

**FOURTEENTH ANNUAL
"LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"
LECTURESHIP, 2006**

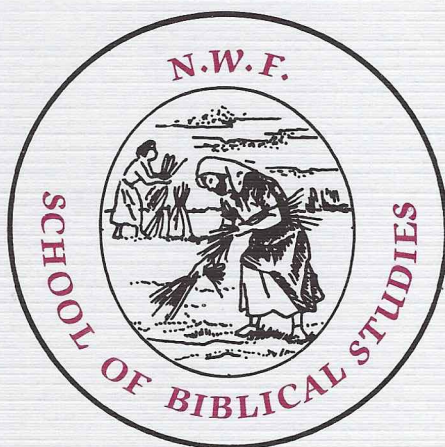
ESCHATOLOGY: "FINAL THINGS"

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"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

(Luke 10:2)



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**FOURTEENTH ANNUAL
"LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"
LECTURESHIP**

February 19-23, 2006

THEME:

**ESCHATOLOGY
A Study of Final Things**

Editor:
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FORWARD

This book contains 28 lesson outlines of the Fourteenth Annual "Labourers Together With God" Lectureship, which was held at the church of Christ at Milestone, home of "Northwest Florida School Of Biblical Studies" in Cantonment, Florida February 19-23, 2006.

We selected 28 subjects under the theme "Eschatology" to help men, women, boys, and girls to have a better understanding and to have a greater respect for final things. We hope these lessons will cause all to make preparation for the day of judgment. Twenty eight men were selected that we believe are capable of preparing and delivering these messages.

These books are free to those who attend the lectureship.

You may purchase VHS, DVD'S, and MP3'S from brother Jim Greene. CD'S and AUDIO TAPES may be purchased from Brother Jeff Orr.

*Kenneth Burleson, Director
February, 2006*

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The Last Works and the Last State

Rusty Stark

1. Texts

- a. The 'last works.' Rev. 2:18-19, *"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; ¹⁹I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."*
- b. The 'last state.' Matt. 12:43-45, *"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. ⁴⁴Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. ⁴⁵Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."* (See also Luke 11:24-26.)
- c. The 'latter end' or 'last state.' (ASV) II Peter 2:20-22, *"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. ²¹For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. ²²But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."*

2. Connection between texts:

- a. These texts are connected by the word 'last' or 'latter.' It is the Greek word from which we get our English word and the theme for this lectureship *'Eschatology.'*
- b. The passage in Revelation is very positive. It is spoken in commendation of the continued growth of the Christians at Thyatira.
- c. The passages in Matthew, Luke, and II Peter are very sobering, setting forth the possibility and the very real danger of apostasy.

3. Order of discussion:

- a. THE POSSIBILITY OF APOSTASY. Matt. 12:43-45; Luke 11:24-26; II Peter 2:20-22
- b. THE POSSIBILITY OF CONTINUED GROWTH AND FINAL VICTORY. Rev. 2:19

c. THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR LAST WORKS AND OUR LAST STATE.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE DANGER OF APOSTASY.

A. Matt. 12:43-45 (Luke 11:24-26)

1. In this text, Jesus compared the generation of the Jews living in his day (v.45) with a man who had an unclean spirit. The evil spirit departed from this man, but later returned with seven other, more wicked spirits. The 'last state' or final condition of this man was worse than the first.
2. This generation of Jews was aptly described as evil.
 - a. Jesus called them a generation of vipers (Matt. 12:34; 23:23), an evil and adulterous generation (Matt. 12:39; 16:4), a wicked generation (Matt. 12:45), and a faithless and perverse generation (Matt. 17:17).
 - b. Peter called the Jews of that day an untoward (crooked) generation (Acts 2:40).
3. How the illustration of the man with the unclean spirit applies to this generation of Jews is a matter of much discussion. The following facts seem to be helpful:
 - a. Israel had many opportunities for repentance and spiritual renewal. Throughout the centuries, God had called His people back to Himself. Sometimes they heeded and experienced temporary reform, but sometimes they did not. *"I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts"* (Isa. 65:2).
 - b. Whatever spiritual renewal the Jewish nation experienced, whether under Moses, any of the judges, Solomon, Hezekiah, Josiah, or even under Ezra and Nehemiah after the Babylonian captivity, it never lasted. They always slid back into evil. In Jeremiah 3, the Lord describes his chosen nation as 'backsliding Israel' three times and 'backsliding children' twice.
 - c. The generation of Jews in Jesus' day had experienced spiritual renewal with John the baptizer. His preaching was received joyfully by many people, but the Jewish leadership rejected him.
4. Now, Israel was in the process of rejecting its Messiah, Jesus Christ the righteous.
 - a. No wonder Jesus called them wicked, vipers, adulterous, etc.
 - b. No wonder He compares them to a man who, having been rid of a demon, allows the demon to return with seven spirits more wicked than himself. God gave

them the chance to escape evil and do right, and instead, they did more evil.

5. The history of Israel, and the behavior of the generation who lived in Jesus' day, serves as a sobering reminder of the possibility of apostasy. Their failures are recorded as examples to us (I Cor. 10:1-11).
- B. II Peter 2:20-22. This passage stands in clear contrast to the doctrine of eternal security (once saved, always saved). Some claim that a person who has been truly saved cannot fall back into sin. They say that if he falls back into sin he was never truly saved. Others admit that a saved person can fall back into sin, but they claim that he will still be saved in spite of the fact that he fell. This passage refutes both ideas. Notice these important points:
 1. The people under consideration are ones who had 'escaped the pollutions of the world,' and had done so 'through the knowledge' of Christ. It cannot be fairly denied that they were 'once saved.'
 2. Those people are 'again entangled' in the pollutions of the world and 'overcome.' Having been 'once saved,' they fell back into sin.
 3. The 'latter end' or 'last state' of such a man is worse than the beginning. How can such a person possibly still be saved but in a worse state than when he was lost? It would have been better for such a man not to have 'known the way of righteousness.' If this man is still saved, why would it have been better? Can any man be worse off in a saved condition than he was when he was lost? Without fear of contradiction, this passage sets forth people who were 'once saved' but were clearly not 'always saved.'
- C. These three passages (Matt. 12:43-45; Luke 11:24-26; II Peter 2:20-22) join many others in showing that people who were God's saved people can fall and can lose their salvation.
 1. The parable of the sower teaches this (Mark 4:1-20).
 2. Rom. 11:19-22 teaches that saved Gentiles, who have been grafted into the olive tree, can be cut off if they fail to continue in the goodness of God.
 3. Gal. 5:4, "...ye are fallen from grace."
 4. Heb. 6:4-6, Those who were 'once enlightened,' who had 'tasted of the heavenly gift,' who were 'partakers of the Holy Ghost,' and who had 'tasted the good word of God,' can fall away, and it is impossible to renew them to repentance.
 5. Even Paul, as an inspired apostle, was in danger of falling and being rejected if he did not fight against sin (I Cor. 9:27).

II. THE POSSIBILITY OF CONTINUED GROWTH AND FINAL VICTORY.

- A. Rev. 2:18-19, *"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; ¹⁹I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."*
- B. The last works of the Christians of Thyatira were more than the first works. Explanation:
1. They were continuing to grow. Their spiritual works were more at the last than they were at the first.
 2. They were not like the lukewarm church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:15-16).
 3. They were not like the church in Ephesus, who had left their first love (Rev. 2:4). Unlike Thyatira, their last works were not more than the first; in fact Jesus commanded them to repent and do the first works (Rev. 2:5).
 4. Thyatira was not like the church at Sardis, who had a good reputation, but whose works were ready to die (Rev. 3:1-2). The Christians at Sardis were not growing, they were fading. Jesus commands Sardis to remember, hold fast, and repent (3:3).
- C. This is good news for us.
1. From the example of Thyatira we learn that we don't have to apostatize; we don't have to fall away. We can 'grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ' (II Peter 3:18).
 2. God has given us the necessary equipment for final victory.
 - a. We can stand against Satan through the armor the word provides, and we can be victorious in the final day (Eph. 6:10-18).
 - b. The word of God provides all we need for all good works (II Tim. 3:16-17).
 - c. The word can sanctify us (John 17:17), build us up, and give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified (Acts 20:32).

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR LAST WORKS AND OUR LAST STATE.

- A. Important points to remember:
1. Our behavior determines our destiny.
 2. We determine our behavior.
 3. We can change our minds.

4. God will reward or punish us based on our final condition at the time of our deaths or at the return of Jesus (our 'last state' or 'latter end').
- B. Explanation and proof of these points:
 1. Our behavior determines our destiny.
 - a. This was true for Abraham who obeyed God when he was called to go out into an unknown country (Heb. 11:8).
 - b. It was true for the Israelites who were promised, "*If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land*" (Isa. 1:19).
 - c. It was true for Ninevah who repented at the preaching of Jonah (Jonah 3).
 - d. And it is true for us. Our behavior determines our destiny (Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8-9; II Thess. 1:7-9).
 - e. Consider Romans chapter 2. God will render to every man according to his deeds (v.6). Endurance in well-doing brings eternal life (v.7). Disobedience, rebellion, and unrighteous behavior results in indignation and wrath (v.8). Tribulation and anguish will be on everyone who does evil (v.9). Glory, honor, and peace will be on every man who works good (v.10).
 2. We determine our behavior. We are self-determining. Some deny this, but each man has the ability to choose his own behavior.
 - a. Joshua 24:15 demands a choice "*...choose you this day...*"
 - b. I Kings 18:21 demands a choice "*...How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him...*"
 - c. Neither heredity nor environment determine our behavior in any final or complete way. Both of these things influence us, but we can choose to overcome heredity and environment. Ezekiel 18 describes an evil man (vs.10-13). Note verse 14, "*Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like.*" By both heredity and environment, the son of this evil man should be evil. His father was evil, and the son saw all his father's evil ways. But the son is able to consider his father's ways and choose not to follow in those sins.
 3. We can change our minds. Again, Ezekiel 18 helps us with this matter. The man who once was determined to do wrong can decide to do right and turn from all his sins (v.21), and the man who has been righteous can turn away from his righteousness and commit sin (v.24).

4. The Lord will reward or punish us based on our final condition at the time of our death or the return of Jesus.
 - a. In the case of the man with the unclean spirit in Matthew 12 and Luke 11, no temporary escape mattered. When the unclean spirit returned with seven other more wicked spirits, the last state of the man was worse than the beginning. It is this last state that is important.
 - b. In II Peter 2:20, it was the last state or latter end that mattered. Those people once were washed, but their final condition, their latter end, was a return to the mire.
 - c. We must be ready for death or for the return of Jesus.
 - 1) Jesus emphasizes this great truth in Matthew 24:36-51. In this passage, Jesus teaches us to be concerned about readiness, about being found doing the right things when the master returns. Verse 42, *"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."* Verse 44, *"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."*
 - 2) This is also the point of the parable of the foolish and wise virgins (Matt. 25:1-13). The foolish virgins who had to go buy oil were not ready when the bridegroom came. But when he came those who were ready went in with him to the marriage (v.10). His conclusion is a command to *"watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh"* (v.13).
 - d. The New Testament clearly shows the importance of our last works and our last state in the following passages:
 - 1) II Cor. 5:9-10, *"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."*¹⁰*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."*
 - 2) I Thess. 4:13-5:10, In this comforting passage Paul reminds us of what will happen when the Lord returns (4:13-18), and then reminds us to live in such a way as to be ready for that day (5:4-6).
 - 3) II Peter 3:10-11, *"But the day of the Lord will come...the heavens shall pass away...the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."*¹¹*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what*

manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

CONCLUSION:

1. If Jesus were to return today, our last works and our last state would be of supreme importance. In fact, our last works would determine our last state. Are your last works more than the first?
2. Are you growing or growing weak? Is your light shining brighter or fading away? Since it is the last state that matters, let us be diligent to make sure our last works are more than the first.

Adaptation of a chart drawn by brother Warren (*A Brief Summary & Review*, Garland Elkins, Spiritual Sword, April, 1977, p 41).

Possible Stages Of Man According To 2 Peter 2:18-22

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
SINFUL	FORGIVEN	APOSTATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In bondage to sin – v.19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Escaped the pollutions of the world – v.20.• Escaped through the knowledge of Jesus Christ – v.20.• Knew the way of righteousness – v.21.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Again entangled therein and overcome – v.20.• Turn from the Holy commandment – v.21
Condition – lost (II Thess. 1:7-9)	Condition – saved (Titus 3:5)	Condition – Worse than lost <ul style="list-style-type: none">• worse than first state – v.20• Better not to have known – v.21
Dog returns →→→→→ to his vomit		
Sow returns →→→→→ to the mire		

The Temporal and the Terminal

2 Corinthians 4:1 5:10

Alan Adams

1. Ubiquitous temporality, and equally ubiquitous finality. — "the things which are seen are temporal"
 - a. Why the discussion: Eschatology, or Final Things?
 - b. Temporality implies finality. Just as,
 - 1) ἀρχή, [beginning] implies τέλος [end]; and πρῶτος [first] implies ἔσχατος [last]; and as,
 - 2) The *terminus a quo* implies the *terminus ad quem*; so,
 - 3) The πρόσκαιρα [temporal things] are inextricably bound to the ἔσκατα [last, final things].
 - c. Respiration and the clock drives us into finality.
 - 1) πρόσκαιρος is a compound: πρὸς ["to, toward," preposition with the accusative case: to denote motion towards, with the movement breaking off on the boundary of an object], plus καιρός ["time," in the sense of a specific and decisive point].
 - 2) The "temporal," then, is that realm in which we move in time with motion towards and a breaking off at a specific and decisive point.
 - 3) In other words, temporality bumps into finality.
 - d. Finality, like air, is all around us. It permeates our lives dictating and controlling us.
 - e. It can be fearsome; or, like Paul, we can harness and use it.
2. What is your endgame?
 - a. There is a general failure to factor finality into an endgame (cf. II Kings 20:1; also II Sam. 17:23).
 - b. Paul's understanding and application of the relationship of the temporal and the eternal, in light of his circumstances, can give us great insight into temporality and its inherent finality.
 - c. Like Paul, may we learn to "faint not" (II Cor. 4:1,16), despite adversity, and despite the fact that the "outward man is decaying" and moving toward finality (v.16).

DISCUSSION:

- I. A DISCOURSE: HARNESSING TEMPORALITY (II Cor. 4:1; 5:10).
 - A. The theme of Paul's discourse: "we faint not" (4:1,16).
 - B. An analysis of Paul's discourse:
 1. Affliction

- a. Despite the fact that the "gospel is veiled" to some (4:3).
 - b. Despite our "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus" (4:10); and,
 - c. Despite the fact that our "outward man is decaying" (4:16).
2. Resolution
- a. We "faint not" because of "this ministry" (4:1-6).
 - b. We "faint not" because the "life also of Jesus [is] manifested in our mortal flesh" (4:7-15).
 - c. We faint not because our "inward man is renewed day by day" (v.16).
 - d. We faint not because our "affliction" is "light" compared to the "eternal weight of glory" that awaits us (v.17).
 - e. We faint not because we do not focus on the things "which are seen," rather the things which are "not seen," because seen things are "temporal" and unseen things are "eternal" (v.18).
3. Anticipation (5:1-10)
- a. Temporal, terminal tabernacle versus the eternal one (vs.1-9)
 - b. The "judgement-seat of Christ" where all is rectified (v.10).

II. THE FACT OF TEMPORALITY.

- A. We are "earthen vessels" (4:7).
- B. We are "mortal flesh" (v.11).
- C. "Death worketh in us" (v.12).
- D. Our "outward man is decaying" (v.16).
- E. "Things which are seen are temporal" (v.18).

III. IMPLICATIONS OF TEMPORALITY AND ITS INHERENT TERMINUS.

- A. Dissolution (4:16; 5:1) implies an ongoing force with an end in sight.
- B. Transparency.
 - 1. We are beings of "mortal flesh" (4:11): we can see temporality in action (cf. Eccl. 12:1-7).
 - 2. We live in a realm of things "which are seen."
 - 3. Inexorableness.
 - a. Death and mortality cannot be stopped.
 - b. Our "tabernacle be dissolved" (5:1).
 - 4. Life.
 - a. The temporal, not only implies the terminal, but also the eternal (4:17,18).
 - b. Clothed in the temporal we "groan" to be "clothed" with and "swallowed up of life" (5:2, 4).

- c. We live not by the "seen," that is, the "temporal" things, for we "walk by faith, not by sight" (5:7).

IV. REACTIONS TO TEMPORALITY.

- A. There are diverse (diametrically so) views, reactions and philosophies regarding the fact of temporality.
- B. Some look at the "end" with optimism and relief. *"Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord" (5:6-8).*
- C. Some look at "end" with cynicism (Eccl. 12:8).
- D. Some look at "end" hedonistically (cf. I Cor. 15:32).
- E. Some don't look at the end at all (cf. Luke 12:20).

CONCLUSION:

1. The terminal is built in to the temporal.
2. We are decidedly temporal creatures, occupying a temporal realm (cf. Heb. 1:11,12).
3. We must, then, be concerned with terminal or final things.
4. We will deal with the terminal, or the terminal will deal with us.

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## The Prophets Saw The Last Days

Victor M. Eskew

1. The prophets of the Old Testament were a noble group of men.
  - a. They were God's spokesmen (Heb. 1:1).
  - b. These men were inspired by the Holy Spirit (Heb. 9:30a; II Peter 1:21).
  - c. The message they proclaimed involved the past, the present, and the future.
2. These men often looked into the future and saw "the last days."
  - a. "The last days" refer to:
    - 1) The last dispensation of time.
    - 2) The Gospel dispensation (*God's Prophetic Word*, Foy E. Wallace, "The Consequences of Premillennialism," pp.352-353).
    - 3) The time between the first and second coming of Christ (*"Premillennialism, True or False?"*, Wendell Winkler, ed., "The Last Days," Garland Elkins, p. 69).
    - 4) Heb. 1:2, *"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."*
  - b. In our English Bible (KJV):

- 1) The words "last days" are only mentioned twice by the prophets of the Old Testament (Isa. 2:2; Micah 4:1).
- 2) Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-32) refers to the last days. Peter indicates this when he references it on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16-17).
- 3) Many other prophets spoke of the last days. Many of them did not know of the time about which they prophesied (I Peter 1:10-12).
3. We will be examining some of the things these men saw in "the last days."

## DISCUSSION:

### I. THE SUFFERING SERVANT.

- A. The prophets saw many things about the coming Messiah.
  1. His birthplace (Micah 5:2).
  2. His virgin birth (Isa. 7:14).
  3. His teaching in parables (Psa. 78:2).
  4. His betrayal (Psa. 41:9).
- B. But the most prominent aspect of the prophecies surrounding the Messiah involved his sufferings.
  1. Isaiah's words are perhaps the best known (Isa. 53:3-8).
  2. Another prophecy that reveals much about the suffering servant is Psalm 22.
    - a. His cry to the Father (Psa. 22:1).
    - b. The shouts of the crowd (Psa. 22:7-8).
    - c. The fact that he would be crucified (Psa. 22:16).
    - d. The soldiers parting his garments and gambling for his robe (Psa. 22:18).
- C. There is absolutely no doubt that Isaiah had reference to the Christ. Philip affirmed this when he taught the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:30-35).
  1. The eunuch read from Isaiah 53:7-8. Philip preached Christ to him from this text.
  2. Isaiah saw the "Suffering Servant" over 700 years before His crucifixion.
- D. One cannot read the verses of Psalm 22 without thinking of the crucifixion. David was seeing things about the Messiah about 1000 years before they occurred. II Samuel 23:2 is the only logical answer for David's ability to see these things. David wrote: *"The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."*

### II. THE NEW COVENANT.

- A. At Sinai, God entered into a covenant with the Jewish nation (Exodus 19:3-6).
  1. This covenant was based upon Israel's strict obedience (Exodus 19:5-6a).

2. Disobedience would bring cursings and death (Deut. 28:15-68).
  - a. Israel did not keep their part of the covenant (Rom. 2:17-25).
  - b. Having sinned against God, the Jews faced a grave dilemma. The covenant under which they lived could not take away sin (Heb. 10:1-4).
- B. It was Jeremiah who looked down the corridors of time to the giving of a new covenant.
  1. He saw this some 600 years before it would happen.
  2. It was a very unique prophecy because the Jews trusted so much in the Law of Moses.
  3. Jeremiah 31:31-34.
    - a. It would be a new covenant.
    - b. The Jews had broken the old covenant.
    - c. Several unique aspects of the new covenant are made known:
      - 1) A law devised specifically for the inner man.
      - 2) One would be taught about God prior to entering into a covenant relationship with Him.
      - 3) Forgiveness and no remembrance of sin were in the new covenant.
- C. The inspired writer of Hebrews quotes Jeremiah almost word-for-word in Hebrews 8:8-12. In Hebrews 8:6 of the same chapter, he affirms that this is the covenant of which Jesus is the mediator.
- D. This new covenant became operative when Jesus died on the cross of Calvary (Rom. 7:4, 6; Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 2:14; Heb. 9:15-17).

### III. THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- A. We have seen that the prophets saw the suffering servant and the new covenant. They also beheld the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.
- B. Joel was the seer who predicted this wonderful event (Joel 2:28-32).
- C. Peter specifically applies Joel's words to the event that transpired on Pentecost following our Lord's resurrection and ascension to heaven.
  1. Jesus had instructed the apostles to tarry in Jerusalem until they were "*endued with power from on high*" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5).
  2. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles (Acts 2:1-4).
  3. The people marveled, and were confused, and made false assumptions about what was transpiring (Acts 2:5-13).
  4. Peter cleared up the difficulty. "*But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass*

*in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:16-17).*

- a. The power of the Holy Spirit literally overwhelmed the twelve.
- b. As apostles, they transferred portions of this divine power to members of the first century church by the laying on of hands (Acts 8:14-17; 19:6; II Tim. 1:6).
- D. That day, the message of the Gospel went forth and the kingdom of God and of Christ was established.

#### IV. THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD.

- A. The prophets saw the kingdom of God that was to be established in the last days in Jerusalem.
- B. In our introduction, we stated that only two Old Testament prophecies specifically refer to the last days. Both of them speak about the kingdom to be established in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3; Micah 4:1).
- C. The prophecy speaks of "the mountain of the Lord's house."
  1. I Timothy 3:15 reveals that the house of the Lord is "the church of the living God."
  2. The church was established in Jerusalem on Pentecost day following the Lord's resurrection (Acts 2:38,41,47).
  3. Jesus had said He would build His church and He gave the keys of the kingdom to Peter in order to do this very thing (Matt. 16:18-19).

#### CONCLUSION:

1. We have only briefly touched upon the things that the prophets saw.
2. These four things were major events associated with the New Covenant that Jesus, the Messiah, would bring forth.
3. Peter was certain and profoundly correct when he wrote that the prophets of old were ministering to us who live in the Gospel dispensation (I Peter 1:12).
4. Peter's admonition that follows due to this point is one that should be adhered to by every child of God.

