternity**. There is another reason for this warning being posted at the very end of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. You see, by comparing Scripture to Scripture, we will discover in just a second that these very words are used to close and seal the two main covenants between God and man, the old Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant, established through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

The original Mosaic Covenant was given on Mt. Sinai, and as soon as the "ink was dry" on the two stone tablets carved by God, the rebellious children of Israel had already violated the business contract which God had established with them. That rightfully made Him very angry. All along the way to Canaan, there was violation after violation. Finally, God had had enough.

"¹ Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you.
² **You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.** ³ Your eyes have seen what the LORD did at Baal Peor; for the LORD your God has destroyed from among you all the men who followed Baal of Peor." – Deuteronomy 4:1-3

To understand what this stipulation is all about, remember that God has just sovereignly entered into a **business contract** with Israel. It is the equivalent of a signed legal document with a notary's stamp on it. Once a contract has been signed, sealed and delivered by and to both parties, it becomes **illegal** for either party to alter the contract without permission of the other person. If you wanted to buy my old '94 Town Car, you would make me an offer. If I thought the offer was fair and reasonable and it enabled me to purchase another car that got better gas mileage, we would agree on the terms, draw up a sales contract, shake hands (which is good enough for me most of the time) and both sign the document in front of a Notary Republic, who will certify that everything was done legally. If you had agreed to give me \$6,000.00 for my oldie but goodie, then for you to arbitrarily send me a check for \$5,000.00 without my approval **in writing and notarized again** would be grounds for a lawsuit, particularly if you were already in possession of the car. Always remember: **breaking the rules is a very bad thing**.

God's contract with Moses and the Children of Israel, however, was not a **mutually agreed-upon contract**. It was God who approached Abraham and made him an offer he couldn't refuse. It was God who established the terms of the contract. And there were only reward and punishment clauses for Israel, not God. Why? Because He **is** God. The Bible says that "*God is not a man, that He should lie, nor the son of man, that He should change His mind*" (Numbers 23:19). There was no danger of God breaching the contract. There was, however, serious concern that **man** would break the covenant, and he did, repeatedly. This kind of one-sided, top-down contract is called a **Suzerainty Contract**, where one party is **superior**, like a king and one party is **inferior**, like his subjects. This double sided threat of punishment puts closure on the document. Many times in the Middle East, contracts would be entered into where both parties cut themselves with a knife, and allowed their blood to mingle together. That meant that each party was bound to the contract under penalty of death if he reneged on his obligation.

In repeating the terms of violation in the Mosaic Covenant and adding stringent, eternal punishments to both violations, the Lord clearly is saying to us that this warning does not apply only to the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is my firmly held conviction that since Revelation closes the New Covenant, the warning of Revelation 22:18-19 applies to the entire **New Covenant**, which would encompass not just Revelation but the **whole New Testament**. I am also firmly convinced that if the plagues issued for adding to are not applied to a person in this mortal life, they must then be applied to that person **for all eternity in their resurrection body**. I know that's scary, but we vastly underestimate the seriousness of violating the Word of God. There is one final observation that I must make about this subject, and then we will return to the Revelation 7 passage. In order to do so, I must once again tell you a story. I've got a million of them. If you live long enough, you meet a whole bunch of good people and a whole bunch of crazy people, and each one of them gives you a story that you can talk about to illustrate any point you want to make.

Many years ago I was preaching on a Sunday afternoon in the little church we were borrowing in Clarksville when a dear friend showed up. Her name was Lou Smith, and her late husband John had been responsible for bringing Christian TV to the metropolitan Louisville area. They had suffered together and been blessed together. Now Lou was ministering on her own, and the Lord had spoken to her to come to our service that afternoon. We welcomed her, and I began my message. It was on this very subject. Lou was thunderstruck because this was a question she had always had in her mind and had never found an answer for. We were grateful that God so graciously answered the question to her satisfaction. As we analyzed the passage, I commented that I finally knew **why** God felt that **adding to** was more serious than **taking away**. Having dealt with both kinds of groups, I knew what the results were, and it didn't take much to see what the impact on the people was. If a denomination or pastor **added to** the Word of God, as many cults and fringe groups do, it was still possible for a member of that organization to be **saved, sanctified, filled with the Holy Spirit, healed, delivered** and anything else that the Word of God already promises. I have seen repeated examples of this in certain Pentecostal groups. They honor the Word of God rigorously, but somehow manage to tack all sorts of additional legalistic rules and regulations onto the covenant. Despite all the unnecessary baggage, people can still push their way through and get what they need from God. It always used to irritate me that certain Pentecostal groups had ludicrous rules about what their women could and could not wear, even to the exclusion of jewelry and makeup. Knowing the freedom that we have in Christ, I just couldn't justify it in my own mind. Yet they also had a remarkable penchant for getting their prayers answered, often more frequently than mine! The reason? Their passion, intensity and zeal for Christ. God knew where their hearts were, and overlooked all the extra junk they were lugging. They still had the New Covenant hidden safely in their heart. But when we began dealing with the religious groups and denominations that specialize in **taking away**, I could quickly see why God would call for the ultimate punishment. In **taking away** from the legally agreed upon Covenant that God had sovereignly entered into with man, these leaders and denominations were also **taking away** the right of their people to be saved, healed, sanctified, filled and delivered! As an example, I have

had many run-ins with a certain very legalistic denomination that constantly teaches that **healing is not for today**, and that the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including the baptism in the Holy Spirit and **speaking in tongues** are not only not for today, but are in fact **a manifestation of the devil himself**. Lord have mercy on these Pharisees! Jesus said of people like this that they prevent their people from entering the Kingdom of Heaven and won't go in themselves. If you have been taught that healing passed away with the Apostles and you believe that lie, then it makes it virtually impossible for you to be healed supernaturally. As a result, when serious debilitating illnesses strike members of these congregations, they die without any possibility of being healed by God. I have personally been to two funerals myself, one of a little girl, the other of a grown woman, both of whom died of cancer even though many of their friends believed in divine healing and prayed constantly for them to be healed. Every prayer that they uttered was cancelled by a faithless, unbelieving prayer uttered by their relatives, who did not believe. The grown woman even had an open vision where the Lord showed her that if she would only believe that He would heal her. I would think that this would be enough to run on. But in opposition to that vision she had a friend who was a "learned" university professor who stoutly maintained that all these things had passed away. The arrogant counsel of her friend caused her to doubt her own vision and she eventually lost hope and passed away. I view such events as tantamount to murder. Small wonder, then, that God **takes away** the right of such people to eternal life!

We now need to get back to those **white robes** that we were talking about a while back. Remember that I said that the **interpretation for the symbol** could be

- (1) In the passage itself
- (2) In the general context of the situation, such as in the same chapter
- (3) In the same book by the author
- (4) Somewhere else in the Bible, almost always **before** the symbol is used again.

It only makes sense for God to do it that way. If He took time to explain each and every symbol each and every time it is used in the Bible, the Book of Books would be ten times larger than it is now. Instead, **God presents and defines the symbol once**. He then expects you to do your homework and study to show yourself approved. That way, He can reintroduce the symbol again and again and almost develop a programmer's mentality toward the Bible, particularly Revelation.

To illustrate what I mean, when a programmer writes a program, he will break the program up into various tasks, such as **calculate-hours, compute-gross, calculate-withholding** and **print-check**. Then, when the main program requires the use of the logic in those modules, the programmer doesn't write the same code all over again. Instead, he **calls** the subroutine by its **name** and the computer pulls in the appropriate module and executes it. This simplifies the programming process immensely. In addition, our computing world long ago moved away from **names** and began associating modules with **pictures or symbols**. Get the drift? The Revelation of Jesus Christ is an enormously complex **computer program** that **calls** for various concepts (modules, if you will) by either their **name** or their **symbol**, such as a white robe. As a student of the Word of God, when you see the phrase "*White robe*" used in a passage, you know **immediately** what that passage is referring to. There is no need to explain the concept all over again. But if you are careless and lazy in your study of the Word of God, then these phrases and symbols become a **mystery** to you, something you **don't understand** and generally **misinterpret** and misunderstand as a result. Such is the case with Revelation 4:1, The Fig Tree and many, many other symbols scattered throughout the Bible. In every case, great damage is done by the misinterpretation of symbols and phrases by lazy so-called experts who won't take the time to do the research themselves to discover what God really meant. In so doing, they generally not only **take away** the true meaning of the phrase or symbol but also **add to** the gap created by the misinterpretation by creating an **alternate, incorrect interpretation for the phrase or symbol**. In so doing, they become **doubly guilty of sin against the Lord and His Holy Word!** Yeah, I know I'm tough, but I have seen the tragic

results of carelessness and laziness in the shepherds and the inevitable significant damage that it does to the sheep. No wonder God gets mad!

Whew! Sorry about that. Maybe we can get back to those **white robes**, OK? (My bad!) In Revelation 6, white robes are given to the people who are beheaded during the Tribulation.

" ¹¹ And **white robes** were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." – Revelation 6:11

An alternate phrase that equates to **white robe** is **fine linen**, always a white color, and it is in this second phrase that we gain our understanding of what wearing white really means.

" ⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in **fine linen, clean and white**: for the **fine linen is the righteousness of saints**." – Revelation 19:8

" ¹⁴ And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, **clothed in fine linen, white and clean**." – Revelation 19:14

There's a lot more in the Old Testament, for wearing white also is supposed to signify **the favor of God, being of the highest quality, pure and holy** and a number of other concepts. The old movie western phrase about "good guys wearing white hats" is a whole lot more true than we realized. In fact, Heaven has only one color preference in its wardrobes:

" ⁹ I watched till thrones were put in place, and the **Ancient of Days** (the Father) was seated; **His garment was white as snow**, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened." – Daniel 7:9-10

" ¹¹ But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. ¹² And she saw **two angels in white** sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³ Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." – John 20:11-13

" ¹ Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake; for **an angel of the Lord descended from heaven**, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. ³ His countenance was like lightning, and his **clothing as white as snow**." – Matthew 28:1-3

Clearly, white robes symbolize **righteousness, righteous deeds (an alternate translation), purity and holiness**. Please remember that **the entire group** raptured in Revelation 7:9 **have white robes on**. To me, that says that they were **already** walking in holiness and sanctification, pure and holy before God. The simple truth is that **sin is incompatible with Heaven**. Even in the desert, when Nadab and Abihu offer their drunken, unholy fire before the Lord, fire came out of the Pillar of Smoke and Fire and consumed them where they stood, making them their own Sin Offering according to the newly-implemented Mosaic Law. The Lord makes it very clear that nothing unclean or unholy will ever be allowed in the New Jerusalem. With that in mind, what then does that say about the massive over-emphasis on cheap and easy grace in the church today? Are their robes pure white? I think not! Will they gain access to the Throneroom of God? What do you think? Quit making excuses about not praying, fasting and taking the moral high ground in life. Each time you sink down into that which is deep, dark and dirty, you soil your own robes all over again. Christ, having cleansed you by His precious Blood, now wants you to walk worthy of the high calling which you have been given. I will absolutely guarantee

you that the Bride portion of the church **will** be pure and holy **before** She is caught up in the air. Not sure about that? Let me refresh your memory.

" ⁶ *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!'* ⁷ *Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, **for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.*** ⁸ ***And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*** ⁹ *Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'"* *And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."* – Revelation 19:6-9

I hate to bring this up, but there is another great misconception about righteousness. I have heard it taught and preached repeatedly that it is God that cleans us up. Nothing could be further from the truth. Having trouble with that one? Here's some more Scripture to make your stomach queasy.