*"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."*

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The Last Days The Last Hour, The Last Day

Tom House

1. There is little, if any thing, which heightens the curiosity of man than to know something of that which is characteristic of the end of things physical, and of the nature of existence extending past this life.
2. Man's curiosity has led him to speculate on matters about which he has little or no knowledge, particularly when pertaining to the final things.
 - a. These speculations have led to a host of unfounded, unsustainable conclusions such as those advanced by the materialists, and the premillennialists.
 - b. While some of these positions are relatively new, speculations of things peculiar to the final things are not unique or exclusive to the modern era. (II Tim. 2:16-18)
3. It is not unnatural for men to yearn for knowledge about things unseen, unexperienced, or unexplained.
4. It is the case however, that God has provided information pertaining to the final things which He considers sufficient to enlighten us without being left to erroneously speculate.
5. While the topic might, upon first glance, seem to possess a redundancy, close examination of the subject will reveal otherwise.
 - a. It will be shown that there is a distinction in the phrases 'the last days,' and 'the last day.'
 - b. An examination of the phrase 'the last hour' will add further collaboration to the understanding of the difference, as well as understanding the significance of the particulars of the phrase on its own.

DISCUSSION:

1. **"THE LAST DAYS."**
 - A. This phrase as found in the Greek language provides the basis for the title of the study of eschatology.
 1. The word 'last' is from '*eschatos*;' and depending on the context, will be defined as 'final, end of, or latter end.'
 2. The word 'days' is from '*hemeros*,' which, in this case, refers to an age, or period of time.
 - B. The phrase, which is found in the English translations some eight times, has commonly been misinterpreted to refer exclusively to the end of the world.
 - C. However, a study of the terms in their particular contexts will reveal that they will reference two periods of the Christian dispensation.

1. Both periods have the same time frame of beginning: the resurrection of Christ, the coming of the Spirit, and the establishment of the kingdom.
 2. One of the periods has been given a specific time in which it will end.
 - a. The significance of this period marks the physical end of a system which had actually already been removed by the death of Christ. Col. 2:14
 - b. This is the period marked by the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred in A.D. 70.
 3. The other period will end when the Lord returns; a time known only to the Father. Matt. 24:36
- D. It is interesting to note that the phrase "last days" is always used in general terms in reference to the Christian dispensation, but more specifically to the period prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.
1. Note the terms Jesus uses in describing the period prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. Matt. 24:19,22,29, "these days" (plural).
 2. Then note, after verse 35, when speaking of His second advent and the final judgment, He will employ the singular "that day."
- E. Some attention needs be given to the beginning of the "last days."
1. Isaiah uses the phrase when stating prophecy relating to the establishment of the Lord's kingdom. Isa. 2:2; Micah 4:1 (Corresponds to Daniel 2:44)
 2. In the record of the Pentecost of Acts 2, Peter reveals when the 'last days' would begin. Acts 2:16-17; Joel 2:28
 3. Paul's opening remarks in the Hebrew letter acknowledge that he was presently in 'the last days.' Heb. 1:1-2
- F. Paul, Peter, and James all spoke of things relative to 'the last days.'
1. In II Timothy 3:1ff, Paul identifies certain characteristics of the period of 'the last days.'
 - a. It is important to note that the description of the 'perilous times' would certainly not be exclusive to a period marking the end of the world; for two reasons:
 - 1) Such would contradict the Lord's statements regarding the end when He noted that there would be no signs specifically marking the coming of that day.
 - 2) Secondly, the descriptions would also as well characterize the day in which Paul lived.
 - b. This passage will also correspond with I Tim. 4:1, where other characteristics of 'the latter times' are given.

- 1) He speaks of some who will depart from 'the faith.'
- 2) Hence, again, it must be determined that he is speaking of a present dispensation, for there were already some departing from the faith. I Tim. 1:18; II Tim. 2:16-17; James 5:19-20
2. The same may be said of Peter's statements in II Peter 3; in that, as seen in verse 3; there would be scoffers in 'the last days.' (note again the plural 'days').
 - a. Who would argue that there was any shortage of scoffers in Peter's day?
 - b. Again, the phrase is used in general terms to the Christian dispensation; but most particularly is addressing matters which were most urgent, considering the impending events.
 - c. This language is not new to Peter's writings.
 - 1) He had noted in I Peter 4:7 that the 'end of all things is at hand,' with the warning of impending persecutions. vs.12-16
 - 2) With the warning of the 'scoffers' in II Peter 3:3, there is the realization that these people did not speak as 'the oracles of God,' as seen in I Peter 4:11; for had they been, they would not have been scoffers!
 - d. Peter is evidently addressing a mentality which was denying that the destruction of Jerusalem could take place.
 - 1) The mentality which would deny an event which had been prophesied by the Lord (Matt. 24), in judgment against Jerusalem, would just as well deny the coming of Christ in judgment at the end of the world!
 - 2) Peter will use the occasion in II Peter 3 to specifically refer to the final judgment.
 - 3) In verse 7 he will use the singular, 'day of judgment;' in verse 10 he refers to 'the day of the Lord,' or 'the day of God' (v.12), and corresponds this to the judgment which came upon the patriarchs who 'fell asleep' in the flood (v.4), and whose fate was sealed when the door to the ark was shut!
3. James' use of the phrase 'the last days' is consistent with the others, in that it would include reference to the days prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, and serve as a preface to refer to the final judgment. James 5:3
 - a. Many of the Jews of James' day, had prospered well from their relation with the Romans; as they took

advantage of that relation to use the Romans to implement the death of Christ (v.6).

- b. Like their Gentile counterparts, the Jews rebellious, unlawful behavior, had desecrated what was once the 'Holy City,' and further becomes the impetus for the city's 'slaughter' (v.5).
- c. While the reference seems specific to the days prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, the language fittingly describes the behavior of man for the remainder of the dispensation.

II. "THE LAST DAY" (Matt. 24).

- A. While the period of "the last days" was identified as to:
 - 1. Its specific point of beginning, and to;
 - 2. Certain events peculiar to the period;
 - 3. There is no specific time given to 'the last day,' except that it will come.
- B. It seems that the Lord's disciples had a mistaken notion regarding the end of the world based on statements He made regarding the temple. Matt. 24:2
- C. The disciples surmised that if the temple was to be destroyed, such would have to be a cataclysmic event; prompting the questions found in verse 3.
 - 1. "When shall these things be?"
 - 2. "What shall be the sign of thy coming?"
 - 3. What shall be the sign of "the end of the world?"
- D. Jesus explains to His disciples the meaning of His language.
 - 1. He is speaking of the 'days' prior to and involving the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - 2. Regarding this period there were specific signs to know of its commencement. vs.5-32; then note v.33
 - 3. But of the end of the world; in answer to the original query, beginning verse 36; He states it is a "day" known only to the Father.
- E. Jesus does, however, give a general description of the day with the use of a similar situation; the judgment of Noah's day.
 - 1. The day will liken all other days in that people will eat, drink, marry, giving in marriage; as they did in Noah's day. Matt. 25:1-13
 - 2. Jesus likens our 'days' to the period of 'days' prior to the flood.
 - a. Noah had preached righteousness (II Peter 2:5) to urge the people to prepare for the impending judgment; but to no avail.
 - b. There are those who preach God's righteousness today for the purpose of preparing man for the final judgment. II Peter 3:11-12; Luke 13:3,5

3. Jesus also notes that the final day will bear similarity with the judgment which came in the flood. Matt. 24:39
 - a. They "knew not until the flood came..."
 - b. One will not know of the final judgment until which time the process begins.
 - c. The population in the final day will possess the same presumption of those of Noah's day, in that they will think that such will not occur today. Matt. 24:50; I Thess. 5:2-3

III. "THE LAST HOUR."

- A. There is a paradox which pervades the discussion of the end of life.
 1. For the faithful Christian, it is a time anticipated. Phil. 1:23-24; 21
 2. For the disobedient, it is preferred that the discussion be avoided.
 3. And yet, for all, the curse of death is quite foreboding. Matt. 26:39; Rom. 5:7
- B. The phrase 'the last hour' will generally be used in relation to the Lord's second advent, and the end of the world.
- C. As noted regarding 'the last day,' it is a time known only to the Father. Matt. 24:36 'day' and 'hour'
- D. As the majority of men will be impervious to 'the last day,' it certainly follows that the same mentality will persist until the very last moment.
 1. Jesus stated that He would come in an 'hour' in which we will be unaware. Matt. 24:50
 2. It will be a time characterized by presumption. Matt. 24:44
- E. The 'last hour' signifies a momentary process identified as "in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye." I Cor. 15:52
 1. "Moment" – '*atomos*' – an atom of time.
 2. "Twinkling" – '*rhipe*' – the jerk of an eye, a blink, an instant.
- F. This moment will define the process of the end.
 1. The sounding of the last trump. I Thess. 4:16
 2. The shout of the archangel. I Thess. 4:16
 3. The Lord descending with His mighty angels (II Thess. 1:7), in the clouds (I Thess. 4:17; Rev. 1:7); "In the air." (I Thess. 4:17).
 4. Every eye shall see Him. Rev. 1:7
 5. Then the resurrection. I Thess. 4:16; John 5:28-29

CONCLUSION:

1. In as much as the virgins knew that the bridegroom was destined to come, persistent diligence was required to be ready

to enter the marriage feast upon the moment of his arrival.
Matt. 25

2. The five wise virgins were so designated because of their diligence.
3. The foolish were so designated because of their lack of preparedness.
4. The Lord's lesson: one should always be ready; for the precise day and hour of His arrival will not be known until it occurs.

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## Ready To Be Revealed Salvation (In The Last Time)

I Peter 1:5

*Richard Guill*

1. What a great theme for this lectureship — “Eschatology” — the doctrine of final things!
2. Oh, what an abysmal depth of ignorance on this subject exists in the world today!
  - a. Pagan world religions have never known the truth on this subject.
  - b. Catholicism, centuries ago, perverted the truth on this subject and continues to do so.
  - c. Protestant denominationalism, dominated by the ungodly doctrine of Premillennialism, has lost touch with the truth on this subject.
  - d. Many in the church of Christ, because of false teaching, or a failure of so many of our preachers to preach on these final things, are also ignorant on this subject.
  - e. Preachers need to preach frequently on this subject which is so vital to our Christian hope and sense of security and so profoundly affects our concern for the lost and our attempts to evangelize the world which lies in wickedness (I John 5:19).

### DISCUSSION:

#### 1. THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF SALVATION IN THREE TENSES.

- A. Salvation in the *past tense* is our initial salvation from our past sins.
  1. Eph. 2:1, “And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” Note that they WERE dead (lost), but NOW are alive (saved).

2. II Tim. 1:9, *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."* Note the past tense: "hath saved us."
  3. From the age of accountability (Isa. 7:16), after committing our first sin, we are separated from God and lost. Each additional sin continues to build a "body of sin" (Rom. 6:6; Col. 2:11-12).
  4. The one who hears the Gospel of Christ, **believes** its message, **repents of sins**, **confesses faith** in the resurrected Christ, and is buried with the Lord in the likeness of his death (**water baptism**) is saved from the guilt and subsequent punishment of his past sins.
- B. Salvation is also spoken of in the *present tense*, meaning that one who has been saved in the past continues to be in a saved state in the present. I John 5:11-13, *"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye HAVE eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."*
1. I Cor. 1:18, *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who ARE SAVED it is the power of God."*
  2. Gal. 4:6-7, *"And because YE ARE sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."*
  3. I John 3:2, *"Beloved, NOW are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."*
  4. With all past sins forgiven at one's baptism into Christ, one then has access to the continual cleansing of the blood of Christ for every sin he may commit till the end of his life (I John 1:7-10).
  5. Through **repentance**, **confession**, and **prayer**, the Christian can be cleansed from every sin and remain "saved." I John 3:3, *"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure."*
- C. But salvation is also spoken of in the *future tense*. Mark 10:30, *"But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world TO COME eternal life."*

1. Titus 1:2; 3:7, *"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."* 3:7, *"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."*
2. Rom. 5:9, *"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we SHALL BE SAVED from wrath through him."*
3. I Peter 1:5 (our text), 9, *"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. ... <sup>9</sup>Receiving the END of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."*
4. Those who obey the Gospel and receive remission of past sins, and then continually keep themselves cleansed by humbly confessing their sins, repenting of them, and asking God's forgiveness, can look forward to the salvation of the body and soul at the last great day.

## II. WHO WILL RECEIVE THIS SALVATION?

- A. The faithful dead of every generation who ever lived — those who loved God and were obedient to His will.

Eccl. 12:13-14, *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."*

1. Jesus spoke of this fact of salvation in Matt. 8:11, *"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."*

- B. The faithful who are living when the Lord returns.

I Thess. 4:17, *"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

1. Not as we are now, but with changed immortal bodies. I Cor. 15:50-52, *"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we all shall be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."*

## III. OF WHAT DOES THIS SALVATION CONSIST?

- A. Escape from the fiery destruction of this world.

1. This world and all that is in it is destined to be melted, dissolved, and burned up with fervent heat (II Peter 3:10-12).
2. However, the righteous dead, and the righteous living at that day, will already be resurrected and changed and

caught up together to meet the Lord in the clouds before this mighty destruction occurs (I Thess. 4:13-17).

B. Escape from eternal punishment in hell.

Matt. 25:34,41,46, *"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ... <sup>41</sup>Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. ... <sup>46</sup>And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."*

C. Redemption of both body and soul. Rom. 8:23, *"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."*

1. Same thought by Paul in Phil. 3:20-21, *"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."*

2. With his blood, Jesus purchased both our body and soul. I Cor. 6:19-20, *"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*

D. But it is more than an escape from destruction and punishment. IT IS the promised inheritance, eternal life, and experiencing the wonders and delights of God's utopia called heaven where *"the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 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"* (Rev. 21:3-4).

#### IV. WHEN IS THIS TO OCCUR?

A. Peter uses the expression in the last time (I Peter 1:5).

1. Sometimes that expression (in its English translation, the Greek words are different) or its equivalent, last days, is used to denote the last great dispensation of time — the Christian age. Example: Peter's quotation of Joel's prophecy on Pentecost. Acts 2:17, *"And it shall come to pass in the last days..."* or John's use of the expression in I John 2:18, *"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now there*

*are many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."*

2. But here it means the end of the world as can be seen from the following phrases in the context: reserved in heaven for you (v.4); at the appearing of Jesus Christ (v.7); and, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls (v.9).
3. It is the time of the Lord's second coming in which the resurrection from the dead, the destruction of this world and everything in it, and the final judgment will occur.
4. As to the day and hour in which this will occur, no man or angel knows. It is known only by the Father; even Jesus does not know. Mark 13:32, *"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."*
5. Therefore, there are no "signs" given which would indicate that the time is near and anyone who tries to find such signs is going beyond that which is written.

## CONCLUSION:

1. The coming of "the last time" or "last day" is sure and certain. Peter said, *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come..."* (II Peter 3:9-10).
2. In view of that last time in which all this is to occur, we should be motivated to live holy and godly lives each day. II Peter 3:11, *"Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."*
3. Christians are urged to give diligence (haste or speed) to make their calling and election sure (II Peter 1:10).

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The Last Trump

Don W. Tate

1. The meaning of the word "trump," according to Oxford American Dictionary, is "an advantage, esp. involving surprise."
2. According to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, the word "trump" means "tremble, vibrate, shake, quavering, reverberation, trumpet, repeated."
3. The word "trump" and the word "trumpet" are used interchangeably in that it was a means of letting something be known.

4. What does the word mean to you? If it is the last trump, then the last warning given unto mankind will have come to pass. It's very important that you are ready for that time, for there will be no more opportunities to get right with the Lord when the last trump sounds.

DISCUSSION:

I. A TRUMP WAS SOUNDED AS A MEANS OF ANNOUNCEMENT.

- A. It would be helpful to consider Leviticus 25:8-10 and to notice a trumpet was sounded on the day of Jubilee. It would be sounded over the entire land of Israel. Liberty and freedom was given unto all those that were considered slaves or if someone had given a possession to hold until a bill was paid.
- B. We have a day of freedom in the United States and it's called "the Fourth of July." Instead of a trumpet sounding, usually a firecracker is sounding, which signifies excitement and freedom from any foreign power.

II. A TRUMP WAS SOUNDED AS A MEANS OF BREAKING DOWN WALLS.

- A. We are all wise enough to know that someone blowing a trumpet would not break down a wall on its own. There would have to be some supernatural power behind the blowing of the trumpet.
- B. In Joshua 6:1-27, a trumpet was used by God's people, as directed by God, so to bring the walls of Jericho down. Of course, they had some other things that they must do in showing their faith in the Lord. In Joshua 6:20, the people obeyed God and were able to destroy Jericho.
- C. It needs to be pointed out that this would not qualify as music, but was more like a loud noise.
- D. God chose different means, throughout the years, in allowing His will to be done. He did not, nor does He have to use such devices, but He does as He wills and people are to abide by whatever He tells them to do, so to obtain the proper results.
 1. Some people would have a hard time understanding why they need to be baptized, but God chose that means for entering His Son Jesus and for having sins removed (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-29).

III. A TRUMP WAS SOUNDED AS A MEANS OF PRODUCING FEAR.

- A. A trumpet is a loud instrument and if many trumpets were sounded it would be difficult to know how many people were blowing the instruments. In a battle, the more trumpets

that would be heard, then the more soldiers one would expect to be ready to fight in battle.

- B. In Old Testament times, the number 300 would not be a very large army, but God knew that He could take 300 soldiers and outwit the enemy. We read of such a time in Judges 7:18-21. To get the full meaning of the story, one would need to read the verses before and after.
- C. Can you just imagine how you would feel, if you thought that no one was able to overcome you, then all of a sudden you hear 300 trumpets; pitchers were breaking; and being able to see lights all around you?
 - 1. I believe we can understand why the enemy was ready to run for their lives.
- D. Can you imagine how the enemy of God is going to feel on the day of judgment knowing that Jesus Christ is coming in judgment, with all His mighty angels? The trump of God will sound and there will be no place for the enemies of God to run!

IV. A TRUMP WAS SOUNDED AS A MEANS OF KNOWING THAT GOD WOULD FIGHT.

- A. When the city of Jerusalem needed to be rebuilt, the workers were afraid of the enemy. But, almighty God would come to their rescue. When God's people would hear the trumpet, it was a means of letting them know that God would fight for them as seen in Nehemiah 4:19-23.
 - 1. The people still had to be on their guard, but it was reassuring to know that God would be with them, as they accomplished His will.
- B. Christians are expected to work for the Lord, but that doesn't mean that the Lord will not be with us today. In fact, one of the purposes for prayer is to petition God for help.

V. A TRUMP WAS SOUNDED AS A MEANS OF GIVING A SYMBOL OF THE VOICE OF GOD.

- A. In Revelation 1:10-11, the apostle John was apparently seeing a vision. He heard the great voice of the Lord, which sounded like a trumpet. We would surmise that John meant that it was extremely loud and he had no trouble in understanding what was said.
- B. Many people speak about God speaking unto them in a small still voice. More than likely, their consciences are being bothered and it's their own minds speaking to them. When God wants something known, He will make it known, for He will sound it out as a trumpet blowing.

VI. A TRUMP WILL SOUND AS A MEANS OF WAKING THE DEAD AND ADVISING ALL THAT JESUS HAS COME.

- A. When you hear the last trump, there will be no more opportunities to get ready for the Lord, for He will be here. *"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed"* (I Cor. 15:52).
 1. Apparently, everything will happen before one can prepare for it. The twinkling of an eye is very fast. Those in the graves and those still alive will all go through a change.
 2. This will not be a day for Christians to fear, but to realize this is why we have lived for the Lord.
- B. The trump of God (trumpet of God; voice of God) will be the greatest sound to ever be heard. Nothing could compare to what you will experience in the future if you have lived a faithful Christian life. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words"* (I Thess. 4:16-18).
 1. The most comforting words in this world are **THE LAST TRUMP!**

CONCLUSION:

1. When the last trump sounds, there will be no more preaching on this earth in warning people to obey the Gospel (II Thess. 1:7-9).
2. The Lord is coming for His people and it's imperative one be a faithful child of God in order to receive the reward (Rev. 2:10).

The End Of The World

Caleb Campbell

1. "The End of the World" is a topic which comes directly from the pages of the word of God.
 - a. Jesus spoke of "the end of the world" (Matt. 13:39-40,49).
 - b. The apostles asked, and Jesus in turn taught, about "the end of the world" (Matt. 24:3,36ff).
 - c. Paul spoke of the fact that the "end" would come (I Cor. 15:24).

2. Along with being a Biblical subject, "The End of the World" is also a popular subject.
 - a. We have probably all seen the highway billboards, religious books, and even Hollywood movies devoted to it.
 - b. Unfortunately, most of the popular depictions of the end are permeated with eternal error (I John 4:1).
3. In light of the above, "The End of the World" is a topic which needs to be carefully examined.
 - a. How can we claim to be students of the Bible if we ignore one of its included teachings (Psalm 119:9-16; Acts 20:27)?
 - b. How can we prepare ourselves to defeat the heresies regarding the end of the world, if we do not first learn the truth concerning its end (Eph. 5:7-17; Titus 1:9-16)?
4. For our study, let us turn our attention to the third chapter of Peter's second epistle.
 - a. Peter wrote, in part, to refute a number of false teachings which were infiltrating the church (2:1ff).
 - b. Some of the specific fallacies being circulated pertained directly to the end of the world (3:1ff).
 - c. In answering both current and future "scoffers," II Peter 3 sets forth some of the clearest teaching in all of the scriptures regarding, "The End of the World."

DISCUSSION:

I. WHY DO WE BELIEVE IN THE END OF THE WORLD?

- A. By inspiration, Peter taught that God is capable of ending this world at any time (II Peter 3:1-8).
 1. There were "scoffers" who doubted the return of Christ and the corresponding end of the world (vs.1-4).
 2. In response, Peter pointed to the catastrophic flood as a clear reminder that God was, and is, able to do whatever He pleases with this world (vs.5-7).
- B. The end of the world will come because it is a standing "promise" of the Lord (v.9; I Thess. 5:23-24).
- C. The world's end is repeatedly referred to as something that "will" or "shall" occur (vs.10-12).
- D. The fact that there will be a need for "new heavens and a new earth" indicates that this current, worn out abode of man will be removed (v.13; Heb. 1:10-12; Rev. 21:1).

II. WHAT EVENTS WILL OCCUR AT THE END OF THE WORLD?

- A. There will be "His coming" (I Peter 3:4).
 1. The second coming of Christ is just as sure as the fact that He ascended to Heaven (John 14:1-4; Acts 1:11-12).
 2. His return will be announced by "a shout," "the voice of the archangel," and "the trump of God" (I Thess. 4:16).