" ¹⁹ *Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His,' and, '**Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.***' ²⁰ *But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor.* ²¹ *Therefore **if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.*** ²² *Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue **righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.***" – II Timothy 2:19-22

To those who think that they will participate in the Rapture and in the Eternal City while living a life style filled with carnality, lust, greed and sinfulness, **think again**. It is not God's job to clean you up. **It is your job**. God will help you, but you must **cleanse yourself**. When you were a small child, you were **unable to bathe yourself**. You lacked the understanding and the physical ability. Your coordination wasn't there yet. But as you **grew up**, you not only **gained the ability** to clean yourself, it became **your obligation and duty to do so**. I get so tired of modern Sluggo children and adults, who are so lazy that they won't even wash their elbows and have body odor that will knock you into next week. When I was in India in 2007, I saw staggering poverty; far beyond anything that we can imagine. Even the poorest of us on welfare is still living like a king compared to the living conditions in that country. But for all of the people that I greeted and prayed for, and that amounted to thousands over the two weeks we were there, **not one person** had a problem with body odor. The Indian people are scrupulous about person hygiene. The men strip down to what amounts to a pair of fluffy BVDs and wash in the canals, even though the canals themselves are often fetid and rampant with disease. Even knowing that, they still bathe each and every day. The women also wash publicly, but fully clothed, so that their modest is always maintained. Their dark hair is always lustrous and clean and they comb it regularly. I didn't see a single Indian girl with an acne problem, either. They have a pure, innocent beauty that makes most of our young girls in America today look like tramps and hookers. We suffer badly from the comparison, and it is small wonder that the Muslim world calls us the Great Satan. America has been exporting uncleanness for a very long time now, courtesy of Hollywood. Rest assured, no such person will have any part in the everlasting, eternal joy, peace, rest and power that the New Jerusalem is saturated with. It would be best if you started cleaning up your act **now**, because for some of you there is a lot of scrubbing to do!

5. One final note in today's teaching: we need to talk about **palm branches** for just a second. Most of the time when you hear teaching about palm branches, it involves the concept of **praise**, and that's true. But as I researched the phrase **palm branch**, I was reminded of something I technically knew at some point in my life, but apparently had filed in the rear of my database and forgotten. It seems that **palm branches** were used in what is alternately referred to as the **Festival of Booths** or the **Feast of Tabernacles**. What is that, you ask? Time for more Scripture!

³⁹ Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a Sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a Sabbath. ⁴⁰ And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, **branches of palm trees**, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and **ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days**. ⁴¹ And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month." – Leviticus 23:39-41

¹⁴ And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should **dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month**: ¹⁵ And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and **palm branches**, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. ¹⁶ So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim." – Nehemiah 8:14-16

What was the Feast of Tabernacles all about and why did the Children of Israel celebrate it? Well, we didn't quite read far enough in Leviticus, so let's look at a few extra verses.

⁴⁰ And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, **branches of palm trees**, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. ⁴¹ And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴² Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: ⁴³ **That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.**" – Leviticus 23:40-43

God wanted his people to remember that they were nomads, totally dependent on Him during that time in the wilderness. To dwell in booths was to remember that there was a time in their forefather's lives **when all they had was God, but that was more than enough!**

The Feast of Tabernacles also signifies, at least to me, that **God was dwelling right along side of them.** There was very little distance between the camp and the Pillar of Fire and Smoke, hovering above the mobile Tabernacle. His Presence was a constant presence in their lives, even though they repeatedly took that presence for granted. Now, in Heaven and later on in the New Jerusalem, there will no longer be any distance between God and His people either. One of the greatest passages in the Bible is found later on in Revelation, but it is appropriate to introduce it here as well.

² And I John saw the **holy city, new Jerusalem**, coming down from God out of heaven, **prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.** ³ And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, **Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them,** and be their God. ⁴ And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. ⁵ And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. ⁶ And he said unto me, it is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. ⁷ He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." – Revelation 21:2-7

It isn't just about remembering that we lived in tents, friends, it's about **God dwelling with us, in the midst of us.** No greater privilege could ever be afforded a simple human being. What peace! What joy! No more tears! Sorrow gone! Pain and death defeated! Halleluia!

But we aren't quite done with that passage, and I am compelled to include the **rest of the story**, to give you cause to pause, think, pray and repent so that you can have a part in the New Jerusalem.

"⁸ *But the **fearful**, and **unbelieving**, and the **abominable**, and **murderers**, and **whoremongers**, and **sorcerers**, and **idolaters**, and **all liars**, shall have their part **in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.**" -- Revelation 21:8*

Believe me, dear friend, you don't wanna go to that other place, nor do you want your friends and children going there either. It would be very wise to make a copy of this article and send it out to everyone you know. Many of them may laugh at you and scorn you, but at least your hands will be free of their blood if they themselves neglect so great a salvation.

I know this sounds like preaching, and it probably is, with a whole lot of information thrown in for good measure. As is often the case with me, I got carried away again and never did get to the subject of our title. We've run out of time today, so I guess we'll just have to open this book one more time so that we can ask ***Who Are Those Guys, Really?***

Day 31 – Who Are Those Guys, Really?



¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” ¹⁴ 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.” ¹⁵ Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.

– Revelation 7:13-15

Yesterday, we tried unsuccessfully to resolve beyond a shadow of a doubt that the vast crowd John saw in Revelation 7:9 was indeed the individuals involved in the Rapture. Unfortunately, so many side issues required clarification that we were sidetracked for a while. God willing, we will be able to put that issue and this entire Episode to rest in what is hopefully the final article in the Episode. Our discussion of the events surrounding the Seals and the Rapture will continue in far greater detail in **Episode 4 – The Crucified Bride**. If you have not already purchased that Episode, I urge you to do so immediately upon completing this book. In Episode 4, I unravel many other mysteries regarding the end times, including a detailed analysis of the Parables of Matthew 24 and 25 in which Jesus carefully outlines the criteria for punishment and reward at the End of the Age and a careful analysis of Daniel Chapter 7 and his dream of the four beasts, which ties into our current world situation and clearly identifies which countries will be in the Ten-nation Confederacy of the Anti-Christ. I know that I’ve probably taught you more than you are able to absorb at the moment, but the teaching must not stop at this point. There is so much, much more that you must know in order to be ready.

Having said all that, we now immediately turn our attention to the question we asked yesterday, “*Who are those guys, and where did they come from?*” If you examine the scenario involved, it doesn’t seem to make any sense from a human standpoint. Why on earth would one of the Twenty-Four Elders bother to ask John such a question? After all, John just got there a short while ago, his spirit man having been pulled out of his body and through the open door of Revelation 4:1, through the stable wormhole connecting this universe to that other universe we call “Heaven”. Our mortal bodies can’t make that trip because the ravaging energies that accompany a wormhole would tear us to shreds instantly as soon as we reached the event horizon. But spirit, having come from God Himself, is by nature eternal, and cannot be destroyed. It is in this way that Paul also traveled into the “3rd Heaven” and saw things that he was not permitted to discuss. It is also in this way that great saints all down through history have traveled from this plane of existence to another, visited with the Lord and then returned. Resurrection bodies, on the other hand, are made of the atomic super-structure of that other universe and are also by definition indestructible so they can pass back and forth at will. We discussed that amazing concept at great length on Days 6-9. Ever since John had arrived “up here” to view and record “the things that shall be”, he had been confronted with a veritable whirlwind of images, most of which had left him gasping for air. And now they expected **him** to have the answer? Get real! No, the Elder was not asking John a question that he expected him to have an answer for. It was a **rhetorical question**, kind of like the time your mother caught you in the kitchen with your hand in the cookie jar and said, “*And just what do you think you’re doing???*” Instead, the Elder was posing the question precisely because he knew that John **didn’t** have the answer, but sincerely wanted to know. John, to his eternal credit, didn’t even try to venture a guess. He knew that all of this was already far beyond his mortal mind to comprehend. He did not yet know that it would take almost 2,000 years for mankind’s sum of knowledge to grow to a point where we would be able to even **start** asking the right

questions. In John's day there were only 200 million people **on the face of the planet**. Had he known that, would he have had the courage to record that an **army** of 200 million men would come out of the "Land of the Rising Sun"? There was no Japan when he lived, at least not in the form that it exists today. And who could have known that China alone would be the home of over 1.3 billion people? No, John respectfully replied to the Elder, "*Sir, you know.*" This reply not only implied that the Elder had the answer to the question, it also implied that John did not. It had the same humble quality about it that marked the Roman Centurion, perhaps Cornelius, who said, "*Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only **speak a word**, and my servant will be healed.*" (Matthew 8:8) Both men had walked with God long enough to know that the words of men mean nothing. Only the Words of God matter. Jesus said that Heaven and Earth would pass away but that **His Word** would never pass away (Mark 13:31). That is still as true today as it ever was and ever will be. Only the Words of God matter, on any subject. Once John had acknowledged to the Elder that he did not have the necessary information, it opened the door for the Elder to explain. And what he told John tells us a mouthful. As usual, we will take his response and turn it into a list. That helps us to focus on each individual thought.

(1) These people are the ones who have come out of the **Great Tribulation** (Greek *megas thlipsis*). In Episode 4 we devote an entire article to this phrase on Day 15. We will also do that here, and we will connect the dots for you so that you can see the results. Remember that we have taught you to connect **key phrases** and **symbols** together in researching the End Times. Actually, the principle works throughout the entire Bible, but since Revelation is **nothing but** key phrases and symbols, it becomes a necessity. Any other method will produce the most bizarre, insane theories and I have read a whole lot of them! If you know your Bible, a little bell should have rung in your head when you saw the phrase **Great Tribulation**. By now, you already know the pecking order of the Seals. To refresh your already over-loaded memory (feel a bit like John about now?), here they are:

- (a) 1st Seal - White Horse - World War in the Northern Hemisphere
- (b) 2nd Seal - Red Horse - Ethnic Genocide in the 10/40 Window
- (c) 3rd Seal - Black Horse - Crop Failure in the Northern Hemisphere
- (d) 4th Seal - Pale or Dappled Horse - Plague & Famine in the Southern Hemisphere
- (e) 5th Seal - The Tribulation - A Global persecution of Christians and Jews
- (f) **6th Seal - The Great Tribulation - Global Earthquake, 144,000 & Rapture**
- (g) 7th Seal - The Wrath of God - God punishes rebellious mankind, satan

Why do we say that the 6th Seal is the **Great Tribulation** and distinguish it from the Tribulation itself? Because the Bible makes that distinction itself, if examined carefully and interpreted **properly** and not carelessly. To back up our claim, let's turn back to the Olivet Discourse and look at it carefully.

If you will also remember, yesterday I told you that the Olivet Discourse is an answer in response to the three-part question asked of Jesus by Andrew, Peter, James and John (Mark 13:3). Jesus, in return, gave a three part answer, but not in the exact same order as the questions were posed. Remember, He was (1) speaking as the Son of God, with limited revelation and (2) was also speaking extemporaneously, off the cuff. It's not like Jesus answered every question posed to him as if he were some stilted university professor.

Matthew 24:15-20 deals with the question "*When will these things be?*" and clearly refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70. As such, it is not relevant to us at the moment. It may have additional prophetic significance if it a **doubly fulfilled** prophecy, but that is a very problematic subject, riddled with wild speculation that we cannot support in context with reasonable Scripture, so we will leave it sit where it lies.