3. He will come in the clouds with a glorious, visible body (Acts 1:9-11; I Thess. 1:10; I John 3:2; Rev. 1:7).
4. He will raise all of the dead and cause those who are alive to undergo a bodily transformation (John 5:28-29; I Cor. 15:51-53).
- B. There will be "judgment" (vs.7,14).
 1. We will universally, yet individually, come before Him (Matt. 25:31-33; Rom. 2:1-6; II Cor. 5:10).
 2. He will judge us by His authority (John 5:27; 12:48; Acts 10:40-42; II Tim. 4:1).
 3. The wicked will be propelled into eternal "perdition" and the righteous into a place of "righteousness" (vs.7,13).
- C. There will be a complete destruction of the physical universe (vs.10-12).
 1. Both this terrestrial abode, and the universe beyond it, will be "dissolved" (vs.10-11).
 2. Every rudimentary element of God's creation "shall melt with fervent heat" (v.12).
 3. The *cosmos* will not be purified or recycled for future use, but will "pass away" (v.10).
- D. There will be a removal of every "work" and facet of this physical order (v.10).
 1. The temptations and carnal lusts of the world perish (I John 2:15-17).
 2. The fashions of the world will pass (I Cor. 7:31).
 3. The riches and possessions of the world will be lost (Luke 12:15-21).
 4. The physical relationships of the world will be no more (Matt. 12:47-50; 22:23-33).
 5. Every physical aspect of this life will be removed!
- E. Contrary to the beliefs of many, all of the above events are to occur in that one, final "day" (v.10,12).

III. WHEN SHOULD WE EXPECT THE END OF THE WORLD?

- A. The time of the end is not known, for it will come "as a thief in the night" (v.10; I Thess. 5:1-2).
 1. Think of all the religious leaders who have foolishly predicted this unpredictable event
 - a. William Miller, founder of the Adventists.
 - b. Joseph Smith of the Mormons.
 - c. Charles T. Russell, leader of the Watchtower Org.
 - d. Hal Lindsey in *The Late Great Planet Earth*.
 2. Jesus was clear when He stated, "*But of that day and hour knoweth no man...*" (Matt. 24:36).
- B. The arrival of the end "*as a thief in the night*" will catch many unprepared for eternity (Matt. 25:1-13; I Thess. 5:3-7).

CONCLUSION:

1. In view of the end, how are we living (v.11)?
2. In view of the end, for what are we aspiring (v.14)?
3. In view of the end, how watchful are we being (v.17)?

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## The Rejection of Christ The Establishment of The Church, The Kingdom

Acts 2:22-36

*Roger Scully*

1. John 1:1-14:
  - a. "Was" is an intransitive verb, thus "God" is a predicate nominative renaming "Word," which shows oneness.
  - b. Verse 3 speaks of this "Word" as being the agent of creation (cf. Gen. 1; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:10).
  - c. Verse 5, "comprehended" (KJV), "apprehended" (ASV), ASV margin overcame; Grk: *katalambano*, which means, as per Thayer, "to take possession of." (cf. I John 1:5,6).
  - d. Then we are told that the Creator came to His creation, "the world" (v.10).
    - 1) The incarnate (v.14).
    - 2) Phil. 2:4ff
  - e. And, how would He be received by His creation?
    - 1) Well, as a sad dictum on mankind, His creation "knew him not."
    - 2) "His own received him not" (v.11).
  - f. He was the "life" who came to bring man "light," yet was rejected (vs.5,8).
2. So there is, then, a sort of irony involved:
  - a. He who came to bring salvation was rejected by those to whom He came to bring it, yet in His rejection He was able to establish the very institute that would offer to man salvation, the church/kingdom.
  - b. The irony continues today by people thinking they can accept Christ apart from His church, thus they reject His church, and as a result, they reject the Christ, for they try to separate that which is inseparable.
    - 1) Principle, Matt 19:6.
    - 2) Problem, Man tries to separate.
3. Flowing from this are the doctrines of Premillennialism and Dispensationalism, both of which deny the church as being the

eternal purpose of God (Eph. 3:1-11), because they deny the rejection of Christ as such, thus they attempt to separate the rejection of Christ, and the establishment of His church, which they attempt to separate as being one with His kingdom.

- a. C. I. Scofield: "We turn to the New Testament and find what? The birth of the King, the heralding of the kingdom as 'at hand,' the utter refusal of Israel to receive her King, the passing of the kingdom into the mixed and veiled condition its full revelation being postponed till 'the harvest,' which is fixed definitely 'at the end of this age.' And then the kingdom being postponed what is revealed as filling and occupying this age? THE CHURCH!"
- b. Likewise, Lewis Sperry, a dispensationalist, comments: *"The kingdom was predicted by the prophets as a glorious kingdom for Israel on earth when the Messianic Son of David would sit on David's throne and rule over the nations from Jerusalem. However, the Jewish nation rejected their king and with Him, the Kingdom. Because of Israel's rejection the Kingdom was postponed...because it was rejected and postponed, [it] entered a mystery form for the present age. The mystery form has to do with the church age."*
4. Despite these statements Peter, with the other apostles, declared Jesus was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23).
  - a. Eph. 3:10,11
  - b. All of which is summed in Acts 2:22-36.
5. Thus, there is a *flip side* to John 1:10, 11.
  - a. V.12—those who received Him were given the "power of choice" to "become sons of God."
  - b. The choice could be exercised by being born of a spiritual birth (v.13; I Peter 1:23).
  - c. A spiritual birth, which would add one to a spiritual family, which is a part of a spiritual kingdom, which is called in the Bible, simply, the church.
6. So it is, then, our purpose on this occasion to show that the rejection of Christ and establishment of the church were/are:
  - a. Contingent, thus inseparable.
  - b. The purpose of God.
  - c. One with the kingdom.
7. We hope to draw the faithful closer to God, reminding them of the eternal mystery of which we are a part, and, if need be, admonish the lost to come to the Kingdom of the Most High King.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. REJECTION (Acts 2:22,23).

#### A. Prophetically told.

1. We often fail to realize how old the cross of Christ is.

- a. Yes, from one perspective, 2,000 plus years.
  - b. But, in reality, it is eternal (I Peter 1:9-12, 20).
- 2. Acts 2:22, 23—it should follow, then, that we could turn to the Old and read of it.
  - a. The Bible must be viewed as a masterpiece of art with each part flowing to the next, thus with each part fitting with the next.
  - b. I Peter 1:2
- 3. Keep in mind the broad beginning of prophecy and its narrowing effect:
  - a. The entirety of God's plan is revealed in Gen. 3:15.
    - 1) Yet, it is revealed in broad terms, which, having it alone, would make it almost impossible to understand.
    - 2) Remember, we have "the rest of the story."
  - b. Psalm 22:6, 7, 16—narrower.
  - c. Isa 53:3,9; Matt 16:21
- B. Ultimately fulfilled.
  - 1. John 5:18, 39-47; 7:7
    - a. Jealousy/envy.
    - b. Hatred.
  - 2. Matt 12:14; John 19:6, 7

## II. INSTITUTION (Acts 2:32-36).

- A. Acts 2:22, 23, 32-36.
- B. Prophetically told:
  - 1. Isa. 2:1-13
  - 2. Jer. 31:31-34
  - 3. Matt. 16:16-21
- C. Ultimately fulfilled:
  - 1. Mark 9:1; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:6-8; 2:1-4, 47.
    - a. Eph 1:22, 23; 5:23
    - b. Heb 8:6-12
  - 2. Thus, Isa. 53:10-12

## III. CONNECTION (Acts 2:37-41, 47).

- A. Joel 2:28-32, Acts 2:16-21, 37, 38; 22:16.
  - 1. Call on the name of the Lord to be saved (Acts 2:21).
  - 2. Call on the name of the Lord by obeying the Gospel, thus are saved by obeying the Gospel (Acts 22:16).
  - 3. Added to the church by obeying the Gospel, which is the same point at which one is saved (Acts 2:41,47; Gal. 3:26, 27; Eph. 5:23).
- B. Church/Kingdom.
  - 1. Mark 9:1, Kingdom to come with power in the lifetime of those then present.

2. Acts 1:6-8, Coming of the power would help them identify when the kingdom had come, seeing as how the power was to accompany the kingdom.
3. Acts 2:1-4, the power had come, thus the kingdom had come, which is, as is revealed in verse 47, the church.
- C. The rejection, sadly enough, continues today.
  1. By people rejecting the authority of Christ (cf. Col. 3:17; John 12:48).
  2. By people attempting to separate that which God has joined (Acts 20:28; 8:3; 9:4; 8:5, 12; Rom. 16:16).
  3. By people asking the church to depart, they have, in reality, asked Jesus to depart (Mark 5:17).
  4. Matt. 19:6; Eph. 5:22-33

### CONCLUSION:

1. Heb. 5:8, 9
2. Let us reject no longer He who was rejected to save.

## The New Testament: The Final And Complete Revelation

*Ben F. Vick, Jr.*

1. This lesson is vital because:
  - a. Many fail to recognize a difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
  - b. A number of religious groups will jump the cross, and drag some peculiar item from a previous dispensation into the present dispensation.
  - c. Many believe that God continues to reveal His will to man in various ways other than the Bible, and in particular, the New Testament.
2. Terms defined:
  - a. New Testament: 27 books from Matthew through Revelation; the second covenant; the Gospel; the doctrine of Christ.
  - b. Final – last.
  - c. Complete – perfect.
  - d. Revelation – divine communication.

**DISCUSSION:****I. THE NEW TESTAMENT IS GOD'S REVELATION FOR MAN TODAY.**

A. The religious world as a whole fails to distinguish between the Old Testament and the New Testament; however, the New Testament clearly makes a distinction.

**1. II Corinthians 3:1-18 compares the two**

|                                    |    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| Tables of stone (v.3)              | vs | Fleshly tables of the heart(v.3)    |
| Old Testament (v.14)               | vs | New Testament (v.6)                 |
| Letter (v.6)                       | vs | Spirit (v.6)                        |
| Letter killeth (v.6)               | vs | Spirit giveth life (v.6)            |
| Ministration of death (v.7)        | vs | Ministration of the Spirit (v.8)    |
| Was glorious (v.7)                 | vs | Rather glorious (v.8)               |
| Ministration of condemnation (v.9) | vs | Ministration of righteousness (v.9) |
| Glory (v.9)                        | vs | Exceed in glory (v.9)               |
| Is done away (v.11)                | vs | Remaineth (v.11)                    |
| Was glorious (v.11)                | vs | Is glorious (v.11)                  |

2. Gal. 3:23-29: The law verses the faith.

3. Heb. 8:6-13; 10:9-10: First covenant vs. second covenant.

B. The essentials of a will (Heb. 9:15-17).

1. A qualified testator – the man who makes the will.

2. A legacy – the gifts bestowed.

3. The executors – those who administer the will.

4. The conditions – terms upon which gifts received.

5. The heirs – those who receive the gifts.

6. The probation of the will – the court must approve.

7. The death of the testator.

**II. THE NEW TESTAMENT IS THE FINAL REVELATION.**

A. Many in the religious world do not believe that the New Testament is the final, last revelation. Consider the following quotations:

1. **Roman Catholic Church** "God who spoke in the past, continues to converse with the Spouse of his beloved Son. And the Holy Spirit, through the living voice of the Gospel rings out in the church – and through her in the world – leads believers to the full truth, and makes the Word of Christ dwell in them in all its riches," *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, p. 25, 1994.

2. **Mormons** – those who do not believe in continuous revelation after the Bible was completed are apostates and fools (I Nephi 13:26; II Nephi 29:4,6). "And again, the elders, priests and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and

the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fullness of the gospel." (*Doctrine and Covenants* 42:12; p. 61, 1973).

3. **Seventh Day Adventist:**

- a. Ellen G. White: "Yet the fact that God has revealed His will to men through His word, has not rendered needless the continual presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Saviour to open the word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings." *The Great Controversy*, p. 6.
  - b. "It is from the standpoint of the light that has come through the Spirit of Prophecy [Mrs. White's writings] that the question will be considered, believing as we do that the Spirit of Prophecy [Mrs. White's writings] is the only infallible interpreter of Bible principle." (from G. A. Irwin, many years president of 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventists General Conference, on page 1 of a tract entitled, "The Mark of the Beast," Canright, *Life of Mrs. E. G. White*, pp.40-41, 1919.
4. "In the year of 1866, I discovered the Christ Science or divine laws of Life, Truth, and Love, and named by discovery Christian Science. God had been graciously preparing me during many years for the reception of this final revelation of the absolute divine Principle of scientific mental healing." **Mary Baker Glover Eddy**, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 107, 1934.
  5. The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearance, better known to us as, **Shakers**: "Shakers have always distinguished between the Bible and the Word of God. To them the word of God is not a book, but Christ's Spirit, ever uttering, ever revealing God. *Shakerism*, 1904." Hutton, Daniel, *Old Shaketown and the Shakers*, Fifth Edition, 1936, p. 9.
  6. The Creed books of men: **Methodist Discipline; Baptist Manual, Prayer Book**, etc.
  7. **Boston Discipling Movement** believed in "Progressive Revelation." Gordon Ferguson: "On the other hand, while God does not continue to reveal spiritual truths, He does reveal the application of those old truths. The truths themselves remain constant, whereas the application may vary by culture and century." (Boston Church of Christ Bulletin, May 1, 1988;). Kip McKean: "During the 1985 Midwest Seminar, the Lord put it upon my heart to ask Martin [W. Martin Bentley, Jr.] to co-lead the Mexico City mission team." (Boston Church of Christ Bulletin, August 24, 1986).



8. On ACU's **web site** under "Churches Looking for Ministers" this advertisement was found: "Believing in God's timing and relying upon the Holy Spirit's leading, the Southern Crescent Church in Atlanta, Georgia is actively pursuing a search for the congregation's first full-time youth minister."
- B. The New Testament is the final, or last revelation of God to man.
  1. Since the Old Covenant was ratified by the blood of animals, and the New Covenant by the blood of Christ, what will be offered to ratify another? What can be ratified that would be superior to the blood of Christ? (Heb. 9:18-21)
    - a. Does the N.T. refer to another covenant after the second as the first pointed the second (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13).
    - b. Christ offered himself once for all. There will not be another offering. (Heb. 9:27-28; 10:12).
  2. Jude 3 teaches that the faith was once for all delivered.

### III. THE NEW TESTAMENT IS THE COMPLETE REVELATION.

- A. A matter or object might be last, yet incomplete. The New Testament, however, is the final revelation of God, and the completed revelation. It is all sufficient to direct our way from here to the heavenly realm (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3).
  1. Scriptures are profitable for *doctrine* – teaching.
  2. Scriptures are profitable for *reproof* – convicting, refuting error and rebuking sin.
  3. Scriptures are profitable for *correction* – setting upright on one's feet.
  4. Scriptures are profitable for *instruction in righteousness*.
  5. "Perfect" (*artios*) means "fitted, complete, perfect, sufficient.
  6. "Thoroughly furnished" — (*exartizo*) — to fit out, to equip fully; "The word was used of documents which were completely outfitted or of a wagon which was completely outfitted or of a completely outfitted rescue boat." (Rienecker/Rogers, Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament, p. 647.)
- B. Miracles were for the purpose of confirming the word (Mark 16:17-20; Heb. 2:1-4). Once the word was completely revealed, the miraculous ceased (I Cor. 13:8-10). The word in written form was completed at the very latest toward the end of the first century.

- C. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13). Was Christ faithful to his promise? Did the Holy Spirit fulfill his role?
- D. The apostles were the ambassadors of Christ, i.e., his representatives, on earth (II Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 6:19). Were the ambassadors faithful to their mission? Did they leave anything out? If so, why the warning not to add nor subtract from the word of God (Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19).
- E. If the Scripture is able to make one perfect; i.e., complete, it must be complete. (II Tim. 3:16-17)

### CONCLUSION:

- 1. The New Testament is the final and complete revelation of God.
- 2. Therefore, we must obey it (Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21).
- 3. Each of us shall be judged by it in the final day.

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The Church The End Of God's Eternal Purpose

Eph. 3:6-11

Kenneth Burleson

- 1. God Organized Three Institutions.
 - a. The Home
 - 1) Gen. 2:18-24.
 - 2) Jesus refers to the beginning of the home. Matt. 19:1-6
 - 3) Paul also made reference to its beginning. Eph. 5:31
 - b. Government.
 - 1) From the creation of man and through many generations, God ruled in religion and government without an earthly king.
 - 2) The children of Israel wanted a king to be like other nations. Deut. 17:14; Judges 17:6; 18:1; I Sam. 8:5; Hos. 13:19; Acts 13:20,21
 - 3) The Christian dispensation. Rom. 13:1-8
 - c. The Church.
- 2. The Church — The End Of God's Eternal Purpose. This Will Be Our Study In This Lesson.

DISCUSSION:**I. THE CHURCH IN PROMISE.**

- A. Veiled Promise. Gen. 3:15
 - 1. Christ the seed of woman. Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:21-23
 - 2. Complete in the church. Eph. 5:23-27
- B. Promise To Abraham. Gen. 12:1-3
 - 1. Through his seed. Gen. 22:18
 - 2. Christ the seed. Gal. 3:16, 18, 29
- C. Promise To Judah. Gen. 49:10
 - 1. Sceptre not depart. Rule
 - 2. Sceptre refers to kingdom. Psalms. 45:6; Heb. 1:3,8

II. THE KINGDOM PROPHESED.

- A. II Sam. 7:12-17; I Chron. 17:11-15.
- B. There Are Other Kingdom Prophecies. Isa. 2:2-3; Dan. 2:31-44, But our attention in this lesson is...
 - 1. On The Prophecy Of Nathan To David.
 - 2. The seed of David to build. Acts 2:30
 - 3. After David's death. Acts 2:29
 - 4. Build His house. Acts 2:30, 47; I Tim. 3:15
 - 5. The throne of the Lord. I Kings 2:12; I Chron. 29:23; Acts 2:32-36
 - 6. Throne established. Isa. 9:7; Acts 2:30, 34, 35
 - 7. Throne in heaven. Psalms. 89:3,4, 34-37; Acts 2:33
 - 8. To rule on throne. Psalms. 110:1; Acts 2:33

III. A STUDY OF EPHESIANS 3:6-11.

- A. What We Find In Verse 6.
 - 1. That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs.
 - a. Part of the family. I Tim. 3:15
 - b. Christians obtain an inheritance. Eph. 1:11
 - c. If we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, spiritually. Gal. 3:29, Jew and Gentile are one in Christ. Gal. 3:28
 - d. Children are not as servants, but heirs. Gal. 4:6,7
 - 2. All are in one body, church, or kingdom. Eph. 1:22,23; John 10:16
 - a. The partition is gone. Eph. 2:14-16
 - b. All can be one in Christ. Eph. 1:10
 - 3. Jew and Gentile are now partakers of His promises.
 - a. The promise made to Abraham. Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:8, 16,29
 - b. When the church was established, all things were brought together in Christ. II Tim. 1:1
- B. All Can Now See That Which Was A Mystery Before. It Is Now Revealed. v.9
 - 1. "Fellowship." — Arrangement or administration by God.

2. While God was working it out it was not revealed to man. I Peter 1:11
 - a. It was in the mind of God from the beginning of all things.
 - b. When completed, man could see it.
- C. That Which The Heavenly Beings Could Not See, Now They Can See. v.10
 1. The angels could not understand that which God was working out. I Peter 1:12
 2. But when finished, they saw the finished product and could understand.
- D. The Eternal Purpose — It Was Always In The Mind Of God. v.11
 1. God meant it to be, therefore, it was not an after-thought.
 2. There is no substitute for the kingdom.
 3. It is a divine institution.
 4. It is to be, "exalted above the hills." Above all other institutions. Isa. 2:2,3
 5. It was planned and built by divine power. Matt. 16:18

IV. IT IS THE LAST INSTITUTION.

- A. Because The Saved Are In The Church. Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23
- B. Because His Blood Will Not Be Shed Again To Purchase Another Institution. Acts 20:28
- C. God Will Not Offer His Son Again. John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Heb. 1:3; 2:9
- D. The Church We Know Will Become The Heavenly Body When He Takes Us Home.

V. AT THE END OF TIME, THE CHURCH OR KINGDOM WILL BE DELIVERED TO THE FATHER.

- A. I Cor. 15:24-28
- B. Matt. 13:41-43
- C. Matt. 25:34,46

CONCLUSION:

1. Our plea is that all may love and cherish the glorious church of Christ.
2. The Lord loved the church enough to die for her. Eph. 5:25
3. We should seek her first. Matt. 6:33
4. The faithful in the church are those who will live with the Father in heaven.

(NOTE: Portions of this outline were gleaned from notes I received in Brother Roy J. Hearn's Class while studying under him at Memphis School of Preaching.)

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# The Apocalypse: The Final Book Of The Bible

*Waymon Swain*

1. Apocalypse. "Revelation to uncover, an uncovering, a laying bare. Making naked." (Thayer)
2. The word comes from the word "*apokalups*" which means, "to uncover, unveil."
3. This would mean in some way it was covered, or hidden.
4. This literature is given in the style of an apocalypse, and is characterized by a series of visions, and symbolic languages.
5. Wayne Jackson said, "this method was used to smuggle a message of hope to the Lord's people, when an unambiguous declaration of victory would have multiplied their afflictions."
6. Most of these signs were largely borrowed from the Old Testament, which, of course, would be familiar to the saints, and Jews of that day.
7. Smith said, "Some 265 verses in Revelation contain reference from the Old Testament."
8. "The basic design of the book is to show that, in spite of the devastating persecution to which Christians were being, and would be subjected, the cause of Jesus Christ would ultimately be victorious over all opposing forces." —Wayne Jackson
9. In fact, the key word in Revelation is "overcome." 2:7,26; 3:5,12, 21.
10. Christ has "overcome," Rev. 5:5, "But one of the elders said to me, Do not weep, Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose the seven seals."
11. Christ overcame, Prevailed, and so shall His people. This gives us Hope!

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **I. THE DATE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION.**

- A. The interpretation one gives the book of Revelation, has a great deal to do with the date he gives the book.
  1. Most have taken the view that the book was written near the close of the first century, the mid 90's, 95-96 A.D.
  2. However, some have taken the preterist view (preterist comes from a Latin word meaning "that which is past") contending Revelation, the Apocalypse was written around 68 to 69 A.D.

3. Those who hold this view, believe the thrust of the book relates to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
  - a. They believe it has already been fulfilled. Wallace, Coffman and others.
  - b. So the book has nothing about the future except the last few chapters about Heaven and the Judgment.
  - c. Realized Eschatology falls into this time of writing.
4. My view and belief is for the later date, the evidence to me is very strong for the later date, 95-96 A.D.
5. Both external and internal evidence, in my judgment, favors the late date.
6. The External Evidence.
  - a. Irenaeus-180 A.D., student of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John said: "The Apocalypse vision was seen not long ago, almost in our own generation at the close of the reign of Domitian."
  - b. Domitian died in 96 A.D. The Christians suffered much under his reign.
  - c. Some others who gave information to support the late date are Clement of Alexandria, Jerome, and Eusebius.
7. The Internal Evidence.
  - a. The spiritual condition of the churches. Like the church at Ephesus, Eph. 1:15, Rev. 2:4.
  - b. The doctrinal departures, the doctrinal teaching of the Nicolaitanes.
  - c. Written while John was banished to the island of Patmos. This was Domitian's way, not Nero's way.
  - d. After studying both the internal and external evidence, we come to the conclusion that the book was written by the Apostle John, around the year 95 or 96 A.D.
  - e. Domitian reigned from 81 to 96 A.D., and near the end of his reign, John received and wrote the book of Revelation.