Matthew 24:4-14 deals with the question "*What will be the end of the age?*" That makes what Jesus will say **highly** relevant to our topic. We made a list out of this passage on Day 28, so we won't do it again. Please do a little flipping back and forth if you have to. Here are the high points:

- (a) In Verse 7, Jesus says that **nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom**. In one simple sentence, He has connected us to the 1st and 2nd Seals, because the Greek word which the King James incorrectly translates as **nation** is really the Greek word **ethnos** from which we get our phrase **ethnic group**. That connects itself to the **2nd Seal**, when **men shall slay one another** (Revelation 6:3-4). The other word which the KJV also interprets incorrectly is **kingdom**, the Greek word **basileia**, which more properly rendered is **administrative center**, such as the capital of a **nation**. As such, this reference ties itself to the **1st Seal**, where the rider is given a **crown** (symbolic of a king) and is told to go out **conquering** and **to conquer**, something that only nations, not individuals or ethnic groups, do. It is critical to remember that the Olivet Discourse is extemporaneous, and therefore not strictly sequential. Jesus addressed the issues as the Holy Spirit provided information to Him, and His human brain was only capable of processing so much information at one time. We've also talked about that at great length. Do you see why I have to spend so much time un-teaching what is wrong and then re-laying the correct foundation for you to make sense of all of this? I guarantee that if you sit under my teaching for a period of four weeks, you will never see your Bible the same again. I further guarantee that the blinders on your eyes will fall off, just like the seared corneas of Paul at Damascus and you will hold Jesus in a holy reverence that you never imagined possible. In addition, I guarantee you that the Revelation of Jesus Christ will make **perfect scientific sense** to you, and you will believe every Word contained therein, but with understanding and not blindly.
- (b) Verse 7 also says that there will be **famines and pestilences**. This connects to both the **3rd Seal**, with **wheat and barley crop failures in the Northern Hemisphere** and the **4th Seal**, where **plague and famine sweep through the Southern Hemisphere**.
- (c) Jesus then **jumps over the 5th Seal – The Tribulation – and proceeds directly to the 6th Seal**, where He mentions that there will be **earthquakes in various places**. Actually, if you read this passage carefully it should probably be read as *"there will be **famines in various places and pestilences in various places and earthquakes in various places**"*. That would match perfectly what the parallel passages of Revelation 6:1-8 and Zechariah 6:1-8 say. One of the critical aspects about the various Seals that everyone seems to miss is that **they are not global**, but restricted to a **particular 1/3rd of the planet**, either the **Northern Hemisphere**, the **Southern Hemisphere** or the **10/40 Window**. The number of recorded earthquakes all over the globe has increased dramatically in the last 100 years, as if something is getting ready to happen. This ties directly to the **mega-quake of Revelation 6:12-14**, where the various Tectonic plates are badly shattered and relocated, moving the mountains and islands situated on them as well. The **hyper-quake of Revelation 16:18-21** will eventually turn the shattered shards of the Tectonic plates into Tectonic Goo and the mountains and islands will collapse back into the magma. Many Bible scholars go into apoplectic shock when they can no longer directly connect the chronological dots of the Olivet Discourse with the chronological dots of the Seals. I have seen some of the strangest and lamest excuses for this supposed "contradiction". How stupid! If I were to be asked, off the cuff, to discuss **my own books**, do you think for one tiny minute that I could recall everything that I have written, **in the correct order**? Listen, let me tell you a little secret about myself. As you know, I have written these books **out of sequence**. There's a reason for that. I felt I needed to discuss the most relevant issues first, and then the non-critical issues. That's why our discussion of the 7 churches will be the **last** Episode written, although it technically may be the **second** one you read. I find myself constantly having to refer **back to my own outlines and books to remember what I said and exactly how I said it!** Jesus was the **Son of Man** in His earthly ministry, and was subject to the same human limitations as I am. There is absolutely no rational reason to get bent out of shape when an on-the-fly Q&A session doesn't match up jot and tittle with a formal presentation.
- (d) In Verse 8, Jesus takes a deep breath and warns the disciples that all of these events, encompassing the 1st through the 6th Seals, are just the **beginning of sorrows**. That statement, when properly understood, doesn't play well with the Pre-Tribulation camp.