## II. WHY WAS THE BOOK WRITTEN?

- A. There are two points or questions we are concerned about.
  1. Why was the book written in the apocalyptic style in which it was written?
  2. Why was the book written at all?
    - a. One person (Gleason) answers the first question. He says, "Apocalypses were usually written at a time of crisis and danger."
    - b. Summers agrees saying, "The personal safety of both the writer and reader was endangered if the persecutors understood the true meaning of the book."

- c. So, the book was written in a code, which would protect the Christian.
- d. Now to the second question. Again summers says, "It is readily seen that troublous times gave birth to apocalyptic literature."
- e. What caused these troubled times? Satan!
- 3. Summers gives the characteristics of apocalyptic literature:
  - a. It has historical significance, based on a real situation.
  - b. Pseudonymous authorship (at times)
  - c. Visions
  - d. The predictive element
  - e. Use of symbols
  - f. The dramatic element

### III. WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK?

- A. McDowell says it is "closely related to the policy of Domitian in insisting that the subjects worship him as a god."
  - 1. It is true, persecution is coming, and there is to be a conflict between Rome and Christianity.
  - 2. So, the Christians needed to be informed to help them endure.
  - 3. This was not the only purpose.
    - a. To comfort the Christians.
    - b. To encourage the Christians.
    - c. To show the victory for the Christian. Rev. 17:14, *"These shall make war with the lamb, and the lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful."*
    - d. To inform the Christians.

### IV. WHO IS PAUL'S "MAN OF SIN?"

- A. II Thess 2:1-12
- B. Does this "man of sin" have anything to do with the book of Revelation?
- C. Paul argued that the Lord had not come, and would not come until there was a "falling away."
- D. Now, a point to be made is this, there was no falling away of any size that developed from the time of this writing 51 A.D. until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
- E. So, the second coming of Christ did not occur with the destruction of Jerusalem.
- F. Let us note some of the traits of the "Man of sin:"
  - 1. The man of sin is the result of the "falling away" from the faith. v.3

2. From the time of this writing he was yet to be revealed. v.3
3. He was designated as the "Man of sin."
4. The man of sin opposes God and exalts himself against all that is sacred. v.4
5. In some way, the man of sin will "sit in the temple of God." v.4
6. He deceives those who love not the truth — by lying wonders. vs.9-10
7. The early stages of this work had already started. v.7
- G. Many theories have been given as to whom his man of sin is:
  1. Pagan Mythology
  2. Satan Himself
  3. Principle of evil
  4. Judaism
  5. A Roman ruler
  6. The future antichrist
  7. Wayne Jackson said, "We believe that the best evidence indicates that the man of sin represents the papal dynasty of the apostate church of Rome."
  8. The identification of the papacy and its religious apparatus with Paul's words in II Thessalonians 2 was the prevailing view for more than a thousand years, a view supported by the writings and interpretations of many of the most brilliant men who ever lived on earth.

### CONCLUSION:

1. We emphasize, the "Little horn" of Daniel 7, Paul's "man of sin" and "the beast" of Revelation have much in common. —Wayne Jackson

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The Uttermost (Last Farthest Reaches Of) The Earth

Acts 1:8; 13:47

W. T. Allison

1. The Gospel is for the whole world. Acts 1:8; 13:46-47; Matt. 28:19-20
2. The whole world received the preaching of the Gospel in the first century. Col. 1:23
3. How did the early Christians accomplish this task?

4. They are a challenge and inspiration for all Christians living in the twenty-first century.

DISCUSSION:

I. GOD'S TRUTH MARCHED ONWARD:

- A. God's truth marched in Jerusalem. Acts 2:41,47; 5:14; 5:29, 42; 6:7
- B. Persecution scattered them. Acts 8:14
- C. Samaria heard the Gospel preached. Acts 8:5
- D. Ethiopia heard the word. Acts 8:26-39
- E. Paul was sent out by Antioch on missionary journeys. Acts 13:3
- F. Gentiles received the Gospel. Acts 10:48
- G. Paul preached to the Gentiles. Acts 13:46-48
- H. All Asia heard the word preached. Acts 19:10
- I. Paul preached to Felix, Agrippa and Caesar's household.
- J. The truth marched from house to hut, village to city, king to harlot, and rich to poor changing and revolutionizing people, homes and lives.

II. WHOM DOES GOD ENTRUST THIS TRUTH?

- A. Gospel entrusted into hands of preachers. Rom. 10:13-14
- B. Christians have this treasure in earthen vessels. II Cor. 4:3,7
- C. God taught against the violence of silence in Obadiah. 10-11.
- D. We are to pull sinners out of the fire. Jude 21-23
- E. We are to walk the Christian walk. I John 1:7; Eph. 4:1; Eph. 5:1; Eph. 5:15; Rom. 4:12
- F. Jesus died to make men holy, let us teach to make men free.
- G. What is God's back-up plan if we fail. There is no back-up plan!

III. WHAT EMPOWERS US TO MARCH FORWARD WITH THE TRUTH?

- A. We know our weakness. If it all depends upon us, we will surely fail. God promised His presence and help. Matt. 28:20
- B. God gives us an armour that is fit for the battle.
- C. God's Christian armour:
- D. The full armour of God. Eph. 6:10-19
 1. Girdle of truth. v.14
 2. Breastplate of righteousness. v.14
 3. Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. v.15
 4. Shield of faith. v.16
 5. Helmet of salvation. v.17
 6. Sword of the Spirit. v.17
- E. The battle plan. vs.18-20

1. Prayer connects us to our Commander-in-chief.
2. The plan of strategy is for us to boldly preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

IV. **WHY MUST THE TRUTH OF GOD CONTINUE TO BE PREACHED?**

A. Three reasons:

1. Jesus said to do it.
2. Mankind is lost.
3. Heaven to gain and a hell to shun.

CONCLUSION:

1. I pledge to you my love, my labor and my life.
2. Will you make the same pledge?
3. Jesus is counting on us to take the Gospel to the uttermost part of the earth. We must not fail Him.
4. SONG: Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!

The Last Adam The First and The Last

Cade Somers

1. Many things in life begin and end in the same manner.
 - a. Every day begins in darkness and ends the same way.
 - b. Babies enter the world with nothing and people die taking nothing with them.
2. It seems every natural event resolves itself; sun up/sun down; weather cycle; even damaged trees after a storm sprout buds and recover; migrating birds find their way to where they once were.
3. But, there is at least one thing that does not so naturally resolve itself—sin; the cure to which is Jesus Christ (John 1:29).
4. Jesus said, "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending...which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*" (Rev. 1:8)
 - a. Thankfully, Jesus is the Constant.
 - b. At the beginning of the day was Christ; at the end of the day will be Christ.
5. It isn't in racing terms we understand this statement, but in terms of space and time. Christ was first and will be last, chronologically speaking.
6. 1 Corinthians 15 is a chapter on the dead.

- a. What is their present state?
 - b. What will be their end?
 - c. What hope do they have?
7. We usually speak of Christ in the *present tense* b/c His being in the grave only lasted three days; He continues to live today. But this lesson subject deals with particular facts about the Son of God's experience in the flesh, which is history. Of this, we shall speak and often refer to the "Last Adam" in the *past tense*.

DISCUSSION:

I. TEXTUAL OVERVIEW.

- A. Chapter context; v.45's place (Outlined)
 - 1. The evidence of Christ's resurrection (vs.1-11).
 - 2. The resurrection of Christ is the foundation of our faith (vs.12-19).
 - 3. Results to be deduced from Christ's resurrection (vs.20-28).
 - 4. The life of believers, an argument for the resurrection (vs.29-34).
 - 5. Analogies helpful for understanding the subject (vs.35-49).
 - 6. Conclusion and exhortation (vs.50-58).
- B. Apostolic inclusions.
 - 1. There were times when man's interpretation of scripture was off-target: some thought Christ was Elijah, Jeremiah or another prophet (Matt. 16:14). Herod thought He was John the Baptist (Mark 6:16).
 - 2. Thus, Paul included "Adam" and "Christ" after the word "first."
- C. Language; unfounded allegory conjecture regarding Genesis 1-11 (second Adam's real existence necessitates first Adam's actual life, and it validates the entire gospel record).

II. ADAM AND JESUS CHRIST LIKENESSES.

- A. Both Were "First" Men.
 - 1. Adam was first created and physically matured. Created at an age in which he and Eve could "be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it..." (Gen. 1:28); the responsibility of dominion indicative of Adam's age; also named the animals (2:20); and the prohibition (Gen. 2:16,17).
 - 2. Christ was "born out of due time" (I Cor. 15:8) as a newborn God-babe.
 - a. Not created as suggested by Jehovah's Witnesses [proposed scriptures include Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15; Rev. 22:13,16 (comp. Isa. 41:4; 43:10; 44:6; 48:12)].
 - b. Gal. 4:4,5, "*But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman,*

made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

- c. *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."* (Isa. 7:14)

B. Both Were Divinely Manifested.

1. God created Adam from the dirt of the ground and gave him the breath of life (Gen. 2:7); he was a "living soul."
 - a. Not the immortal, reasoning, conscious, responsible soul we think of.
 - b. But, the being of man: breathing, active, with organs, muscles and blood, the very most sustaining part of the body (cf. Lev. 17:11; John 6:53).
2. Christ was God Himself, in the flesh; He was a "quickening spirit."
 - a. Not a mere being having vital signs, but the ability to impart life.
 - b. John 14:6; 1:4; 5:26; 11:25

C. Both Were Tempted.

1. Adam was tempted by means of the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life (command, Gen. 2:16,17; tempted, Gen. 3:1-7; I John 2:15-17).
2. Jesus was tempted "in all points" (in every way possible) Heb. 4:15.
 - a. Of the flesh—hungry, Satan told Him make stones bread (Matt. 4:3).
 - b. Of pride—(Matt. 4:5-7) taken by Satan to Jerusalem, set atop the temple, and was told "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down," saying the stones at the bottom would not hurt him in the "fall" or descent.
 - c. Of the eyes—(Matt. 4:8,9) taken atop a high mountain and shown all He could have if only Jesus would fall down and worship Satan.
 - d. The only difference was in that, *"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."* [CHRIST was not tempted out of a drawn-away heart, but of humiliation and allowance; Heb. 4:15—"cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities"]

D. Both Shaped Patterns.

1. Adam for sin.
 - a. In Adam all die (v.22); not a suggestion of inherited sin (cf. Ezek. 18:4,20).

- b. Job described man's dilemma, at one point pondering the possibility of hope in death (Job 14:1-18).
- c. Rom. 5:12,17; 6:21,23
- 2. Christ for righteousness (glorified in resurrection, Rom. 1:4; I Tim. 3:16; I Peter 3:18).
 - a. In Christ, none die spiritually.
 - b. Paul is not dealing with the resurrection of judgment, but the resurrection of life (cf. John 5:26-29).
 - c. Sin-stained souls became blood-bought.
 - 1) (to the palsied man) "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee..." The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Mark 2:5,10).
 - 2) John 1:29, "...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."
 - 3) Rom. 6:17-19 does not blame Adam for our sins; "ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine" (I Cor. 15:1-4; Col. 2:12).
 - 4) Hosea 7:13; I Peter 1:18,19
 - 5) We shall overcome through the blood of the Lamb; the faithful throughout the ages have (if we accept this as early martyrs or consider it in general sense).

III. CHRIST'S TRANSCENDENCE.

- A. Christ was first in Word (John 1:1,14). He is greater than Adam.
 - 1. He had first-hand role in Creation (Heb. 1:2; John 1:3).
 - 2. He continues in Heaven as High Priest, and His Spirit exists among us today.
 - 3. He is eternal (Heb. 13:8).
 - 4. He committed himself to this world, lowering self, to be raised from the grave by His and the Father's power; Adam was limited to human power.
- B. He died like all men, but became the firstfruits of them who sleep (v.20; cf. the wave sheaf the first of the harvest, Lev. 23:10).
- C. Summary of His Actions; made way for...
 - 1. Body sown in corruption to be raised in incorruption (I Cor. 15:42).
 - 2. Sown in dishonor to be raised in glory (v.43).
 - 3. Sown in weakness; raised in power (v.43).
 - 4. Sown natural; raised spiritual (v.44).
- D. We bear the image of Adam and shall bear the spiritual image of Christ.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. All humanity may relate to the first Adam, but all may also relate to the second.

2. The greater of the two is Jesus Christ.
3. To be Adam's child, one had no choice, but to be Jesus Christ's child there is.

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## **The Last Enemy, Death**

I Cor. 15:26

*Guyton Montgomery*

1. What is Eschatology?
  - a. A discussion of the last things.
  - b. "A branch of theology which treats of the doctrines concerning death, the condition of man after death, the end of this world period, resurrection, final judgment, and the final destiny of the good and the wicked" (McClintock & Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, p. 287).
2. The study of Eschatology has made man marvel all through the ages.
3. In fact there may be no other subject so disputed with so many different doctrines.
  - a. Apocalypse Postponed.
  - b. The Slumbering Apocalypse.
  - c. The Rapture.
    - 1) Partial Rapture
    - 2) Post-tribulation Rapture
    - 3) Mid-tribulation Rapture
    - 4) Pre-tribulation Rapture
  - d. The year 2000.
4. While the study of Eschatology may seem intimidating, when one begins to study it with the Bible they find out it is not nearly so complicated.
5. It is much like with the word "Eschatology" itself; it could be simplified by saying the study of final things, but for some reason man likes to complicate things.
6. When one studies Eschatology, it is only a matter of time until he must deal with what Paul penned by inspiration in I Cor. 15:26.
7. With the above statements in mind, let us study what is written in its simplistic manner.

### **DISCUSSION:**

- I. **THE CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE.**
  - A. I Cor. 15:20-26 — Text Examined.

1. The resurrection of Christ is an undeniable fact.
2. *"The first fruits of them that are asleep"* (v.20).
  - a. This is not to say that he is the first one to ever have been raised from the dead.
    - 1) The child that Elijah raised by the power of God (I Kings 17:22).
    - 2) The man that was raised from the dead when his body touched the bones of Elisha while being buried (II Kings 13:21).
    - 3) Lazarus (John 11:43,44).
  - b. Christ was the first to arise from the dead to die no more.
  - c. To have a better understanding of the idea of "first fruits" it would do well to notice the ancient ceremony in Israel of waving the sheaf of first fruits (Lev. 23:9-11).
  - d. "Christ is the first fruits of all the sleeping saints in his resurrection. As certainly as he is risen so certainly shall they rise, for he is the pledge and assured part of their resurrection." (David Lipscomb, Gospel Advocate Commentary pg. 230).
3. *"...For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive"* (vs.21,22).
  - a. It was by this sin of Adam & Eve that physical death came upon man.
    - 1) While in the Garden of Eden, man had access to the "tree of life" which would give life (Gen. 2:9).
    - 2) When Adam & Eve ate of the fruit from the "tree of knowledge of good and evil" they were banished from the garden which prohibited access to the tree of life (cf. Gen. 3:19-23).
    - 3) Thus came physical death to the life of man.
  - b. However, now that Christ triumphed over death, man will be raised from the dead for eternity (cf. John 5:28).
4. Jesus will reign until he has conquered all enemies (v.25).
  - a. cf. Dan. 2:44.
  - b. Everything that is under Satan is the enemy of God and Jesus will conquer it, including death.
5. Then our text, "The Last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

## II. WORD STUDY.

### A. Last

1. *ESCHATOS* (*es'-khat-os*), farthest, final (of place or time): — ends of, last, latter end, lowest, uttermost (Strong's Greek Dictionary).

- a. This word occurs in 49 verses of the New Testament.
    - b. Some occurrences are: John 11:24; Heb. 1:2; James 5:3; 1 Peter 1:5.
    - c. In the KJV, the word *eschatos* is often translated as "uttermost."
  2. The word "last" is a word that can be viewed with anticipation or apprehension.
    - a. Anticipation.
      - 1) When labors are to be ended.
      - 2) "Here is the last piece of wood to be split.
    - b. Apprehension.
      - 1) When enjoyment is to be ended (or the source of enjoyment is gone).
      - 2) "That was the last piece of fried chicken."
- B. Enemy
1. *ECHTHROS* (*ech-thros*), from a primary *echtho* (to hate); hateful (passively, odious, or actively, hostile); usually as a noun, an adversary (especially Satan): — enemy, foe. (Strong's Greek Dictionary).
    - a. This word occurs in 32 verses of the New Testament.
    - b. Some occurrences are: Matt. 5:43; Gal. 4:16; Heb. 10:13; Rev. 11:5.
  2. The word "enemy" is a word that can be viewed with anticipation or apprehension.
    - a. Anticipation.
      - 1) When there is conquest over the enemy.
      - 2) "The enemy has been conquered."
    - b. Apprehension.
      - 1) When the enemy is (or may be) victorious.
      - 2) "The enemy is ready to attack."
- C. Death
1. *THANATOS* (*than'-at-os*), (properly, an adjective used as a noun) death (literally or figuratively): — deadly, (be...) death. (Strong's Greek Dictionary).
    - a. This word occurs in 106 verses of the New Testament.
    - b. Some occurrences are: Matt. 4:16; Luke 1:79; John 12:33; Acts 22:4; Rom. 6:3.
  2. The word "death" is a word that also can be viewed with anticipation or apprehension.
    - a. Anticipation.
      - 1) When there is all to Gain.
      - 2) "*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*" (Phil. 1:21).
    - b. Apprehension.
      - 1) When one is living for this world and is unprepared for the hereafter.
      - 2) "I don't want to die."



3. Death has been feared all through the ages..
  - a. *"...the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling come upon me. And horror has overwhelmed me"* (Psa. 55:4,5).
  - b. *"Who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage"* (Heb. 2:15).
  - c. Bildad described death as the "king of terrors" (Job 18:14).

### CONCLUSION:

1. Separately, the three words previously noted (last, enemy, death) are fearful in themselves.
2. Yet, when you put the three together it will strike fear into the hearts of many.
3. However, to a Christian these words bring hope.
4. What do they do for you?

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Premillennialism: False View Of Last Things

Terry Joe Kee

1. The god of this world (Satan) fills the world with falsehood and lies.
 - a. He loves and desires for man to believe lies.
 - b. Some "wrest" the scriptures to their own destruction. II Peter 3:16
2. One prominent lie today is the lie of premillennialism.
 - a. Pre=Before; Mille=1000; Annum=Year; Ism=Doctrine, System.
3. This doctrine teaches that Jesus will return to the earth BEFORE he establishes the kingdom and will rule with his saints for a period of 1000 years.
4. Those who accept this doctrine generally believe:
 - a. The kingdom of Old Testament prophecy has not been established.
 - b. The church was given as an afterthought, a substitute.
 - c. The land promise made to Abraham is yet future.
 - d. Christ will return in the future to establish his kingdom.
 - e. The Jews, as a nation, will be converted and restored to Palestine.
 - f. Christ will reign with his saints for a period of 1000 years in Jerusalem on David's literal throne.

5. The consequences of believing such a doctrine are eternal!
 - a. It forsakes God's eternal purpose for his church (kingdom).
 - b. It counts the blood of Christ (the church's purchase price) as worthless. Eph. 3:8-11; Acts 20:28
 - c. Nothing is harmless that counts the church and the blood as vain things.
6. Generally, there are three systems: Premillennialism, Postmillennialism, and Amillennialism.
 - a. Premillennialism is the system already mentioned and that will be the focus of this study.
 - b. Postmillennialism is the view that the world will one day be "Christianized" and that the return of Christ will occur at the close of a long period of worldwide righteousness and peace called a millennium.
 - c. Amillennialism says that the Bible teaches that there will be NO millennial period of righteousness at the end of the world.
7. Premillennialists generally hold that:
 - a. The kingdom of God is not now in the world and that it will not be instituted until Christ returns.
 - b. It is not the purpose of the present gospel age to convert the world to Christianity, but rather to preach the gospel as a witness to the nations and to warn them of and make them justly subjects to judgment; also to gather out of all nations God's elect, the church saints.
 - c. The world is growing worse and will continue to grow worse until Christ comes to establish his kingdom.
 - d. Immediately preceding the return of Christ there will be a period of general apostasy and wickedness.
 - e. We are now in the latter stages of the church age and the return of Christ is near, probably to occur during the lifetime of this generation.
 - f. At the coming of Christ the righteous dead of all ages will be raised in the "first resurrection."
 - g. The resurrected dead together with the transfigured saints who are alive on earth are to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.
 - h. The judgment of all the righteous will then take place, which judgment primarily consists of the assignment of rewards.
 - i. Before and during the tribulation period the Jews are to be restored to the land of Palestine.
 - j. At the mere sight of the Messiah, the Jews are to turn to him in a national conversion and true repentance.
 - k. Christ at his coming destroys the anti-Christ and all his forces in the battle of Armageddon.
 - l. After the battle of Armageddon Christ establishes a world-wide kingdom with Jerusalem as its capital, in which he and the resurrected and transfigured saints rule for a thousand years in righteousness, peace and prosperity.

- m. During this reign, the city of Jerusalem and the temple are to be rebuilt, the feasts and fasts and the priesthood ritual and sacrificial system reinstituted, through reform in a Christian spirit and by Christian worshippers.
 - n. The golden age is also to be characterized by the removal of the curse from nature so that the deserts shall blossom as the rose and the wild ferocious nature of the beasts will be changed.
 - o. During the millennium great numbers of the Gentiles will turn to God and be incorporated into the kingdom.
 - p. While many remain unconverted and rebellious at heart they are not destroyed, but are held in check by the rod of iron rule of Christ.
 - q. During the millennium Satan is bound, cast into the abyss and so shut away from the earth.
 - r. At the close of the millennium Satan is to be loosed for a short time.
 - s. The millennium is to be followed by a short but violent outbreak of violence, wickedness and rebellion headed by Satan, which all but overwhelms the saints and the holy city of Jerusalem.
 - t. The forces of wickedness are to be destroyed by fire which is cast down upon them from heaven.
 - u. The wicked dead of all ages are to be raised in the "second resurrection," judged, and with the Devil and wicked angels, cast into Hell.
 - v. Heaven and Hell are introduced in their fullness, with the new heavens and the new earth as the future home of the redeemed, which will constitute the eternal state.
8. The second coming of Christ is a prominent New Testament doctrine.
- a. The second coming of Christ in the New Testament is mentioned an average of once every twenty-five verses.
 - b. The passages dealing with the second coming are commonly perverted in the world today to the point they do not closely resemble the writers intent. cf. II Peter 3:15,16
9. False doctrines have been taught on the second coming since the first century. cf. II Thessalonians
- a. Some of the "Church Fathers" taught and believed in pre-millennialism, but did not advocate it to the degree it is taught today.
 - b. Among the Catholics this is practically a new theory, although some do advocate it today.
 - c. During the days of the Reformation, premillennialism was taught only to a slight degree.
 - d. This theory was first made prominent by William Miller in 1843 with his predictions of the end of the world and the second coming.