- (e) In Verses 9-12, Jesus then directs His attention **back** to the **5th Seal**. How do I know that those verses refer specifically to the 5th Seal? Just listen to the list of things that will happen:
- [1] They will deliver you up to (the) **Tribulation**. How's that for a good starter, Bub ???
- [2] They will **kill you**. This ties directly to Revelation 6:5-11, where we see under the altar the souls of those **who have been slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held**. Close enough for you? No? Then how about Verse 11, where those same souls are told to rest a little while longer, until the number or census of their fellow servants **who would be killed, just as they were is completed?**
- (f) Jesus then goes on to say in Verse 10 that **because of these events, many will be offended, betray one another and hate one another**. This is the only possible outcome if the church has been steeped in **Pre-Tribulation Rapture** theology. If you have been taught, from pulpit to TV screen, that we are all going to fly out of here before our hair gets mussed and you suddenly find yourself on an executioner's block, I suspect that you might feel just a little betrayed. The same thing happened to the church in China in 1948 when the Communists invaded. Mao Tse-tung was the Anti-Christ and the Chinese Church was going to be raptured out before he could put his evil hands on them. That happened, **didn't it???**
- (g) Now that we have a huge block of disaffected ex-Christians who have rejected Christ because they were falsely taught that they would not have to suffer for Him, they are "*sheep without a shepherd*", so to speak. I am sure that Lucifer would be more than glad to provide deceived shepherds for them, and so **false prophets will arise and deceive many** in Verse 11. Hint: where will all these false prophets come from? How about **all the pastors and teachers who faithfully espoused Pre-Tribulation Theology and who now are humiliated and also reject the Gospel of Jesus Christ as being as totally false as the Rapture Doctrine which they so ardently espoused?** I have taught for decades that before there can be a *parousia* (catching away), there must first be an *apostocia* (falling away). This principle is known to every grain farmer in the world and is called **winnowing**, the separation of the **wheat from the chaff**. Hmmm... Did Jesus tell any parables about anything like that? I must share a brief story about this process. Many years ago I had a good friend named Steve Rexing who was a businessman and a farmer. Steve was also a very godly man and was treasurer of his little Presbyterian Church. I had been studying Jesus' parables on farming, and I posed a question to Steve. He put out quite a bit of corn. In Southern Indiana, corn grows very well, and the stalks would get 6 to 7 feet high, as high as an "*elephant's eye*" as the *Oklahoma* song goes. In the fall, when Steve would run one of his combines through the field, all that would be left of the tall stalks would be an inch and a half of stubble. I always wondered how the innards of that combine of his worked, and so I asked him one day. "Steve," I said, "*when you run your combine through a field ready to harvest, how does it separate the corn kernels from the stalk, the sheaf, the silk and the cob?*" "*You really want to know?*" he replied (almost sounds like the Elder in Revelation, doesn't it?). "*Yes*", I said, "*It's always amazed me*". "*Well*," Steve replied, "***It beats the hell out of it!***" with a wink of his eye. Once the stalk of corn reaches the interior of the combine, various devices strip the corn cobs off of the stalk, which is then ground up into fodder for the cattle. After that, other devices shuck the cob, removing the outer covering and the silk. Finally, the denuded corn cob is **beaten beyond belief until every single kernel of corn has been removed** and deposited through a tiny aperture into a safe and secure vat where **it is stored up for removal**. The cob is also ground up for fodder. And that, dear friends, is exactly how you tell wheat from chaff. You beat it up, and then toss it up into the wind. The wheat or barley or any other grain has some substance to it and falls back down to the ground. The chaff, having no substance or weight to it, is blown away by the wind. How do you tell a phony Christian from a real one? Maybe it's whether they speak in tongues or not? Nah. What about how they dress? Nope! How much religious jargon they use? Hardly. Then how, Pastor Ray, **how?** Jesus said that we would know them **by their fruit**. When we all get persecuted, killed, beaten and betrayed, some of us **will get what little remaining hell there is in us beaten out of us**. As such, we will rise to the occasion and shine like stars in the heaven, willing not only to live for

Christ but also to die for Him. Others, who do not have the fruit of the Holy Spirit abundant in their carnal, shallow, sinful lives, will be **beaten right into Hell instead**. Without a shadow of a doubt, **before the Rapture there will be a time of Winnowing**. Repeat it after me: **Before there can be a parousia, there must first be an apostocia**. I'll bet they didn't teach you **that** in your Sunday School classes either, **did they?**

- (h) In Verse 12, Jesus adds, almost parenthetically, that because **lawlessness will increase, the love of many will grow cold**. Read that sentence again. Compare it to our culture today. Doesn't it make your blood run cold? Friends, we may already **be** in the Tribulation right now!
- (i) Jesus finally adds that **he who endures to the end shall be saved**. I sense nothing that smacks of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture in that sentence, do you? For that matter, I see absolutely nothing at all in any of what Jesus just said about the End of the Age that could possibly support a Pre-, Mid- or even Post-Trib Rapture. Hmmmm...

That leaves us with one final question to answer: "*What will be the end of the Age?*" This question is answered in Matthew 24:21-31, and this is where the going gets really, really good! Again, we must make a list. Wait till you see what it reveals!

- (a) Jesus says that then there will be (a) **Great Tribulation**. Now, **you tell me**, does that phrase sound at all familiar? That's right! In fact, if we go to Strong's Concordance to check out the **Koine Greek** involved, it is, you guessed it, **megas thlipsis**, the **exact same phrase found in Revelation 7:14 !!!** Recall how we said that Revelation is connected to the rest of the Bible? Through a series of interlocking **key phrases** and **symbols**. This particular linkage is one of the most important in all of Sacred Scripture. From this point on, almost everything that Jesus describes will be **directly connected to the Great Tribulation**. If the 6th Seal is indeed the Great Tribulation, then there should be clear phrase and symbol linkages throughout this passage. Now we have to make a **list within a list!**

- [1] Jesus begins in Verse 21 by stating that there will never be a time of such great distress as this time in all the history of the world.
- [2] He then adds in Verse 22 that **unless those days had been cut short, prematurely terminated, no life (flesh) would have been left on the planet**. Clearly, we are looking at an **ELE (Extinction-Level Event)** here. Our geologists tell us that the earth has suffered as many as seven near-fatal blows already in our past, the most recent of which wiped out the dinosaurs. Whether we agree with their dating is irrelevant. The geological record clearly records events which have nearly destroyed all life on earth. You and I know of at least one: the Flood.
- [3] He says that **false Christs and false Apostles will arise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect**. Here He gets a bit out of sequence again, just as He did with the first five Seals. The event Jesus is describing will actually happen in the **7th Seal, the Wrath of God**, as the **False Prophet performs signs and wonders and calls fire down from heaven to support his claims for the Beast (the Anti-Christ)** (Revelation 13:13-15). Again, **this is permissible** because we are using **the Revelation of Jesus Christ as our timeline marker because it is a formal document rather than an extemporaneous discourse**. I hope all of this is making sense to you. The difference between Jesus as strictly Son of Man and afterwards in His combined nature as Son of God / Son of Man is enormous. If you don't believe me, just take a good look at Him in His divine dual nature in Revelation 1:13-18 and Revelation 19:11-16. Think that looks like anything close to a normal human being?
- [4] He identifies **where** His Second Coming will occur in Verses 26-28 by saying that "*wherever the carcass (His body) is (will be crucified, dead and buried), there will the eagles (an indirect reference to the angels) be gathered together*". Where was Jesus' body turned temporarily into a carcass? I know that sounds gross, but He said it, not me! The answer, of course, is **Jerusalem!** So if Jerusalem is the place where He was killed, then Jerusalem will be the very point where He returns in all of His power and glory. Isn't that only fair and appropriate? Talk about making a point! And, oh, yes, it was the Jews who killed Him, wasn't it? So would it also not be highly appropriate for

Him to appear directly over their heads, letting them know that they killed their highly-sought-after Messiah and have been waiting in vain for Him for nearly 2,000 years. No wonder they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an **Only (Begotten) Son**, as one grieves for a **First-Born (Among Many Brethren)** -- Zechariah 12:10, adapted slightly.