- e. More recently this theory has been popularized by such men as Hal Lindsey with his book, *The Late Great Planet Earth* and perhaps even more by C. I. Scofield and his Scofield's Reference Bible along with so many more fanciful writings among the promoters of this doctrine.
- 10. This theory has also infiltrated the church and almost brought it to ruin.
 - a. In 1830 Alexander Campbell wrote concerning these matters in the "Millennial Harbinger." (February 1, 1830)
 - b. Moses Lard presented some of these matters in "Lard's Quarterly" in October 1864.
 - c. One should read Robert Milligan's *An Exposition And Defense Of The Scheme of Redemption* and note the last forty or so pages where he addresses these matters. This was in 1868.
 - d. In 1909 R. H. Boll was appointed front page editor of the Gospel Advocate.
 - e. In 1910 he began to write on the second coming of the Lord.
 - f. In 1915 the premillennial question came to the front in the Lord's church.
 - 1) Brother Boll believed and taught this premillennial theory.
 - 2) Most brethren during this time had not studied this question and therefore had determined this to be simply a matter of opinion.
 - g. T. W. Brents volume *Gospel Sermons* has a chapter advocating some of the principles of premillennialism. This was in 1918.
 - h. In 1918 in Louisville, Kentucky the Highland church disfellowshipped two elders, R. O. Rubel and C. A. Taylor for opposing the premillennialism being taught by their preacher E. L. Jorgenson.
 - i. In 1927 the first debate among our brethren was held between R. H. Boll and H. Leo Boles. At this time H. Leo Boles suggested these matters should not be made into a test of fellowship and many brethren agreed with him.
 - j. Beginning on January 5, 1933 in Winchester, Kentucky Charles Neal and Foy E. Wallace, Jr. held what is still today one of the greatest debates ever on premillennialism. This debate in large measure slammed the door on premillennialism in the churches of Christ and saved us from being carried into digression. Foy Wallace said this is a matter of fellowship and soon those like H. Leo Boles and G. C. Brewer agreed with him and renounced their earlier statements. Since then, this has not been a matter of opinion among faithful brethren.

DISCUSSION:**I. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IS NOT PRE-MILLENNIAL.**

- A. This theory states that Christ is coming to establish his kingdom on earth to rule for a thousand years.
- B. This theory teaches that Jesus intended to set up his kingdom on earth and reign here, however his plans were foiled when the Jews rejected him; thus he died in disgrace, ascended to heaven as a failure and founded the church as a substitute promising to return to earth and succeed the second time what he had failed at the first time.
- C. The death of Jesus was not an unexpected accident, but was rather the theme of the Old Testament prophecies. cf. Gen.3:15; Isaiah 53:1-12; Psalm 22:1,16,18; 34:20; 69:21
 - 1. His resurrection is the essence of victory not defeat. Heb. 2:14; Rom. 1:4; Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 10:21; 1:1-3; 12:1,2
 - 2. The church is not a last minute substitute for the kingdom. Eph. 1:22,23; 3:8-11
 - a. The church and the kingdom refer to the same institution. Matt. 16:18,19
 - b. The Old Testament foretold of its beginning. Isa. 2:1-4
 - c. The kingdom is spoken of as being in existence. Col. 1:13; Mark 9:1
- D. Jesus never intended to reign on earth in a literal sense. John 18:36
- E. His second coming signals the end and not the beginning. I Cor. 15:24-26
- F. If Christ failed the first time, what assurance is there that he will succeed the second time?
- G. The second coming cannot be premillennial in nature.

II. THE SECOND COMING IS NOT IMMINENT.

- A. Imminent means "at hand, near, close, ready to happen, impending."
 - 1. "At hand" is without significance if the kingdom has not yet come. Matt. 3:1,2; Matt. 4:17
 - 2. Premillennialism says that the imminent return of Jesus has always been taught.
 - 3. The Bible teaches nothing now that it did not teach when written.
 - 4. If it teaches this in the first century it taught error, because Jesus did not come!
- B. Paul did not teach an imminent return. Acts 20:28-32; II Tim. 4:6; I Thess.5:2; II Thess. 2:1-3
- C. Peter did not teach an imminent return. II Peter 1:14 cf. John 21:18,19; II Peter 3:10

- D. The coming of Christ will be imminent at some point, but it is not possible for man to know that time. Matt. 24:36-44; Matt. 25:13; Mark 13:32
- E. We must realize that one day Christ will return, but there is not anything in scripture to indicate or to suggest that the time of his return is imminent or anything that could lead us to an exact time or date.

III. THERE WILL NOT BE MULTIPLE RETURNS OF CHRIST.

- A. Premillennialism calls for at least one to many "second comings."
 - 1. The "Rapture" according to this doctrine is the time when the Lord will come again "for his saints."
 - 2. Then the "Revelation" will occur seven years later when the Lord will return again "with his saints" to establish the kingdom to last 1000 years.
 - a. The rapture is unknown to the scriptures. Rev. 1:7
 - b. The idea of a revelation to end in a reign on the earth is likewise foreign to the scriptures. The Bible does not teach anywhere that Christ will ever set foot on the earth again! I Thess. 4:13-18; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 1:7
- B. The second coming of Christ will be at the end of his reign and not at the beginning of an earthly reign. I Cor. 15:24-26
 - 1. When Jesus returns the earth will be destroyed. II Peter 3:9,10
 - 2. He will come to punish the wicked and reward the righteous. II Thess. 1:6-10; Matt. 16:27; Mark 8:38
 - 3. The righteous will be raised at the "last day." John 6:39,40,44
 - 4. But the wicked will be judged at the "last day." John 12:48
 - 5. All the dead will be raised at the same hour (time), not 1007 years apart. John 5:28,29
- C. The idea of a dual coming is error and totally foreign to the teaching of the Bible.

IV. THE FACT AND PURPOSE OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

- A. The second coming of Christ has been promised. John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 9:27,28
 - 1. Refusing to believe in premillennialism does not mean that one denies the second coming of Jesus.
 - 2. The Lord has promised to come and he will! II Peter 3:9
- B. What will be the purpose of his return?
 - 1. Not to establish an earthly kingdom. John 18:36
 - 2. Not as an offering for sin. Heb. 9:26,28

3. Not to offer salvation to the disobedient. II Thess. 1:7-9; Heb. 9:27
4. He is coming to fulfill his role as judge. John 5:22; Rom. 2:16; Acts 17:31
5. He is coming to receive the righteous. John 14:1-3
6. He is coming to execute judgment against the wicked. Jude 14,15

C. One ought to read carefully Matthew 25:31-46.

V. THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES ONLY ONE RESURRECTION — NOT TWO!

A. W. E. Blackstone, *Jesus Is Coming*, pp. 47-49, teaches two resurrections to come.

1. Blackstone uses I Cor. 15:22-26 to argue the order of the resurrection.
 - a. He says this passage is "so plain that the wayfaring man need not err therein."
 - b. He has the order of Christ first; next the godly who are his at his coming; the "end" referring to the rest of the dead.
2. Blackstone argues that I Thess. 4:13-17 "reiterates and emphasizes" that the dead in Christ shall rise first, when the Lord descends with a shout. Further he says the unrighteous are not mentioned and therefore have no part in the first resurrection.
3. Finally he argues that Rev. 20:4-14 shows the first resurrection completed by the resurrection of the tribulation saints and the reign with Christ occurs before the rest of the dead are raised.

B. What does the Bible say?

1. Would not I Cor. 15:22-26 be an excellent place to insert the thousand year reign? But Paul puts rather "the end."
 - a. I Cor. 15 affirms that Christ is reigning and will continue to reign until death is destroyed and abolished.
 - b. Notice, I Corinthians 15:25 "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Jesus must reign until the last enemy, death, is destroyed.
 - c. Therefore as long as one is left in the grave, death is not destroyed. Christ will reign therefore until the last person is raised from the grave.
 - d. There is no room in this passage for a thousand years between two resurrections.
 - e. This passage will have Christ in heaven reigning during the millennium while Mr. Blackstone must have him on earth.
2. Does the mention of the first resurrection by Paul in I Thess. 4:13-17 indicate a second?
 - a. I Thess. 4:16 does not indicate a second resurrection.

- b. Without a doubt Paul says the dead in Christ will rise first!
 - c. But first before what? Before the righteous living are caught up to meet the Lord in the air.
 - d. In this passage Paul is not even dealing with the resurrection of the unrighteous – only the righteous are referred to here. The wicked are not under consideration!
 - e. Some of the Thessalonians had the impression that their dead brethren would be at a disadvantage when the Lord returned.
 - f. Read this passage along with II Thess. 1:5-10 and see that Paul refers to the general resurrection of all at his return.
- 3. Never will a premillennialist speak long without referring to Rev. 20 and in so doing will pervert it time and again.
 - a. Mr. Blackstone and others see "thousand years" and immediately build an entire system of false theology around it.
 - b. Brother Wallace powerfully points out all that is not mentioned in this passage which must be mentioned for premillennialism to have a "leg to stand on."
 - c. There is no mention of the second coming of Christ, a bodily resurrection, a reign on earth, the literal throne of David, Jerusalem or Palestine, us, or Christ on earth. (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., *God's Prophetic Word*, p. 284)
 - d. Notice especially *"They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"* (Rev. 20:4).
 - 1) "They" is third person plural and Mr. Blackstone must make it first person plural, "We."
 - 2) No mention of Christ reigning but "they reigned."
 - 3) According to their doctrine, if the reigning ended at the end of the thousand years, so must the living!
 - e. Compare Rev. 20:5,6 with Rev. 2:11.
 - 1) Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other.
 - 2) Overcoming persecutions equaled exemption from the second death.
 - 3) Part in the first resurrection equally exemption from the second death.
 - 4) Overcoming the persecutions and part in the first resurrection were equal to the same thing, therefore they are equal to each other.
- C. There are numerous plain passages which show without doubt that there will be but one resurrection:

1. John 5:28,29 shows that the wicked and the righteous will be raised at the same time.
2. Why didn't Jesus correct Martha when she expressed belief in "the resurrection at the last day?" John 11:24
3. Four times in John 6 Jesus speaks of the "last day." John 6:39,40,44,54. How many days are there after the Last day?!? Certainly not a thousand years!
4. Notice that in the same book Jesus speaks of the wicked being judged by his word in the "Last Day" John 12:48.
 - a. If the righteous are going to be raised at the last day and the wicked are going to be raised at the last day, can this be anything except the general resurrection?
 - b. Notice that Paul expressed "A" (singular) resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous! Acts 24:14,15
 - c. John said "All kindreds of the earth" would see him. Rev. 1:7

VI. THERE WILL ONLY BE ONE JUDGMENT — NOT TWO OR SEVEN!

- A. Premillennialists are divided relative to how many judgments there will be. Some say two: a judgment of the righteous and a judgment of the unrighteous.
- B. Scofield's Reference Bible lists seven judgments:
 1. The Judgment of Believers' Sins. He says this took place at Calvary.
 2. The Judgment of Self in the Believer. This is the continuing process in life where inner thoughts are scrutinized in the light of God's word. This is more commonly referred to as the conscience.
 3. The Judgment of Believer's Works. This is based on II Cor. 5:10. It is argued this applies only to Christians as per the use of "we" indicating only Christians present at this judgment.
 4. The Judgment of the Living Nations. This is classed as one of the most important judgments in the dispensational system because it determines which nations will enter the millennial kingdom. This is argued from Matt. 25:31-46. This will occur at the time of the revelation — when Christ comes WITH the saints.
 5. The Judgment of Israel. Not all dispensationalist acknowledge this as a separate judgment. This judgment seems strange since their doctrine teaches a mass conversion of the Jews at his return using Rom. 11:26 as their proof-text.
 6. The Judgment of Fallen Angels. This is based on the words of Paul in I Cor. 6:3. This judgment fails miserably when one considers Jude 6, *"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he*

hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Few men doubt this to refer to the final judgment.

7. The Great White Throne Judgment. This is based on Rev. 20:11-15. It is argued that this is only the judgment of the wicked. This could not include the righteous for they have all already been judged according to their doctrine. But why open the book of life? Does this not indicate that the righteous are present? Read also Rev. 21:27. Those not in the book were cast into the lake of fire, but those in the book gain entrance into heaven.
- C. Notice also the following passages which show there is only one judgment:
 1. Acts 17:30,31, God has appointed A DAY!!! — not days.
 2. Matt. 25:31-46, Premillennialists seek to use this passage but it destroys their doctrine:
 - a. Both the righteous and the unrighteous will appear before the throne at the same time.
 - b. Both the sheep and the goats are present (v.32).
 - c. Both those who hear him say "come" and those who hear him say "depart" are present together (vs.34,41)
 - d. Both those who enter life eternal and those who enter everlasting punishment are present together (v.46).
 3. II Cor. 5:10, Paul says ALL shall appear before the judgment seat.
 4. II Peter 2:9, Peter said the Lord knows how to reserve the unjust unto THE DAY (not days) of judgment!
 5. Heb. 9:27, The Hebrew writer tells us of THE JUDGMENT, not judgments.
 6. Notice closely Luke 11:32, *"The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."* They will rise in THE judgment — not judgments!

VII. CHRIST NOW SITS ON DAVID'S THRONE AND IS NOW REIGNING.

- A. All agree that Jesus was promised David's throne. cf. II Sam. 7:12-17; Luke 1:30-33 cf. Heb. 1:5; Rom. 1:3
- B. The premillennialists fail to realize that David's throne is in heaven. cf. Psalm 89:35-37
- C. Peter's great argument on Pentecost was that Christ has ascended to the throne of David and is now king, ruler. Acts 2:29-36
- D. Jesus possesses the "key of David." Rev. 3:7 This is authority.
- E. Jesus has a throne and scepter. Heb. 1:8

- F. Jesus is to reign until all enemies are destroyed. I Cor. 15:25

VIII. THE KINGDOM CLEARLY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED.

- A. While Christ was on earth the kingdom was "at hand." Mark 1:15
1. cf. Dan. 2:44
 - a. Head of gold — Babylonian empire.
 - b. Breast and Arms of Silver — Medes and Persians.
 - c. Belly and Thighs of Brass — Grecian.
 - d. Legs Iron and Feet part Iron and Part Clay—Roman.
 2. The Romans were ruling when Christ began preaching. Luke 2:1; John 11:48
- B. Jesus said the kingdom would come with power during the lifetime of apostles and those living then. Mark 9:1
1. Power came when the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost. Acts 2:1-4
 2. This is the time when Jesus began to rule over his kingdom. Acts 2:36
- C. The Hebrew writer spoke of the kingdom as in existence and standing forever. Heb. 12:28
1. Rev. 1:9 speaks of John as "in tribulation" but also speaks of his being in the kingdom!
 2. Paul reminded the Colossians that they had been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. Col. 1:13

IX. CHRIST IS NOW REIGNING OVER HIS KINGDOM!

- A. Daniel prophesied that Jesus would come to the Ancient of Days to receive a kingdom. Dan. 7:13,14 Not from, but to!
- B. The parable of Jesus in Luke 19:11-27 says that the Lord would go into a far country to receive a kingdom. This refers to Christ going to the Father.
- C. Paul said Christ would reign "TILL" the last enemy (death) is destroyed. I Cor. 15:25,26
1. Death will be destroyed at the resurrection.
 2. Therefore the reign will last until the resurrection.
- D. Further, Paul said the kingdom would be delivered up to the Father. I Cor. 15:23,24
- E. Notice all the differences in the Bible and the premillennial doctrine:
1. Premillennialism says that Christ is not now reigning. The Bible says He is now reigning!
 2. Premillennialism says that at His coming will be the beginning. The Bible says that at His coming will be the end!

3. Premillennialism says that at his coming the kingdom will be set up. The Bible says that at His coming the kingdom will be delivered up.
 4. Premillennialism says that when Christ comes, God will give Him the kingdom. The Bible says that when Christ comes, He will Give the kingdom to God.
- F. Notice that Paul said that at His coming, Christ would judge the world and the Kingdom! II Tim. 4:1

CONCLUSION:

1. These theories dethrone Christ, minimizes the church, and gives false hope to the Jews.
 2. May all men be ready when the Lord returns, for when He does, all will be raised and all will be judged.
 3. Man's only hope is found in Christ! Men must obey now or die without hope!
- (NOTE: I do not claim originality with these thoughts. This is taken in large part from notes I have accumulated over the years. Also, much of this is from notes taken when in the Memphis School of Preaching in a class on Premillennialism taught by Frank Young.

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## Dispensationalism: False View Of Last Things

*Gilbert Gough*

1. The false doctrine of Dispensational Premillennialism has been developed in the imaginations of men during the past 150 years.
  - a. Do you realize how many denominations believe in dispensational premillennialism at least in part if not the whole?
  - b. Presidents Carter and Reagan believed that Israel would rise to power — the building up of Israel's armaments.
  - c. Leading denominational preachers like Billy Graham, Jerry Falwell, etc. have promoted this false system.
2. The men who held and promoted this false doctrine at its inception, examined the world's condition and believed it was helpless and hopeless.
  - a. They were not satisfied with God's plan to save the lost souls through the church, so some other way other than the mere church was devised.
  - b. They looked for another way for hope other than through the church of Christ, thus rejecting God's plan (Eph. 3:9-12).

- c. They found it in what they called "God's promise to earthly Israel."
- 3. The advocates of this newer doctrine allege that God never intended that the church should be the force or influence over society so as to eradicate sin in men's lives.
  - a. Thus, they held that the church is a mere afterthought to serve until the Jews are willing to accept the Christ as their Messiah or King, at which time Christ will enter upon an earthly reign, and all evil men will be physically destroyed.
  - b. Only the righteous will be left to live upon the earth.
- 4. Their brand of premillennialism divides God's dealings with man into seven dispensations; namely,
  - a. the dispensation of *innocence*;
  - b. the dispensation of *conscience*;
  - c. the dispensation of *human government*;
  - d. the dispensation of *promise*;
  - e. the dispensation of *law*;
  - f. the dispensation of *grace*; and
  - g. the dispensation of *the kingdom*.
- 5. The principles of the dispensationalism were borrowed, in the most part, from the Brethren Movement in England.
  - a. Edwin Irving, of London, had prognosticated from his sermons that the Lord may come at any moment.
  - b. He stressed there is no single event intervening between the church and the "any moment expectancy."
  - c. The fathers of the dispensational movement in America — J. N. Darby, W. E. Blackstone, and C. I. Schofield — did not reveal the source for the background principles of their movement.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIAL REVIEWED.

- A. The Old Testament prophecies which were/are misunderstood by the Jews and the dispensationalists of today envisioned the coming of the Messiah who had been promised by those prophecies.
  - 1. The Jews longed for the kingdom that God had promised and with its king it would conquer the Romans and all other nations who threatened them.
  - 2. Some prophecies which relate to this matter:
    - a. The seed promise. Genesis 3:15; 22:18; II Samuel 7:12, 13;
    - b. The land promise. Gen. 15:17; 17:1-8;
    - c. The prophecies regarding the promise of restoration from the land of Babylon; and
    - d. The promises relating to the king and His kingdom. II Samuel 7:12, 13; Isaiah 2:1-4; Daniel 2:35-44; Psa.

89:3,4, 34-37; 110:1-4; Daniel 7:13,14; Ezekiel 21:27; Gen. 48:10.

3. A vital part of any premillennial program is the contention that the prophecies of the Old Testament indicate that the Messiah was to reign on the literal throne of David in the literal city of Jerusalem over fleshly Israel as a political ruler for a thousand years.
- B. Premillennialists say the purpose of the coming of Jesus was to offer the kingdom to the Jews.
  1. Since they believe Jesus failed to set up His kingdom, they conclude that the offer was rejected by the Jews.
  2. The Jews crucified the king, and rejected His kingdom.
  3. They had a false hope that an earthly, material kingdom of the Jews would be once again established like in David and Solomon's days.
  4. They blinded themselves to the spiritual import of the prophecies concerning the king and His kingdom.
  5. They have a sensual, materialistic view just like the Jews.
- C. Jesus' kingdom was "postponed" since the Jews rejected Him and the church was established as an interlude till Christ's comes again.
  1. Mark 1:15 says "the kingdom was at hand," so the premillennialists say Jesus did not know the Jews were going to reject Him (which is an insult to the deity of Jesus since by implication they would have to say He was not omniscient).
  2. This view entails the program that if the Jews as a nation had accepted Christ, then:
    - a. He would have then and there set up the kingdom with the literal city Jerusalem, as the capitol;
    - b. The Jews then would have defeated the Romans in a military battle and would have expelled them from the land; and
    - c. The Jews would have been exalted to first place among the nations.
  3. The scenario envisioned by the premillennialists further entails the element that the church of Christ was not in God's original plan (cf. Eph. 3:9-11 for proof otherwise).
    - a. This means that when Christ was rejected as the Jews' king and when the kingdom was rejected by them as a nation, then the church was set up as an afterthought to function until Christ comes again.
    - b. So, when Christ comes again, we will have the "first stage" of His "second coming."
    - c. We now live in what they call "the age of church" or the "church dispensation."

- d. They contend that the present preaching of the gospel is not an effort to save all men, rather it is for the specific purpose of witnessing and calling a definite number who are to compose the body of Christ.
- D. When Jesus comes, the dispensationalists say the first resurrection of the dead will take place.
  1. The "first resurrection" (mentioned "they think" in Rev. 20:6) will take place at "the rapture" (a word never mentioned in the Bible).
  2. This means that when Christ comes for His saints:
    - a. All saints (both during the Old Testament and New Testament periods) will be raised from the dead.
    - b. All saints living will be changed.
    - c. This is the so-called "first part" of the first resurrection.
- E. At the "rapture," all the saints (both resurrected dead and all living who will be "changed") will ascend to meet the Lord in the air (thus, a misuse of I Thess. 4:13-18).
  1. The "church age" ends at the "rapture."
  2. The coming of Christ for His saints will be secret and it will take place at night.
  3. The "rapture" is also called the first part of the first stage of the Lord's second coming — the taking of the saints to heaven is called "the rapture."
- F. Now that the saints are in heaven, they will enjoy the marriage supper of the Lamb (as they see it in Rev. 19:7-10), but at the same time there will be a seven year period of the reign of the anti-christ (Rev. 13; II Thess. 2; Daniel 7; 11) with the last three and a half years being the "great tribulation" (Daniel 12:1).
  1. After the "rapture," the saints will be in heaven with the Lord for seven years.
  2. During these seven years the "judgment of the saints" will take place.
  3. This will involve the giving of each saint his appropriate reward and assigning to each his respective position in the kingdom.
  4. Although all the saints are in heaven, during the reign of the anti-christ, there will be many people converted to Jesus. (How? Who knows?)
  5. The Jews will then make a covenant with the anti-christ and those people who are converted during the seven years that the saints are with Christ in heaven will be killed before the Lord returns.
  6. All of the newly converted saints will be killed and they are identified as the tribulation saints.