[5] Will the return of the Son of God be visible? You betcha! In Verse 27, Jesus says "*that as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be*". There is soooo much there! First of all, Jesus compares His Second Coming to **lightning**, and not just **any** lightning. We're talking about a thunderbolt that **covers the entire sky!** Now **that** is lightning! But there is something else really cool hidden in this verse, and it has to do with the **direction** in which the lightning will travel. In order for His return to appear as lightning **all throughout the world**, it would have to be **dark** all across the world. Normally, that would be considered to be an impossibility. While half of the earth has daylight, the other half has nighttime. But, given the traumatic, volcanic events of the 6th Seal, **the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light** just prior to His Return, because all of the ash and soot in the atmosphere will **reflect the sunlight back into space, causing a global blackout**. It will be precisely at that point in time that hundreds, then thousands, then millions of **brilliant points of light** will appear in the darkened sky, **starting directly overhead in Jerusalem, and then racing at the speed of light(ning) from the east toward the west**. They will appear over Europe and Africa first, then the Atlantic Ocean, then the Western Hemisphere, then across the Pacific Ocean, on to the Far East and then finally to the Middle East, closing the gap again directly over Jerusalem. As I wrote that last sentence, the Holy Spirit revealed something to me that I had never known before. **The direction of the appearance of the angels and their passengers, the righteous dead follows the exact path of the historical conversion of nations to the Gospel of Jesus Christ!** The Church **began in Jerusalem** on the Day of Pentecost. It then **spread through Europe**, moving **westward**. There was also some initial conversion in **Africa** in the form of the **Coptic Christian Church**. The Gospel then **leaped across the Atlantic** and totally saturated the **Western Hemisphere**, with **Protestantism taking North America** and **Catholicism taking Central and South America**. After that, there was a lull in the action again, as God prepared to hurdle the immense Pacific Ocean. But about 50 years ago, **revival broke out in the Far West, in China** and has continued unabated since then. There are probably more **true** believers in China than in any other part of the world. Once **Pre-Tribulation Theology** had been **discredited** by the coming of the Communists and the church in China had to once again read the often-neglected General Epistles of Peter and John where suffering for Christ is a normative experience, **explosive growth followed**, as it always does. A suffering church is always a growing church. We have real spiritual problems with prosperity. Always have. Always will until His Return. Traveling ever westward, massive revival has now broken out in **India**, where it is estimated that despite rapidly increasing persecution and the **open killing of Christians, generally with machetes (swords), the church has grown from less than 3% to perhaps as much as 25% of the nation**. There has never been as rapid a conversion of a nation of India's size in the recorded history of the world. Truly, the time is short. Finally, a **great wave of revival is quietly and secretly beginning in the Middle East, as women and children, terrorized by their Shi'ite, wife-beating, gun-brandishing husbands, are turning to such organizations as TBN via satellite and internet**. The Middle East and the portions of Africa directly south of it will be the final stage in the evangelization of the world, following the pattern laid down by Jesus almost 2,000 years ago. How wonderful! How marvelous! How beyond our understanding is the glorious mind of God! How I bow in shock, awe and reverence to Him who understands and creates all things! Glory be to God in the highest!

[6] In Verse 29, Jesus nails the timeline down for us beyond a shadow of a doubt. He says, **"after the Tribulation (capitalization my preference) 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 (or stability) of the heavens (or atmosphere) will be shaken.** We have finally come to the crux of the matter. What event follows the 5th Seal, the

Tribulation? The answer? **The 6th Seal – The Great Tribulation.** How can I be sure? The answer is simple. **Connect the dots.** Link **key phrase to key phrase** and **symbol to symbol.** Watch. It's easy. In fact, I'll do it for you.

Olivet Discourse Event

The sun will be darkened (24:29)

The moon will not give its light (24:29)

The stars will fall from heaven (24:29)

The powers of the heavens will be shaken (24:29)

Revelation 6th Seal Event

The sun became black as sackcloth of hair (6:12)

The moon became like blood (6:12)

The stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind (6:13)

Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up (6:14)

Dear friends, how much confirmation do you need to believe me? The Olivet Discourse and the Seals of Revelation have just **lined up perfectly**, or at least perfectly enough for a jury to render a decision. There is so much supporting evidence that our case for a Pre-Wrath Rapture just before the beginning of the 7th Seal is virtually unbreakable. This, dear friends, is why I stopped believing in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture and started supporting what I only years later was referred to as a Pre-Wrath Position. I searched the Scriptures for myself to see what the Bible **actually** said about the End Times, instead of relying on someone else's second hand opinion. I **studied to show myself approved, rightly dividing (using the correct principles) the Word of Truth.**

Oh, wait! We're not quite done yet, are we? Gosh, after all this time, I forgot something. **I forgot to get us Raptured!** Go ahead, slap me up-side the head. I deserve it. Omigosh! What a dummy!

- [7] Drum roll, please! Everyone ready? In Verse 30, Jesus says **"then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven (read that as an incredible number of individuals hovering in the upper atmosphere wearing white robes and glowing like the stars themselves!) with power and great glory".** The hosts of heaven are now positioned in the upper atmosphere, some with believers who have been "asleep in Jesus", some waiting for their passengers to be picked up on the surface of the planet. By the way, this **totally** destroys the false doctrine of a **secret rapture**, doesn't it? Ready? Here it comes! One... Two... Three...
- [8] Verse 31 says **"And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"** Mark 13:27 adds the phrase **"the earth"**, but we already discussed all of that.