7. The three and one half years of tribulation – they hold – will be the most severe persecution ever brought upon men. Here is the battle of Armageddon (so they say Rev. 19:17-21 teaches).
  8. Somehow and in some way all the physical nation of Israel will be saved during the tribulation.
- G. Now dispensationalist aver that the Christ returns for His second stage of His second coming to invoke the second part of the first resurrection. This period is called the Revelation where Jesus shows Himself to one and all.
1. The so-called "revelation" is to occur simultaneously with the coming of Christ with His saints to end the "great tribulation" putting an end to Armageddon.
  2. This will be the time that the "tribulation saints" are resurrected and they are to be regarded as the gleanings of the great harvest of the first resurrection.
  3. This will be the time of "the second stage" of the "second coming of Christ."
  4. The Gentiles who are living on the earth will be judged and disposed. (Matt. 25:31-46 somehow fits their picture here).
  5. Christ will then ascend to the throne of David and be coronated as an earthly king of a so-called "millennial kingdom," which then will be established and last for a thousand years.
  6. With anti-christ being destroyed, Satan will be bound and sealed in the pit (as they literally teach from Rev. 20:1-3).
  7. The "tribulation saints" will be resurrected — i.e. seven years after the other saints are resurrected.
  8. This will be the so-called "second part" of the first resurrection.
- H. Now, the kingdom is to be a material, earthly kingdom which lasts for a literal one thousand years.
1. This kingdom began at "the revelation" and it will be a glorious reign where there will be peace — the lion will lie down with the lamb — and no temptation to sin.
  2. They hold that it is during this time that the Gentiles on earth will be converted and it will be a time when national Israel will become supreme over all the earth and will occupy the number one spot, militarily speaking, among nations.
  3. During the millennium, the saints (members of the church will be in Jerusalem and will rule as co-rulers with Christ with a "rod of iron."
- I. Toward the end of the millennium, Satan will be loosed for one more battle, the battle of Gog and Magog (as they literally interpret Rev. 20:7-9).



1. Once and for all, Christ is victorious over Satan's host (as literally they literally interpret Rev. 20:9,10).
2. Then comes the judgment at the great white throne (as literally they literally interpret Rev. 20:11-15).
3. After this final victory and judgment, the kingdom is given to God for eternity.

## II. DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISM REFUTED.

- A. Since the death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and coronation of Christ all transpired in fulfillment of prophecy, dispensational premillennialism is false and Christ has been reigning as king over His kingdom/church since the first day of Pentecost following His resurrection from the dead.
  1. Prophecy shows that Jesus would be on trial and die by crucifixion (Isa. 53:7,8).
    - a. The writers of the Gospels reveal the truth of these events.
    - b. Philip, the inspired evangelist, pointed out that Isaiah 53 was fulfilled in Christ.
  2. Prophecy shows that Jesus would be buried (Isa. 53:9).
    - a. Fulfillment is found in Matt. 27:57-60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:42; I Cor. 15:1-4).
    - b. He was crucified between two malefactors and was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man.
  3. Prophecy shows that Jesus would rise from the dead (Psalm 16:10).
    - a. Peter said as recorded in Acts 2:22, 23 that Psalm 16:10 was fulfilled in Jesus' resurrection.
    - b. Witnesses saw the resurrected Christ (I Cor. 15:5-8).
  4. Prophecy shows that Jesus would ascend and be coronated as King (Daniel 7:13,14).
    - a. Acts 1:9-11 says the disciples were witnesses to Jesus' ascension and even an angel of God affirmed it.
    - b. Peter affirm the coronation of Jesus at God's right hand in his sermon in Acts 2:33-36.
    - c. Acts 2 is the beginning of the church/kingdom of Christ where Jesus established His spiritual kingdom.
- B. The Bible teaches that the kingdom of Christ was established on the first Pentecost after our Lord's resurrection, and that Christ now reigns on David's throne in heaven.
  1. Mark 9:1
    - a. Since Jesus is of the nature of His Father in heaven, Jesus cannot lie (Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18).

- b. Jesus said that in the lifetime of some of those to whom He spoke, the kingdom would come with power.
    - c. If the kingdom did not come, then Jesus lied or there are some very old people on the earth.
    - d. Jesus' kingdom did come with power on Pentecost (Acts 2).
  - 2. Daniel 2:40-44 and Isaiah 2:2-4 prophesy the coming of the kingdom during the fourth kingdom, the Roman empire and on Mt. Zion where the city of Jerusalem stood.
    - a. Prophecy has been made and fulfilled.
    - b. The church began in Jerusalem when Rome was in power.
    - c. To deny such is to deny the integrity of prophecy and the Almighty One who gave it.
  - 3. Col. 1:13, Rev. 1:9, and Heb. 12:28, teach that the kingdom was in existence in the first century because Paul the apostle, the Colossian brethren, John the apostle, and the Hebrew brethren were in the kingdom. How could they have been in the kingdom if the kingdom had not been set up?
  - C. Time and space does not give us time to deal with the fulfillment of the seed promise, the land promise made unto Abraham and how they are fulfilled in detail.
  - D. Time and space does not give us time to deal with the figurative language of the book of Revelation as opposed to the literal interpretation of the futurist views.
  - E. But one thing is for sure: If dispensational premillennialism is proven to be false in any one or more of its constitute elements, the whole system falls.
    - 1. Since the death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and coronation of Christ is true and it was part of God's plan and purpose, then premillennialism is false and is false doctrine.
    - 2. Since the kingdom is the church, and the kingdom/church has been established, then dispensational premillennialism cannot be true; it is a false doctrine and must be rejected.
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# The Final, Complete Reign Of Christ

*David Lemmons*

1. Men of our day do not like to think about being in submission to a king, the much more popular form of government is democracy.
2. However, we cannot read our Bible very long without coming into contact with teaching regarding the REIGN of Jesus Christ.
3. This reign should be of great interest to all men and a study of it should be of tremendous value.
4. Considering the great benefits available *only* under the final and complete reign of Christ, we should without question be willing to sell all that we have to attain citizenship in it (Matt. 13:45-46).  
The final, complete reign of Christ—

## DISCUSSION:

### I. WAS BEAUTIFULLY PROPHESED OF BY THE PROPHET ISAIAH (Isa. 11:1-10).

- A. Being of the "root of Jesse" would have to be established by genealogical records, which would be impossible after A.D. 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem, thus presenting a problem to the premillennialist.
- B. Traits of the coming King (vs.3-5).
  1. Spirit of wisdom & understanding (v.2).
  2. Spirit of counsel & might (v.2).
  3. Spirit of knowledge & fear of the Lord (v.2).
  4. Will judge with no partiality (v.3).
  5. Fairness will rule (v.4).
  6. Righteousness shall be his girdle (v.5).
- C. It will be a peaceable kingdom (vs.6-9).
- D. This reign will include the Gentiles (cf. Rom. 15:12).

### II. IS NOT AN EARTHLY REIGN, BUT SPIRITUAL.

- A. We can be sure that the premillennial definition of the kingdom is not correct.
- B. Jesus did not promise to establish a military kingdom of this world (John 18:36).
- C. Jesus did not fail in establishing His kingdom because the Christians in Colosse were translated into it (Col. 1:13).
- D. Jesus is presently reigning as King upon David's throne (Acts 2:29-34).
- E. That reign is the same as the reign of Jesus over His church.

### III. PRESENTS TO ITS CITIZENS GREAT CHALLENGES.

- A. We have the mission of taking the Gospel to the world (Mark 16:15-16).
- B. We are in a spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10ff).
- C. Our influence is of great importance (Matt. 5:13-16).
- D. Matthew 13 parables show our mission under this reign...
  1. To Sow the Seed—THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM (Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23).
  2. To Emphasize the DIFFERENCE between the Church and the World (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43).
  3. To Grow (Matt. 13:31, 32).
  4. To Be the Proper Influence Among Others (Matt. 13:33).
  5. To Help the World to SEE WHAT A TREASURE THE KINGDOM IS (Matt. 13:44).
  6. To Get People to See the Importance of Being Willing to Pay the Price for the Great Pearl of Kingdom Citizenship (Matt. 13:45-46).
  7. To Teach and Preach About Judgment Day (Matt. 13:47-50).
  8. To Help Others Understand the Nature of the Kingdom (Matt. 13:51-52).

### IV. IS OUR HOPE OF GLORY (Col. 1:27).

- A. Christ within man is the only hope of glory.
- B. This is what qualifies man for the glory that is with God.
- C. Christ Jesus, as He lived here on earth, is the *PERFECT PATTERN* of the life fitted to attain and enjoy glory with God.
- D. The world-view of the Christian is the only one that offers such marvelous hope as to live for ever with God in glory!
  1. That world-view makes life here filled with great importance and meaning!
  2. We have an opportunity so to live as to inherit *ETERNAL LIFE* in the presence of God.
  3. We have an Example to follow who will never lead us astray.
  4. We have an Example to follow who *NEVER CHANGES*—Heb. 13:8, "*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*"
  5. Our Perfect Example wants *ALL OF US* to come to Him (Matt. 11:28-30).
- E. If it is the case that Christ is in us, we are trying to mold our lives in such a fashion and so order our lives that they are compatible with the example set by our Lord (I Peter 2:21).

## V. ULTIMATELY, WILL BE DELIVERED UP TO THE FATHER (I Cor. 15:24).

### CONCLUSION:

1. The final and complete reign of Christ is that reign which is presently in effect.
2. Let us appreciate the value of being in that kingdom and under that reign.

# The Last Days of Israel Were Not the Final Judgment

*Jimmy W. Bates*

1. It is important and necessary that we study and understand Bible teaching on **Final Things**.
  - a. Life on this earth is a period of preparation for those *Final Things*: Death, Second Coming of Christ, Resurrection, Final Judgment, and Eternal Destiny – Heaven or Hell!
  - b. As with all Bible subjects, there is much misunderstanding and false teaching concerning the Bible doctrine of **Eschatology**.
  - c. Our subject deals with the false concept that the final judgment took place with the coming of the Lord in judgment upon rebellious Israel in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
2. The Bible speaks of numerous judgments of God upon rebellious individuals and nations:
  - a. Individuals: 1) Korah – Num. 16, 2) Ahab – I Kings 22, 3) Herod – Acts 12.
  - b. Nations: 1) Egypt – Exod. 14; Isa. 19, 2) Babylon – Isa. 14, 21, 3) Judah – Isa. 1.
3. Different from all these judgments, there will be a FINAL, UNIVERSAL JUDGMENT of all persons and nations at the second coming of Christ – Matt. 25:31-46.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. THE LAST DAYS OF THE JEWISH STATE OF ISRAEL

- A. Background: In developing His plan of redemption for man, God promised Abraham that through his seed He would make a great Nation through which the Messiah (Savior) would come (Gen. 12:1-3; Gal. 3:16).

1. This Israelite Nation developed in Egypt; God delivered them and gave them His law through Moses, and in the fullness of time He sent the Savior into the world (Gal. 4:4).
  2. The work of Jesus on earth (while under the law of Moses and the Mosaic system of Judaism) laid the foundation for a new covenant – the Gospel – the universal law of Christ and the system of Christianity.
  3. God's plan of redemption for man was culminated when Jesus died on the cross making forgiveness of sins possible (Heb. 9:12).
- B. The END of the Law of Moses and the Mosaic system:
1. The Mosaic system of Judaism was never intended to be permanent – its purpose was to bring us to Christ and the Gospel system (Gal. 3:23-29).
  2. Christ fulfilled this purpose and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross (Matt. 5:17,18; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14), replaced it with the new Covenant, His Law, His Priesthood, His Church, and His system of religion – Christianity, which is for both Jew and Gentile (Heb. 8:6-13; 9:15-17; 10:8, 9; Gal. 3:28, 29).
- C. Pronouncement of judgment upon rebellious Israel:
1. The history of Israel is one of rebellion against God.
    - a. They rejected and killed the prophets God sent to them.
    - b. They now reject Christ and the Gospel. They pursue the death of Christ and will persecute and seek to destroy Christianity.
  2. Christ severely rebuked the Jewish leaders (Matt. 23), and predicted the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1-35), which would bring an end to the Jewish economy.
  3. This prophecy was fulfilled in A. D. 70, when the Roman Army under Titus surrounded the city and totally destroyed it and all within.
- D. A brief summary of Matt. 24 & 25 (Compare Mark 13 and Luke 21).
1. Matt. 24:1 – disciples show Jesus the buildings of the Temple.
  2. V. 2 – Jesus predicts destruction of Temple.
  3. V. 3 – At the mount of Olives, disciples (Peter, James, John, and Andrew) ask Jesus:
    - a. "when shall these things be?" (Destruction of Temple).
    - b. "when shall be the sign of thy coming?" (His second coming).
    - c. "and the end of the world?"

4. Matt. 24:4-35 — Jesus answers the first question. He gives signs pointing to the destruction of Jerusalem and states it will be in "this" (His) generation (v.34).
5. Matt. 24:36–25:46 — Jesus answers the question of His Second Coming and the end of the world and states there will be no signs pointing to that event; the Father only knows (v.36).

## II. FALSE DOCTRINE OF "REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY" (KINGISM).

- A. "*Realized Eschatology*" — a philosophy of eschatology which teaches that ALL Bible prophecy of final things (second coming, resurrection, final judgment, end of world, etc.) was fulfilled in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem and therefore there is no future coming of Christ, resurrection, judgment, or end of the world.
  1. This is a radical form of "*preterism*" which views most of Bible prophecy pointing to final things as having been fulfilled already.
  2. A variation of "Realized Eschatology" was introduced into churches of Christ in 1971 by Max King and his father-in-law C. D. Beagle. This doctrine in the church has come to be known as "*Kingism*".
- B. The false premise of this doctrine:
  1. Those who espouse this doctrine believe that the New Testament teaches an "imminent" return of Christ in the first Century.
  2. It is believed that since the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 is a "coming" of Christ, therefore the "second coming" of Christ must have taken place in A.D. 70.
  3. Since the New Testament teaches that the resurrection, judgment, and end of the world will occur at the "second coming" of Christ, therefore these events must have also taken place with the destruction of Jerusalem. In order to make it fit their doctrine, these events are "spiritualized":
    - a. "*Resurrection of the dead*" is the spiritual raising of the church out of Babylon or Judaism — the idea that the church was in the grave of Judaism until A.D. 70 and was then raised to glory and power. This would imply that from Pentecost to A.D. 70, the church existed without power and glory.
    - b. "*The Second Coming of Christ*" and "*Judgment Day*" took place spiritually in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, therefore, no future coming of Christ or Judgment.
    - c. "*The End of the World*" is the end of Judaism or the dissolving of the Jewish world.

- d. The "*Last Days*" refers to the last days of the Old Covenant (Judaism) and covers the period from the cross (or Pentecost in Acts 2) to A.D. 70.
  - e. "*Heaven and earth*" or (Judaism) passed away in A.D. 70.
  - f. The "*new heaven and new earth*" or (Christianity) was established in A.D. 70.
  - g. The "*New Covenant Era*" referred to as "*the age to come*" began in A.D. 70 and is unending – the eternal age.
- C. We often refer to Pentecost of Acts 2 as the "hub of the Bible" because of the importance of the events of that day being the focal point of the Bible.
- 1. Kingism takes the focal point away from Acts 2 and places it on the destruction of Jerusalem A.D. 70.
  - 2. Woe unto those who wrest the Scriptures "to their own destruction" (II Peter 3:16).

### III. THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM IN A.D. 70 WAS NOT THE FINAL JUDGEMENT!

- A. Matt. 24 – The destruction of Jerusalem CANNOT be the Second Coming and Final Judgment.
- 1. Luke 21:20, 21 – When they see Jerusalem compassed with armies, Jesus tells them to flee to the mountains for safety.
    - a. In the Second Coming – the earth will be burned up (II Peter 3:10-12), thus no mountains to which to flee!
    - b. No armies surrounding Jerusalem then for all will appear at the final Judgment (II Cor. 5:10).
  - 2. Matt. 24:19, 20 – The difficulties of a woman with child, nursing mothers, winter travel, or Sabbath day do not fit the Second Coming and final Judgment.
  - 3. Matt. 24:30 – The Lord would "come" in power and glory against Jerusalem.
    - a. This was a representative "coming" by means of the Roman Army. (cf. Matt. 22:7).
    - b. In contrast, the Lord's Second Coming will be literal and visible (Acts 1:11; II Thess. 1:7-9; II Tim. 4:1; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:7).
  - 4. Matt. 24:3 – The "end of the world" and "Christ's coming" are simultaneous.
    - a. The "world" of Matt. 24:3 and Matt. 13:49,50 in Jesus' parable of the Tares is the same.
    - b. The final Judgment is at the end of the world, not at the fall of Jerusalem.
- B. Matt. 25:
- 1. The Jews could know the day and hour of the fall of Jerusalem, because they had signs.



- a. In Matt. 25:13, Jesus said we, "know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."
- b. Compare Matt. 24:36.
2. Matt. 25:14-30 – The "reckoning day" when all must give account of the use of his/her talents did not come in A.D. 70.
3. The fulfillment of Matt. 25:31, 32 is identified in several ways:
  - a. Christ will "come in His glory".
    - 1) This will be after "this present world" Tit. 2:11-13.
    - 2) "This present world" is the Christian era and not Judaism.
    - 3) This will be, "...the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).
  - b. The appearing of Christ to judge the world is when He comes, "and all the holy angels with him..."
    - 1) Jude says this coming is "to execute judgment upon all..." (Jude 15).
    - 2) Paul describes it as coming "...in flaming fire, taking vengeance..." (II Thess. 1:7, 8).
  - c. He then, "sits on the throne of his glory" – His judgment throne.
  - d. "And before him shall be gathered all nations" – This is the final, universal Judgment.
    - 1) This judgment will include the entire human race – not just the people in Jerusalem (Acts 17:31; II Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15; II Tim. 4:1).
    - 2) Jesus said the people of Nineveh will be present on the day of Judgment (Matt. 12:41), but they were not in Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
  - e. This Judgment Day will be a day of final separation – heaven or hell (vs.32,46). This did not happen in A.D. 70.
- C. Acts 17:30 - 31 – The "day" of Judgment:
  1. Will be at Christ's Second Coming.
  2. Will be after the affairs of life are over (Heb. 9:27,28). This was not A.D. 70.
- D. I Peter 1:4,9,13 – The Second Coming (appearance) of Christ is when Christians receive their eternal reward.
  1. Salvation is reserved in heaven (v.4).
  2. It comes at the "end" of our faith (v.9).
  3. It will be realized when Christ is "revealed" (v.13).
  4. Note: If this occurred in A.D. 70, then heaven would have to be here on earth now.
    - a. Thus, no salvation promised after this life.
    - b. Our only hope is now (v.13).
    - c. No future rewards or punishment after this life – really no heaven or hell.

- E. The Final Judgment will take place on the "last day" (John 6:39,40,44,54; 11:24; 12:48). The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was not the last day!

### CONCLUSION:

1. Let us not be deceived by those who claim the Judgment is past;.
2. Each day should be lived with the realization that we will one day appear before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account!

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Characteristics Of The Last Days

II Timothy 3:1-17

Jared Knoll

1. Paul is soon to be departing this life (II Tim. 4:6-8), and in so doing he would be leaving a young man who had spent much time, toiling and even suffering with the Apostle.
2. He had instructed Timothy to be:
 - a. A strong instructor of the faithful (II Tim. 2:1,2).
 - b. A good soldier (II Tim. 2:3-5).
 - c. An approved, unashamed workman (II Tim. 2:15).
 - d. A vessel of honor and meet for the master's use (II Tim. 2:19-21).
 - e. A servant of the Lord meekly helping others (II Tim. 2:24).
3. Yet Paul says, "This know also..." (II Tim. 3:1). While Timothy follows his instruction, he will not be unopposed, yea he will have strong, fierce opposition.
4. As Paul sounds the warning of what shall come in the last days (Christian dispensation – as other lessons have discussed), we would do well to realize that while Paul may or may not have had a particular time period in mind, we still live in the last days which will continue until Christ comes again and the world ends, thus the warning is just as much to us.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE REASON FOR THE PERILOUS TIMES, "FOR..." (vs.2-5).**
 - A. Definitions: (collected from various sources).
 1. *Lovers of self* — fond of self; too intent on one's own interest; such a lover of self that it interferes with the rights, comforts and happiness of others.

2. *Covetous* — fond of silver, lover of money, (Paul said idolatrous, Col. 3:5).
 3. *Boasters* — braggart; empty pretender; vaunting self with speech.
 4. *Proud* — appearing above others; with an over-estimate of one's means and merits; despising others or even treating them with contempt; what boasting is to speech, proud is to action.
 5. *Blasphemous* — speaking evil/slanderosly of God or man; abusive, harsh or injurious speech; speech injurious to another's good name.
 6. *Disobedient to parents* — rebellious toward parents; despising parental authority.
 7. *Unthankful* — ungrateful; ungracious.
 8. *Unholy* — wicked; irreligious, unlike God (I Peter 1:15, 16).
 9. *Without natural affection* — hard-hearted toward kindred; lack of love for kindred; lack of love which nature demands; used primarily of the love of parents for children and children for parents (worse than infidels; I Tim. 5:8).
 10. *Trucebreakers* — implacable; will not keep covenants or commitments; inconsiderate of another's position.
 11. *False accusers* — the word is actually *diablos* which means slanderer or devil ("the accuser of our brethren..." Rev. 12:10); destroying the reputation of the good and honorable.
 12. *Incontinent* — without self control; intemperate in any pursuit or thing such as money, tongue, appetite, pleasure.
 13. *Fierce* — savage; not tame; without feeling or sensitivity for others.
 14. *Despisers of those that are good* — hostile to virtue; opposed to goodness or good men.
 15. *Traitors* — betrayer; without loyalty to friend, family, cause, country and etc. (cf. Matt. 10:34-36).
 16. *Heady* — rash or reckless without regard for consequence; not influenced by sound or wise advice.
 17. *Highminded* — to inflate with self-conceit; to blind with pride or render foolish; exaggerated impression of self (c.f. I Cor. 10:12).
 18. *Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God* — fond of pleasure; pleasure becomes top priority; "If it feels good, do it."
 19. *Form of godliness but denying the power thereof* — appearance of godliness or piety yet it does not dominate their life, "Saturday night Satan; Sunday morning Saint."
- B. Observations about this text with its definitions:

1. Selfishness or self-will is the tap-root which propagates such perilous times.
 - a. Paul begins with lovers of self, which is appropriate and each of the others is dependent upon this for germinating within the heart and growing into action.
 - b. The devil's appeal often begins with self. Consider his tempting of Eve and Christ (Gen. 3:1-5; Matt. 4:1-11).
2. Sin is self-feeding — it multiplies itself.
 - a. Selfishness leads to covetousness; covetousness leads to boasting; boasting to proud and proud to blasphemy.
 - b. Disrespect for authority in the home will create unthankfulness and unholiness because disrespect for parents will generate disrespect for others and God.
 - c. Continuing in sin will then generate a hatred for good and workers of good (John 3:16-21).
3. Much of this, if not all, with regard to this chapter is accomplished under the cloak of religion, "having a form of godliness."
 - a. Consider the fact that the first persecution came from religious people (Acts 7:1-8:3; 9:1,2; Phil. 3:4-6).
 - b. Christianity even began at the hands of "religious" people (Matt. 27:18; Acts 2:23).
4. This does not indicate the end of the world to be near or night at hand.
 - a. I have heard people declare the end to be near because of the apparent wickedness of our day. They have reached an erroneous conclusion.
 - b. These are simply characteristics that can be expected in the last dispensation, yet remember they are not new to the world.
 - c. Every dispensation and era of man has been plagued with such wickedness. Religious and secular history reveal the evil that exists in the world.
5. Timothy is told "from such, turn away"
 - a. Paul commands that no active affinity, fellowship, association that would influence or tarnish him was to be in place.
 - b. Compare Eph. 5:11; I Tim. 6:3-5; II Thess 3:6,14; II Cor. 6:14; 7:1; Prov. 4:14; Jer. 15:17; I Cor. 5:9-11; Rom. 16:17

II. THE RESIDENCE AND REPRESSION OF PERILOUS WORKERS (vs.6-9).

- A. Paul warns Timothy concerning the method of these perilous workers. He speaks of the specified place where

they perform their evil works, but also assures that there is a limit to the advances which they can make.

- B. They "creep into houses and lead captive silly women..."
 - 1. *Creep* — worm their way in (c.f. Jude 4; II Peter 2:1; Gal. 2:4)
 - 2. *Houses* — families or households.
 - 3. *Silly women* — literally "little, simple or foolish women."
 - a. These, according to many commentators, are "society ladies" which are wealthy, idle and gullible ladies which would clamor to new things or ideas.
 - b. Being laden with sins and such emptiness/meaningless and dissatisfaction of life they seek the most appealing way to find relief.
 - c. They are willing to entertain new teaching and thus ever learning, yet the more they learn of the new teaching the farther they get from the truth, thus never coming to a knowledge of the truth.
 - d. Before you call the "feminist patrol" remember women are not the only gullible people that give footholds in society to the perilous workers (Consider those in Athens, Acts 17:21).
- C. They are like Jannes and Jambres who withstood Moses.
 - 1. These are probably the magicians of Exodus 7 that tried to hinder Moses by attempting to undermine his authority and appear to have as much power and authority as Moses.
 - 2. Such did not depart from the ways of men with the death of these magicians.
- D. These shall proceed no further.
 - 1. They can only progress so far then no further.
 - 2. There will come a point when their folly will be evident. People will see past the smoke and mirrors.
 - 3. Gamaliel said it well when he warned the Jewish leadership about their treatment of the Apostles and the affect they were having on the people in the city of Jerusalem (Acts 5:34-40). The work of men can only proceed so far before it comes to nought.
- E. Observations:
 - 1. Don't become idle like "silly women" — you will become ample prey, "meet for their use rather than the master's" (II Tim. 2:21).
 - 2. Set your heart on knowing the truth, all else aside lest you be ever learning and never coming to a knowledge of the truth (John 7:17; James 1:21; I Peter 3:15).
 - 3. Be on guard, be ready, be watching, know that some will try to undermine the authority of the Gospel and you as a teacher of the Gospel.

4. Don't lose hope — false teachers/perilous workers can only proceed so far. You cannot win when you battle against God (Rom 8:31; I John 4:4; Jer. 20:11).

III. REPROACH AND RESOURCE FOR THE PERILOUS TIMES (vs.10-17).

- A. Paul brings to Timothy's mind the effect that the perilous workers will have on the righteous (vs.10-13).
 1. Timothy had "fully known" the teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity and patience. He also was aware of the persecutions Paul endured.
 2. Paul mentions Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, cities of the first missionary journey in close proximity and even Lystra the home of Timothy and place where Paul was stoned (Acts 13:14-14:20).
 3. Timothy, aware of such persecution, also was given hope knowing God delivered them out of each.
 4. Timothy needed to know that the closer he would be to the Lord, the greater and fiercer the opposition would become (I Peter 4:4,12-16).
 5. We should be aware of the same, but also the promises of God to deliver (I Cor. 10:13; Heb 4:14-16.)
- B. Paul also brings to light the resource that Timothy has at his disposal by which he can meet the challenges of chapter two and endure the perilous times of chapter three (14-17). He has the Bible, a book that:
 1. Charts the course of continued obedience, "*But continue thou in the things...*"
 2. Gives the learning needed, "*which thou hast learned...*"
 3. Assures, "*and hast been assured.*"
 4. Contains the wisdom and power to save, "*make thee wise unto salvation....*"
 5. Is inspired of God, "*All scripture is given by the inspiration of God...*"
 6. Is profitable and all-sufficient, "*is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished....*"

CONCLUSION:

1. God does not keep us in the dark concerning the things which we will face when we cling to Him, but He does call upon us to count the cost (Luke 14:26ff).
2. Perilous times may/will come but we can still be strong teachers, good soldiers, unashamed workman, vessels of honor and meet for the master's use.

The Last Farthing, Mite

Matt. 5:26; Luke 12:59

Rick Knoll

1. Eschatology, the study of final things, is certainly one of those topics we should take very seriously as mortal man.
2. Jesus came to this world, setting in motion the beginning of the end.
 - a. Man would need to know what to do.
 - b. Jesus would declare the terms of citizenship.
3. Our text warns of making wise decisions before judgment.
 - a. Matt. 5:26, *"Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."*
 - b. Luke 12:59, *"I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite."*
4. In our study we will attempt to show why the Lord used such terms as "farthing" and "mite" to describe paying a debt.
5. We will show why this teaching is so important.
6. We will see what the results could be when followed.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE SAVIOUR'S TEACHING.

A. In Matthew 5:26.

1. The context is within the Sermon on the Mount. Matt. 5-7
 - a. His sermon would show where true happiness is found. Matt. 5:3-12
 - b. How the citizens of the kingdom were to influence and shine forth to in the world. Matt. 5:13-16
 - c. He made comparisons to what was to what was going to be.
 - 1) *"Ye have heard it said..."* Matt. 5:21.
 - 2) *"But I say..."* Matt. 5:22.
 - d. Jesus would teach as one with authority. Matt 7:29
2. The "farthing" was the smallest amount of money.
 - a. The value would be about a halfpenny.
 - b. We might say something today like "until you pay every last penny."
3. It would be better to reach agreement with one's debtor before reaching the judge when full payment would be required.

B. In Luke 12:59.

1. The context is Jesus teaching on watchfulness and what effect that teaching would have.
2. In verses 54, 55 he called their attention to what they were able to deduce by observation.

- a. You see clouds in the west... here comes the rain. v.54
 - b. You see a south wind blowing... here comes a scorching heat. v.55
- C. Jesus would rebuke them for being able to read the signs for rain and heat approaching, but could not see the signs of the appearing of the Son of God!
- D. Now he advises to make arrangements with one's adversary before he make it to the presence of the judge. vs.58,59

II. THE REASON JESUS WOULD GIVE SUCH ADVICE?

- A. In temporal situations.
 - 1. It is to one's advantage to take a little loss rather than to have to pay the full or heavier penalty required by the law.
 - a. Plea bargains occur all the time by law breakers.
 - b. Going before a judge with matters of the law, may require full mandatory punishment.
 - 2. Better to admit wrong and receive mercy from the adversary.
- B. In situations involving those in Christ.
 - 1. Better to admit wrong and make restitution, than to cause more problems later on.
 - 2. The sooner agreement is made the sooner the church can get back to seeking and saving the lost.
 - 3. There are eternal ramifications for wrongs not resolved before appearing before the eternal judge.
- C. It is urgent for us to come to an agreement.
 - 1. Because time is of the essence. James 4:14
 - 2. We have only today to act. Heb. 3:13

III. REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY TO OBEY JESUS' ADVICE.

- A. Love. I Cor. 13:1-8a
 - 1. Love must be the motivating factor.
 - a. This would apply to the adversary.
 - b. This would apply to the guilty one.
 - 2. Love was what motivated God to send his Son to die for us. Rom. 5:8
 - 3. A loving desire to do what is right.
- B. A willingness to forgive.
 - 1. Matt. 6:12, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."
 - 2. Matt. 6:14,15, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

3. Eph. 4:32, *"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."*
- C. Recognize human frailties (especially our own).
 1. We must realize we all have moments when we do that which may not be right. Rom. 3:23
 - a. To deny this is to make God a liar. I John 1:10
 2. Must help those who are weak.
 - a. *"Now we exhort you, brethren,...support the weak, be patient toward all men."* I Thess. 5:14
 3. Employ the golden rule.
 - a. Matt. 7:12, *"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."*
 - b. I believe this would eliminate so much wickedness in the world if only applied.

IV. HINDRANCES TO OBEYING JESUS' TEACHING.

- A. Pride and stubbornness.
 1. Pharaoh, a good example of this.
 - a. Who is God that I should obey him? Exodus 5
- B. Indifference.
- C. Disbelief.

V. RESULTS OF HEEDING THE ADVICE.

- A. Not a passage supporting the false doctrine of purgatory. Heb. 9:27
- B. In this life.
 1. Our enemy can become our friend.
 - a. Who could not use another friend.
 - b. May be a potential convert.
 2. We have opportunity to make our life right before we stand before God.
- C. In the life hereafter.
 1. We will have to hear those words well done.
 - a. We will be in fellowship with the Father and Son. I John 1:7
 2. Or spend eternity paying the price until every last farthing/mite is paid in full!
 - a. Heb. 10:33, *"It is a fearful thing..."*
 - b. God has the book!

CONCLUSION:

1. We need to follow completely to the very best of our ability the law of Christ.
2. We must know that souls are at stake.
 - a. Our own.
 - b. Our brothers and sisters in Christ.

- c. Our friends and acquaintances.
- d. Our neighbors.
- 3. We must know the urgency of the situation.
- 4. Home in heaven is at stake.
- 5. Teaching applies to all, there are no exceptions.

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## The Millennial Reign Does Not Follow The Final Coming Of Christ

*Virgil L. Hale*

- 1. Some questions that need to be answered in this study.
  - a. Why will Christ come again?
  - b. What will happen when Christ comes again.
    - 1) Will He set up His kingdom here on earth?
    - 2) Will there be a thousand year reign on earth and then the judgment?
    - 3) Or, will His coming be the end?
- 2. We need to be concerned with what the Bible teaches, not the wild imaginations of men.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. HOW MANY MORE APPEARANCES WILL CHRIST MAKE?

- A. The Bible definitely teaches that He will come again. (John 14:3; Acts 1:11)
  - 1. It does not, however, teach that He is coming to establish His kingdom.
  - 2. Nor does it teach that he is coming again, and again.
- B. The kingdom was to come during the life time of some who were present while our Lord was on the earth (Mark 9:1).
  - 1. Note The kingdom was to come with power.
    - a. The Apostles were to receive power when the Holy Ghost came (Acts 1:8).
    - b. The power came on the day of Pentecost when the Apostles were "filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4).
- C. John was in the kingdom when he wrote the book of Revelation (Rev.1:9).
- D. The Hebrews had received the kingdom (Heb. 12:28).
- E. The brethren at Colosse had been translated into the kingdom (Col. 1:13).
  - 1. How was this possible if the kingdom had not come?

## II. TAKE A LOOK AT PREMILLENNIALISM'S CLAIMS.

- A. The first phase of Christ's coming.
  - 1. He comes for the saints (I Thess. 4:16-17).
  - 2. There will be a resurrection of the righteous.
  - 3. The living saints will be changed.
  - 4. There will be a judgment of believers according to their works for reward.
  - 5. The rapture will last for seven years.
  - 6. There will be great tribulation.
    - a. Man of sin will be revealed.
    - b. The Beast King Dictator of the revived Roman Empire (Rev. 13).
    - c. Jacob's trouble that brings Jews to repentance.
    - d. The harlot or false church (Rev. 17).
    - e. 144,000 are sealed.
- B. The second phase of Christ's coming.
  - 1. The battle of Armageddon takes place.
    - a. Christ comes with His saints (Jude 14; I Thess. 3:13).
    - b. The stone smites the image (Dan. 2).
    - c. The nations are destroyed, the kingdom is established Christ sits on the throne of David.
    - d. Jews are converted, the land is allotted.
  - 2. The sheep and goat judgment takes place (Matt. 25:31ff).
  - 3. The millennium (thousand year reign takes place).
    - a. Saints will have glorified bodies.
    - b. People on earth in fleshly bodies.
    - c. Jesus will rule over the earth with the rod of iron (Rev. 2:27).
    - d. There will be no sin.
    - e. There will be death
    - f. The curse will be removed.
    - g. There will be no war.
    - h. They will keep the law.
    - i. The temple will be rebuilt and animal sacrifices will be offered.
    - j. Knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth.
  - 4. There will be a little season.
    - a. The devil will be loosed.
    - b. The nations will be deceived.
    - c. The battle of Gog and Magog takes place.
- C. The third phase of Christ's coming.
  - 1. The end of the world.
  - 2. Resurrection and judgment of the wicked.
  - 3. Death is destroyed and the kingdom is delivered up to God.
- D. Does your Bible teach the above? ABSOLUTELY NOT!!!

### III. THE BIBLE DOES SPEAK OF "THE DAY OF THE LORD."

- A. I Cor. 5:5; II Cor. 1:14, "...in the day of the Lord Jesus"
- B. "...the day of the Lord" will come "as a thief in the night" (I Thess. 5:2; I Peter 3:10).
  - 1. This means when He is least expected.
- C. John 14:1-4, Christ will "come again" not again and again.
- D. He will "appear the second time" (Heb. 9:27-28).
  - 1. The Bible knows nothing of a third or fourth appearing.
- E. There is nothing secret about His coming "every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7).
- F. When He comes "the just and unjust" will be raised (Acts 24:15).
- G. His coming will be "the last day" (John 6:39,40,44,54; 11:24; 12:48).
- H. There are no signs to indicate when He will come (Matt. 25:13).
- I. When He comes the judgment will take place (Matt. 25:31; II Tim. 4:1; Rev. 20:11-15).
  - 1. He will say "come" or "depart" (Matt. 25:34, 41).
  - 2. The reward or punishment will be "everlasting" "eternal" (Matt. 25:46; II Thess. 1:7-9).
- J. His coming will be "the end" not the beginning (I Cor. 15:22-26).
  - 1. Note: II Thess. 1:7-9; John 5:28-29
  - 2. "...the harvest is the end of the world" (Matt. 13:39-40).
  - 3. The Gospel is to be preached "unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20).

### IV. HOW PREMILLENNIALISM CONTRIBUTES TO INFIDELITY.

- A. It denies that Christ is now reigning (Rev. 1:5-6; I Cor. 15:22-28).
- B. Annuls this dispensation as "the last days" (Heb. 1:1; Acts 2:17).
- C. Makes God false to His promises (Mark 1:14-15).
- D. Alternates Judaism and Christianity (Heb. 8:5-7; 9:9-10).
- E. Minimizes the Gospel, belittles the church (Eph. 3:9-11).
- F. Revokes the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).
- G. Nullifies salvation to the Gentiles now (Acts 15:14-18).
- H. Demotes Christ from heaven's throne (Heb. 1:3-13).
- I. Makes first coming of Christ a failure (Gal. 4:4; John 17:1-14).

### CONCLUSION:

- 1. We can accept the false theories of men or we can accept the inspired Word of God.
- 2. God's Word is clear regarding the matters that we have been studying.

3. We are not left to grope about in the dark with uncertainty.
4. Let us be sure that we have obeyed the truth that we are living a faithful Christian life, and we can rest assured that all will be well with our soul when the Lord comes in judgment.

## The Final Judgment

*Sidney White*

1. We are constantly facing judgment from various sources. I Cor. 4:3-4.
  - a. We face judgment from the brethren.
  - b. We face judgment from mankind in general.
  - c. We often judge ourselves, either too harshly or too kindly.
  - d. Then we face the judgment of the Lord.
  - e. With each of the first three sources of judgment, we must recognize the truth of Proverbs 14:12.
2. We should be well aware of the term "judgment" in the Bible.
3. It is a sobering thought to face God in judgment, and only the Gospel will help.
  - a. II Tim. 4:1ff; Acts 24:25
  - b. Such ought to make us interested in the Gospel.
  - c. Only those who take the judgment seriously will listen to the Gospel.
4. There are things we may not know about the judgment, but there are some things we can know.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. WE CAN KNOW OF THE CERTAINTY OF THE JUDGMENT.

- A. Acts 17:30-31 and Heb. 9:27 both speak of the certainty of the judgment.
- B. Most do not question the certainty of death, and yet the judgment is just as certain.
- C. God has always judged.
  1. "I will execute judgment in the land of Egypt", Exodus 12:12.
  2. According to Deut. 10:17-18, God "doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment."
  3. In Malachi 2:17, the prophet speaks of the people of his day who have wearied the Lord by saying, "Where is the God of judgment?"

4. In Rom. 1:32, Paul speaks of the "judgment of God" relative to the list of sins mentioned in the conclusion of the chapter.
- D. Consider the phrase "day of judgment" as found in Matt. 10:15; 11:22; II Peter 2:9; 3:7 and I John 4:17.
- E. The phrase "judgment seat of Christ" is found in Rom. 14:10 and II Cor. 5:10.
- F. The phrase "judgment of God" is noted in Rom. 1:32 and 2:2, 3,5.
- G. It appears foolish to ignore the fact of the final judgment of God. It will come and we will be there!
- H. While it is certain that the final judgment will come, it is uncertain as to when, Matt. 24:36.
- I. One should never take the goodness of God (in allowing the world to continue to stand) as a weakness on His part. The design of the continuing world is covered in II Peter 3:4,9.

## II. THE STANDARD OF THE JUDGMENT IS CLEARLY SET FORTH.

- A. Note some of the specific phrases used in the Bible in this regard.
  1. John 12:48, Jesus says, *"He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."*
  2. In James 2:12, James says, *"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."*
  3. Paul, in Romans 2:2 says, *"But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things."*
  4. Thus, the word spoken by Jesus, the law of liberty, truth will be the standard of judgment.
- B. It is impossible for man to know correct judgment in every case.
  1. Such is not hard for God because he knows all the circumstances.
  2. Note I Samuel 16:7 with regard to the selection of a king for the children of Israel. *"...for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."*
  3. Then there is the statement found in Ezekiel 18:20. *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."* God doesn't get things mixed up as man sometimes does.
  4. Bribery, education, success, prominence, etc. will not blind the judgment of God.
- C. Therefore, we must walk in harmony with God's standard.
  1. I John 1:7; II John 4-6; III John 3-4

2. Man must set aside his own feelings and follow God's standard.
3. God, out of His love, goodness and concern for mankind, has told us what to expect.

### III. THE BIBLE ALSO TELLS US EXACTLY WHO WILL BE AT THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

- A. According to II Cor. 5:10, Rom. 2:3-4 and Matt. 25:31-46, esp.v.32, "all" will be there.
- B. In II Tim. 4:1, Paul speaks of the Lord as the judge of the "quick (living) and the dead."
- C. From such verses, one would conclude that the great and small, the widely known and the not so widely known, the rich and poor will all be there.
- D. The final judgment is an appointment made for man by God and is not an optional matter.

### IV. THE NATURE OF THE FINAL JUDGMENT IS STATED IN SOME CASES AND IMPLIED IN OTHERS.

- A. Paul, in Romans 2:5, speaks of "the righteous judgment of God." Note also Acts 17:32 in this regard.
- B. Since the final judgment is of the Lord, it will be Divine judgment. We will have the perfect Judge and He will make the verdict exactly as it should be. Note I Cor. 4:3-4
- C. The final judgment will be judgment of the individual.
  1. In Rom. 2:6, Paul says relative to that judgment, that God "will render to every man according to *his* deeds."
  2. In II Cor. 5:10, he further writes that man will be judged "according to that *he* hath done."
    - a. We will not be judged as a congregation.
    - b. We will not be judged as a family unit.
    - c. Thus, there will be a severing of family ties and friendships.
- D. The final judgment will be in view of our activity.
  1. Note again Rom. 2:6; II Cor. 5:10; Eccl. 12:13-14.
  2. One should note here that judgment is according to our activities, not our intentions.
  3. John, in writing to the Laodiceans in Rev. 3:14-22, shows that their lukewarmness was a point of condemnation.
  4. Thus, the final judgment will be a time of examining our lives, the activities or the lack thereof.
- E. The final judgment will be one where no excuses will be accepted.
  1. Rom. 2:1; Luke 14:16ff, esp.v.18; Rom. 1:20.
  2. One will not be excused because of a marriage partner, neighbor, the burdens of life or other such excuses that are often offered for our unfaithfulness.

3. Sincerity alone will not be sufficient. Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46
- F. The final judgment will be one in which there will be no respect of persons.
  1. Rom. 2:11; Acts 10:34-35.
  2. Matt. 11:20-24, Rom. 1:16. The Jews had the Gospel preached to them first, then to the Gentiles. The Jews had certain privileges, advantages and opportunities, but they also had certain liabilities.
    - a. What about the person brought up in a Christian home?
    - b. What about the person who has been taught the truth?
    - c. What about the person who has heard sermon after sermon but has not obeyed the truth?
    - d. What about the person who has had opportunities to serve and has failed to do so? Compare the parable of the talents, Matt. 25:14ff.
- G. The final judgment will be a time of the revealing of the secrets of men.
  1. Rom. 2:16; Eccl. 12:14; Heb. 4:13
  2. Do we conduct ourselves when we are "out of town" the same as we do when our friends and neighbors see us?
  3. Do we say and do things that we ought not behind the closed doors of our homes?
  4. Are we willing to be judged by the thoughts of our hearts, thoughts that sometimes include hatred, malice, jealousy and ill-will?
  5. The good and the evil we have done in secret He knows.
- H. The finality of the final judgment is clearly set forth.
  1. There will be no court of appeals to overturn the judgment of God.
  2. Matt. 25:31-46 uses language to verify this point.
    - a. Look at the words "come" and "eternal life" in verses 34 and 46. That is final.
    - b. Look also at the words "depart" and "everlasting punishment" in verses 41 and 46. That is final
- I. The final judgment for some will be a time of rejoicing, I Peter 4:13 and Matt. 5:12.
- J. The final judgment for some will be a time of regrets, Matt. 7:21-23 and Luke 16:19-31.