I know that was a lot of research to do, but by doing so, we have conclusively connected, in context, the events which Jesus says not only will occur **just prior to His Coming**, but are also said to follow **after** the Tribulation. Jesus further identified this period of time as **(the) Great Tribulation** in Matthew 24:21. Now, to bring closure to this discussion, we must finally **return to Revelation 7** and John's discussion with the Elder.

¹³ *Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, 'Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?'* ¹⁴ *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

It almost begs the question, but I can't help pointing out that it would be impossible for someone to **come out** of the Great Tribulation unless they were already **in** the Great Tribulation. You can't get **out** of a tub unless you are already **in** the tub, and you certainly can't get **out** of trouble unless you are already **in** trouble!

Who are those guys, anyway? Where did they come from? They are those individuals who have **come out of the Great Tribulation, the 6th Seal, as identified in Matthew 24 and Revelation 6 by linked phrase and symbol, joined with those who came from Heaven with Christ according to I Thessalonians 4.** Their point of departure? **Some heaven, some earth.** Their destination? **Before the Throne. In front of the Lamb.** Their E.T.A.? **Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King. Very soon!** Their condition upon arrival? **Dressed in robes of white, washed in the precious blood of the Lamb.**

What will be the final disposition of these individuals? Do they have to fear for their salvation when, at the end of the Millennial Reign and after the destruction of the heavens and the earth, the Great White Bema Judgment Seat appears? The best way to answer that question and close this day's article and this entire Episode is to simply **tell you** what God has already **told us.** I pray that it will be a **challenge** to your character if you have been disobedient and a **comfort** to your soul if you are living for Him. May God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him! **Amen and Amen!!!**

*"¹⁵ Therefore they are **before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.** And He who sits on the throne will **dwell among them.** ¹⁶ They shall **neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;** ¹⁷ for **the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters.** And **God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.**" – Revelation 7:15-17*

This closes the 6th Seal and completes the Rapture. The next event will be a mysterious 20-year pause in the action, followed by the terrible 7th Seal, the Wrath of God. To learn more about these events, please order **Episode 4 – The Crucified Bride** and **Episode 5 – The Time of the Beast.** Just contact us at the address shown on the back of the front cover or on the **Meet Dr. Young** page. May God bless each and every one of you. Blessed is he who **reads,** who **hears** and who **keeps** these words (Revelation 1:3).

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. 1st Creature like a Lion
 - c. 2nd Creature like a Calf
 - d. 3rd Creature like a Man
 - e. 4th 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. 1st 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. 2nd 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. 3rd 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. 4th 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. 5th 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. 6th 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 /7th 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. 7th 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. 1st 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. 2nd 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. 3rd 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. 4th 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. 5th Trumpet / 1st 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. 6th Trumpet / 3rd 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 7th 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) -- 1st 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. 7th Trumpet / 3rd 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) -- 2nd 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) 2nd 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) 1st Bowl/Plague – Sores on people (16:2)
 - (b) 2nd Bowl/Plague – Sea dies/becomes like blood of dead man (16:3)
 - (c) 3rd Bowl/Plague – Rivers & Streams become like blood (16:4-7)
 - (d) 4th Bowl/Plague – Sun scorches earth (16:8-9)
 - (e) 5th Bowl/Plague – Beast’s kingdom blacked out (16:10-11) [Exodus 10:21-23]
 - (f) 6th 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) 7th 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. 2nd 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. 2nd 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) 1st – Jasper (21:19)
 - (2) 2nd -- Sapphire (21:19)
 - (3) 3rd – Chalcedony (21:19)
 - (4) 4th – Emerald (21:19)
 - (5) 5th – Sardonyx (21:20)
 - (6) 6th – Sardius (21:20)
 - (7) 7th – Chrysolite (21:20)
 - (8) 8th – Beryl (21:20)
 - (9) 9th – Topaz (21:20)
 - (10) 10th – Chrysoprase (21:20)
 - (11) 11th – Jacinth (21:20)
 - (12) 12th – 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

Day Title

Scripture

Episode One – The Revelation of Jesus Christ (20 Days)

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 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. <u>The</u> 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 |

Episode Two – Things That Are (15 Days)

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 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 |

Episode Three – The Things That Shall Be (31 Days)

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 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

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

Scripture

Hebrews 7:1-3
Hebrews 7:1-3
Hebrews 7:3
Revelation 5:1-4
Revelation 5:1-2
Revelation 6:1-2
Revelation 6:1-2
Revelation 6:3-4
Revelation 6:5-6
Revelation 6:7-8
Revelation 6:9-11
Matthew 24:3
Matthew 24:3
Revelation 6:12-14
Revelation 6:12-14
Revelation 6:12-14
Revelation 6:12-14
Revelation 7:3-4
Revelation 7:5-8
Judges 18:30-31
II Peter 1:20-21
Revelation 7:9-10
Revelation 7:13-15

Revelation 7:13-15

Episode Four – The Crucified Bride (34 Days)

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

Matthew 24:3
Matthew 24:3
Luke 21:24
Romans 11:25
Romans 11:25
Romans 11:25
Matthew 24:36-39
Matthew 25:1-4
Matthew 25:6-10
Matthew 25:20-21
Matthew 25:37-40
Matthew 20:8-16
Matthew 20:13-16
I Corin 3:12-15
Matthew 24:21-22
Matthew 24:15-20
Matthew 24:15-20
Daniel 2:31-35
Daniel 5:3-6
Isaiah 44:26-28
Daniel 2:41-43
Daniel 7:2-5
Daniel 7:2-5
Daniel 7:6
Revelation 13:11-14
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...Whoa! | 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**

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|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 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. Ray Young

Meet Dr. Young



Dr. Ray Young has been studying the **Revelation of Jesus Christ** for over 30 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 skilled author, having 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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