## CONCLUSION:

1. One song that we use as an "invitation song" is "Are You Ready?"
  - a. It speaks of a "great day coming" which will be for the saint.
  - b. It speaks of a "bright day coming" which is for those that love the Lord, John 14:15 and I John 5:3.



- c. It also speaks of a "sad day coming" for sinners. The message is "depart, I know you not".
- d. "Saint" and "sinner" will be parted right and left.
- 2. Are you ready for that day to come? Today?
- 3. We believe in baptism; why don't we act like we believe in a final judgment?
  - a. There is a reward for faithfulness.
  - b. There is punishment for unfaithfulness.

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Matthew 24-25, Typology

Lindon Ferguson

1. The Bible is a Book to be studied (II Tim. 2:15). The dedicated student of God's Word will "give diligence" in his pursuit of biblical knowledge, and one means of doing so is by engaging in a study of typology, the study of Bible "types."
 - a. E. W. Bullinger defines the word "type" (Grk. *tupos*) as, "A figure or ensample of something future and more or less prophetic, called the 'Antitype'" (*Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, p. 768).
 - b. Merrill F. Unger says of "antitype" (Grk. *antitupos*), "that which is represented or prefigured by a type...The type is a figure and the antitype is the reality which the type figured as Christ is the antitype of the Paschal lamb" (*Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 70).
 - c. D. R. Dungan (*Hermeneutics*) supplies twelve helpful points, from which we consider three, especially in light of the lesson to be presented.
 - 1) "We must never expect the type and the antitype to be the same, for that would not be type and antitype, but identity. We shall find therefore that it is utterly impossible to find something in the antitype that is analogous to every feature of the type, or that the type has perfectly prefigured the antitype" (#2, p. 360).
 - 2) "It must tell something. When it is a representation of a present truth or duty, it is a symbol, and not a type" (#4, p. 360).
 - 3) "Any thing, to be a type, must have been a real person, thing, event, or office" (#9, p. 361).
 - d. Dungan further states, "Remember that the type has been selected for one point, or, at most, for but a very few features of similarity" (p. 369).

2. The assigned study for this hour is Matthew 24, 25. *Typology*, wherein consideration is given to the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jewish temple, and the ending of the Jewish economy (24:4-35), as a "type" of the second coming of Christ and the end of the material universe (24:36-25:46), the "antitype."
3. Some things said within this lesson will overlap, to some degree, with other presentations.

DISCUSSION:

I. BOTH EVENTS BACKED BY DIVINE REVELATION:

A. The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

1. Due to time and space, only a few of Jesus' foretelling statements will be considered.

a. MATT. 8. Contextually, the faith of a centurion served for this statement from the Lord to those present. *"Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"* (vs.11-12).

- 1) Jesus contrasts the readiness of Gentiles to manifest their faith in Him (contextually, per example of the centurion), with the lack of faith on the part of the Jews, to whom He came, and to whom the gospel would first be preached, and who would ultimately be cut off.

b. MATT. 21. Three times in this chapter Jesus denounced the Jewish nation. In giving the parable of the wicked husbandmen, the Lord drove home His point with these emphatic words: *"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"* (v.43).

- 1) In the context of this parable (vs.33-46), Jesus (v.39), predicted His death outside of Jerusalem when He spoke of the wicked husbandmen taking the landlord's son out of the vineyard and killing him.

a) He then asked the Jewish leaders present to pass sentence on the wicked husbandmen. What would the owner do to them when he returned (v.40)?

b) Their answer was, *"He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their season"* (v.41). Here the

- Jews, unknowingly, predicted what was to happen to their nation.
- c. MATT. 23. Here the Lord gave a severe denunciation of scribes and Pharisees, closing with this verdict, *"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate"* (v.38).
 - 1) No longer is it *"My house"* (Matt. 21:13), but *"your house."*
 - 2) God had forsaken it.
 - d. MATT. 24. This chapter is the culmination of a series of prophecies against the Jewish nation.
 - 1) Jesus with His disciples (four apostles, Mark 13:3), foretells the destruction of the temple buildings they had just pointed out to Him, saying, *"See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down"* (24:1-2).
 - 2) He then gives them a number of signs that would take place after Pentecost, preceding the A.D. 70 destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (24:4-14).
 - a) All these things would take place before the end came, i.e., the destruction of Jerusalem. These signs are further put into perspective by 24:34, *"This generation (contemporary with Jesus) shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."*
 - b) Jesus then gave the *true* sign by which they could know the destruction was beginning, that being, when they saw *"the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place"* (v.15; Dan. 9:27). In Luke's account we find out what the Lord meant: *"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh"* (Luke 21:20).
 - c) About four decades later, Roman armies would devastate Jerusalem, first under the command of Vespasian, then under the command of his son Titus.
 - B. The second coming of Christ, the judgment day, and the end of the world.
 - 1. Such is a prominent theme in the New Testament, amounting to one out of every twenty-five verses, or in excess of three hundred.
 - 2. Jesus foretold of His second coming (Matt. 24:36-44; 25:31-34; Mark 13:32-33; John 14:1-3).
 - 3. Angels announced His second coming (Acts 1:9-11).
 - 4. New Testament writers tell us about his second coming.

- a. Paul (Phil. 3:20-21; I Thess. 4:13-18; II Thess. 1:7-10; Titus 2:13).
- b. The writer of Hebrews (Heb. 9:27-28).
- c. Peter (Acts 3:20; II Peter 3:10-12).
- d. Jude (Jude 14).
- e. John (I John 2:28; 3:1-3; Rev. 1:7).

II. BOTH EVENTS CONTAIN THE "HOW" OF THE COMING OF THE "SON OF MAN."

- A. The destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27).
 - 1. Such language figuratively expresses that Jesus came in power and glory in the transpiring events. He would be figuratively coming while He would be sitting at the right hand of God (cf. Heb. 8:1, "...we have an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens").
 - a. If this coming of the Son of man had been literal, then we would not be here this hour (II Peter 3:10).
 - 2. Clouds, in the Old Testament, often symbolized the power of God in judgment.
 - a. Cf. Isaiah 19:1, *"The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it."*
 - b. It is also important to notice that this coming of the "Son of man" is related to "those days" (Matt. 24:19, 22, 29), and not to "that day and hour" (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32).
 - 3. The transpiring events in the destruction of Jerusalem would prove Christ was in heaven and in control.
- B. The literal and future second coming of the "Son of Man" (Matt. 24:37-39, 43-44). Also, we can know this about His coming.
 - 1. It is to be a personal coming (John 14:3, the "if" meaning "since" or "because").
 - 2. It is to be a visible coming (Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Grk. for "shall appear" means "become visible"; I John 3:2).
 - 3. It is to be an audible coming (I Thess. 4:16; I Cor. 15:52). Some have referred to I Thess. 4:16 as the "noisiest verse" in the Bible.
 - 4. It is to be a coming with angels and in flaming fire (II Thess. 1:7-8; cf. Matt. 25:31-34). Christ will have His attendants when He comes in glory and majesty.
 - 5. It is to be a coming in association with "that day and hour" (Matt. 24:36), not "those days" (Matt. 24:19, 22, 29, a prolonged period).

6. It is to be a coming that is as unexpected as a night thief (with out warning, Matt. 24:43; I Thess. 5:2; II Pet. 3:10).
7. It is to be a coming that highly emphasizes the need to be ready (Matt. 24:37-39, 42-43; 25:1-13, 14-30).

III. BOTH EVENTS INVOLVE SEPARATION, DESTRUCTION AND FINALITY.

- A. The destruction of Jerusalem would mean distress, oppression and suffering. Jesus warned of *"great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be"* (Matt. 24:21).
 1. McGarvey and Pendleton wrote regarding the words *"nor ever shall be."* "The promise that there shall be no more days like it of course excludes the terrors and miseries of the judgment day, since it belongs to celestial rather than terrestrial history" (*The Fourfold Gospel*, p. 26).
 2. To better know the havoc and savagery wrought by Rome, we must look outside the Bible. Josephus, the Jewish historian, set forth that "Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them" (*Antiquities*, 10.11.7).
 - a. In his *Wars*, Josephus tells of severe famine, the devouring of human bodies, the setting on fire of the city and temple, the slaying of people, without mercy, noting that there were so many dead bodies the ground gave no visible appearance.
 - b. According to his writings, 97,000 Jews were captured and 1,100,000 perished during the siege and capture of the city (*Wars*, 6.9.2.).
 - c. The terribleness of this event would be heard of by other Jews who would mourn (Matt. 24:30). Therefore the earth and its inhabitants were still in existence.
 3. In this time of calamity, Divine providence intervened (Matt. 24:22). It is believed that there was no loss of life among Christians as they fled to the mountainous region of Pella beyond Jordan (Trans-Jordan), thereby making for a separation of the righteous and the wicked.
 4. With the destruction of the temple and genealogies, the sacrifices gone, Judaism sustained death.
- B. The universal second coming of Christ will find many unprepared for it. When this time comes the following will take place.
 1. The Lord will raise all the dead (good and evil) at the same time (John 5:28-29).
 2. The Lord will change the living (I Cor. 15:50-53).
 - a. Contextually, the dead raised incorruptible, and the living changed relates to Christians.

- b. However, all humans have corruptible bodies, and for them to inhabit heaven or hell, immortality must be put on.
- 3. The Lord will dissolve the material universe (II Peter 3:10-12), and gather all mankind for judgment (II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10b-12; cf. Rev. 20:11-15).
 - a. The events of A.D. 70, in Jerusalem, must pale in comparison to that which will take place at *"that day and hour."*

CONCLUSION:

1. The figurative coming of Christ in physical judgment on Jerusalem was terrifying and complete, and serves to warn that there is a greater payday ahead for sin and transgression.
2. The judgment of the last day will be God's last word concerning Satan and sin with all injustices on earth being satisfied and avenged.

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## Chronology Of The Final Coming And Attendant Events

*Tom Snyder*

1. The second coming of Christ is a theme that runs through the entire Bible.
2. It is a very broad theme encompassing many sub-topics.
3. We will only be dealing with the chronology of Christ's second coming.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. GOD'S POSITION ON TIME.

- A. There is a sense in which God is not concerned with time, Psa. 102:24-27; 90:4; II Peter 3:8
- B. There is a sense in which God is very much concerned with time:
  1. The creation week, Gen. 1, 2.
  2. The events of the flood, Gen. 7:4, 10, 12.
- C. There is a sense in which God attaches a purpose to time:
  1. The time when Israel was to possess the land of Canaan, Gen. 15:13-16.
  2. The time in which Israel was to be in captivity, II Chron. 36:21.

- D. There is a sense in which God speaks of one time but means another time:
  - 1. Daniel's 70 weeks.
  - 2. This is figurative, but it speaks of a flow of a definite time.
- E. While it is true God is a timeless God, we must understand:
  - 1. There are timetables that God has adhered to based upon His wisdom and foreknowledge;
  - 2. Sometimes this is revealed beforehand;
  - 3. Sometimes after the fact;
  - 4. Sometimes nothing is revealed.

## II. TIME AND REDEMPTION.

- A. The prophets give testimony to a timetable, I Peter 1:7-11.
- B. Paul spoke of this timetable in Gal. 4:4.
- C. God has never been haphazard toward man's redemption, but has planned and executed with great wisdom and foresight, Isa. 46:10-13; Eph. 1:5-14.
- D. There is from beginning to end a plan and the timely execution of this plan, and to this end God has a time in which this earth will be brought to a close and redemption will be complete, Matt. 24:36; Acts 17:31.
- E. The question is, has God given a chronology of when Jesus comes at the last day?

## III. CHRONOLOGY OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

- A. Concerning the time of the coming of Christ:
  - 1. God has kept the time of the second coming secret, Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32; I Thess. 5:2; II Peter 3:10.
  - 2. Was/Is Jesus coming soon?
    - a. This was the apparent position of some of the early Christians.
    - b. Paul writes to correct their misconception, showing that before the Lord comes again, there must be a falling away, II Thess. 2:3;
    - c. Peter had to deal with this, II Peter 3:3-4;
    - d. This didn't come from Peter, for he knew that he himself must die as the Lord had foretold.
  - 3. If Jesus is not coming soon, when is He coming? Only the Lord knows this and He has not revealed it.
- B. Concerning the coming of Christ:
  - 1. The Bible does not give us a definitive time-line as to the events of the second coming:
    - a. Some events will be in the "blink of the eye," I Cor. 15:51-52;
    - b. Some events will be beyond the use of time (the measure) since time will cease to be:
      - 1) How long will the judgment take? Rom. 14:10-12;

- 2) How do you measure time in eternity?
  - 3) We know only how to measure "earth time."
  - 4) We know only the times God has revealed to us.
- C. Errors relative to chronology.
1. Premillennialism puts a 1000 year gap between the second coming of Christ and the final judgment.
  2. Some would see a time of opportunity to repent between the second coming of Christ and the destruction of the earth with the judgment.
  3. Immediate judgment denies the time-line of the second coming.
  4. The Catholic dogma of purgatory is also a denial of the God-given time line.
- D. We have many places within the Scripture where the second coming is discussed. The purpose wasn't to give a chronology but to express a need for faithfulness:
1. The sure punishment of the wicked, II Peter 3:10-12.
  2. Concern over those who die before the Lord comes, I Thess. 4:13-17.
  3. The authority of Christ, John 5:27-29.
  4. This world is not our home, Phil. 3:20-21.
  5. The resurrection of Christ demands the future resurrection of man, I Cor. 15:51-53.
  6. The need to be accepted of God, II Cor. 5:10.
  7. The coming in judgment upon the ungodly, Jude 14-15.
  8. The vengeance of God, Rev. 20:10-15.
  9. Hope in face of persecution, II Thess. 1:6.
- E. We have a number of events which we are told will take place with a logical order:
1. Jesus will be seen visibly, Acts 1:11.
  2. He will be seen even by those who pierced his side (implying a resurrection), Rev. 1:7.
  3. There will be the resurrection of the righteous and unrighteous, John 5:27-29.
  4. The kingdom will be delivered up to the Father, I Cor. 15:24.
  5. There will be a change of the living, I Cor. 15:51-53.
  6. There will be a time of sentencing, II Cor. 5:10.
  7. There will be a destruction of the world, II Peter 3:10-12.

## CONCLUSION:

1. From the beginning to the end of the Bible, we see the judgment of God.
2. What we learn is that God **WILL** judge.
3. Many are more concerned with trying to set a time for the final judgment than to make ready for it.
4. With some it is "out of sight, out of mind."
5. From what God has given we need to know:



- a. Now is the day we need to make preparation, for our time is uncertain.
- b. We need to be always faithful for there will be no time to repent once the Lord comes, II Cor. 5:10-11.

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"Last Opportunity"

Paul Curless

1. Bill was born into a middle class family where both father and mother were faithful members of the Lord's church (Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:18).
 - a. Bill was a normal child with all the cuts and bruises as any other active, inquisitive child of that day.
 - b. Bill did well in grade school, with above intelligence.
2. Having godly parents – Bill attended all church services (Heb. 10:25).
 - a. He received good grades in High School, played second base on the High School baseball team and was well liked.
 - b. During his second year of High School he was anxious to enroll in driver's education so he would receive his driver's license at age 16, and he did.
3. His folks helped him buy a used automobile, with one stipulation, that he would agree to pay the insurance. Bill was employed at a local fast food restaurant after school.
4. Throughout the years, Bill had heard many gospel sermons and God's plan for saving people.
 - a. Like so many young people, Bill thought that he had lots of time in the future to become a Christian. Seemingly he had forgotten the verse in Ecclesiastes 12:1 *"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth..."*
 - b. After all, he was extremely busy having fun and enjoying life in the fast lane. Christianity would have to wait.
5. On a Monday night while driving home after putting in extra hours at his part-time job, he became very sleepy, run off the road and hit a tree.
 - a. Within a few minutes he passed into eternity.
 - b. Little did he realize the sermon he heard yesterday (Sunday) was his "Last Opportunity" to obey the Gospel. Even though this was just a story; it no doubt has happened many times in people's lives.
 - c. Which brings me to my assigned topic for this lectureship, "Last Opportunity."

DISCUSSION:**I. GOD IS LONG SUFFERING.**

- A. The long suffering of Almighty God is seen in the Old Testament.
 - 1. God gave the people of Noah's day a hundred and twenty years to repent while the ark was being built (Gen. 6:3).
 - 2. *"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth. And that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the earth; for it repenteth me that I have made them"* (Gen. 6:5-7).
 - 3. Thanks be to Noah, a just and righteous man in the sight of God, grace (favor) was given (Gen. 6:8-9).
 - 4. God gave Noah, a man who walked in principle and practice with Him, specific instructions to build the ark (Gen. 6:14-16).
 - a. The size of this giant ark was approximately 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high.
 - b. The square feet of this ark would have been about one million 300 thousand square feet.
 - c. Of course Noah, being a righteous man, obeyed all of God's commands (Gen. 6:22).
- B. And so mankind had many years to repent because of God's longsuffering (I Peter 3:20).
 - 1. But once the ark was completed and the worldwide flood was upon the earth – men had their last opportunity to obey God before the door of opportunity was closed (Gen. 7:16).
 - 2. Only those who took advantage of God's grace were spared, all others were destroyed by the flood (Gen. 7:23).
 - a. *"And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly"* (II Peter 2:5).
 - b. *"Which sometime (aforetime) were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water"* (I Peter 3:20).
- C. During the days of Noah, the majority of God's creation squandered their time and were only concerned about doing evil (Gen. 6:5).
- D. Seemingly, not a lot has changed in society today.

II. NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES OF GOD'S LONG-SUFFERING AND MAN'S LAST OPPORTUNITIES.

A. God's longsuffering and grace is seen in the New Testament.

1. *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men"* (Titus 2:11).
 - a. God's grace would allow all to be saved by coming to the knowledge of the truth and obeying it (II Peter 1:2,3; Heb. 5:8,9).
 - b. The Gospel is for all (II Thess. 2:14).
2. The Lord would have all to be saved (II Peter 3:9).
3. All could be saved if they would but obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4). Yes, the Gospel is where the saving power is obtainable (Rom. 1:16).

B. Why do so many, the majority, not obey, but pass up their last opportunity to become Christians?

1. Because they feel comfortable on the broad way, Matt. 7:13,14, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."*
2. Let us never forget, sincere as they may be, millions of religious folks are on the "broad way."
 - a. Now I realize that some Christians, hopefully very few, who are walking by feelings, rather than by faith (II Cor. 5:7) don't want to accept what God says about salvation being found only in Christ (the Lord's church, Matt. 16:18) where all spiritual blessings are found (Eph. 1:3). It is my prayer that they don't pass up their last opportunity to repent of their error (Luke 13:3; Acts 8:22), and obey the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - b. Satan has many sincere, religious people in his kingdom all working for him. II Cor. 11:13-15 says, *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves unto the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the minister of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."*
 - 1) Satan has and will continue to deceive many (II Cor. 11:3).
 - 2) Satan (through his ministers) will mislead, lie, spread false doctrines, tempt, and do all he can to destroy the Lord's church (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 4:14; John 8:44; Acts 5:3; II Cor. 11:13,14).

- 3) Satan is like a roaring lion (I Peter 5:8).
3. Many pass up their last opportunity to obey God because they love the world more than God. One cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24); we either serve God or the world where Satan rules.
- a. We are told in I John 2:15-17 not to love the world and also what the world offers.
- 1) Lust of the flesh (what one does with his body).
"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Peter 2:11).
 - 2) Lust of the eyes (what you do with you mind, because the eyes are the gateway to the mind).
"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (II Thess. 5:22).
 - 3) Pride of life (what you do with your will, since pride is a sin of the will). *"...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).*
- b. Actually there is a passage in Genesis 3:6 that covers all three ways man is tempted. *"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, (lust of the flesh) and that it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eyes) and a tree to be desired to make one wise (pride of life) she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."*
- C. The rich man of Luke chapter sixteen obviously passed by his last opportunity to obey God – being more concerned about living the life of leisure and wealth rather than being concerned about the hereafter, forgetting that someday all will face physical death, *"And as it is appointed unto man once to die but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27).*
1. Many people are living their lives as if this earth and what it offers is all there is.
 2. However, all those who have passed into eternity know the truth; but the majority of them passed up their "last opportunity" to get right with God.
 3. If only they would have heeded Solomon's advice, having looked high and lo for what life is all about he concluded that all should *"...Fear God, and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13).*
- D. The rich farmer in Luke 12:15-21 is another example of one who passed up his "last opportunity" to obey God.
1. He was rich and was only concerned about getting more wealth — a covetous individual (Luke 12:15). Covetous people will not inherit heaven (I Cor. 6:10; Eph. 5:3-5).

2. He was self-centered; the personal pronoun "I" was used six times in three verses. The word "my" is used five times.
3. He only thought about his future years upon the earth, and that he could be at "...ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Luke 12:19).
4. He forgot one important thing, that his great abundance of wealth could not justify his eternal soul, *"But God said unto him, thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"* (Luke 12:20)
5. Luke 12:21 reminds us that all who lay up treasures for themselves upon earth is not rich toward God.
6. The rich farmer was a foolish man, for laying treasures upon earth, when he should have been laying them in heaven (Matt. 6:19-21).
 - a. He also was foolish for thinking his wealth would allow him to live many years upon this earth (Luke 12:19).
 - b. James tells the truth about life, *"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow, for what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away"* (James 4:14).
 - c. Life is short compared to eternity and death is certain (Heb. 9:27).

III. LESSONS FOR US TO REMEMBER.

- A. Don't wait too long by passing up your "last opportunity" to obey God or get right with God as an erring Christian (Matt. 7:21-23; Acts 8:22; James 5:19-20).
 1. In light of Bible teaching, the majority will wait too long causing them to miss out on heaven (Matt. 7:13,14).
 2. Many in the religious world are being deceived; some of their leaders are telling them they will have a second chance. Those with some Bible knowledge know that whatever one does to prepare for eternity must be done on the earthly side of life (II Cor. 6:2; Heb. 9:27).
- B. Unfortunately, many will find themselves unprepared for eternity, because they didn't take advantage of their "last opportunity" to obey God.
 1. Those in the days of Noah did (Gen. 6:5-7).
 2. The rich man did (Luke 16:19-31).
 3. The rich farmer did (Luke 12:15-21).
 4. We plead with you not to become as one of these – lost with No hope of heaven.

CONCLUSION:

1. Let us never forget, God's longsuffering is salvation (II Peter 3:15).
2. All of the above examples had ample opportunities to obey God.
3. Today, we have opportunity to render obedience and become Christians or as an erring child of God to repent, confess, and pray God for forgiveness. Don't be like that woman Jezebel, who God gave her space to repent, but she did not (Rev. 2:20,21).
4. Some day our "last opportunity" to obey the Gospel will be gone (II Thess. 1:7-9).
5. *"And now, Lord what wait I for? My hope is in thee"* (Psalm 39:7).
6. As Paul informs us in II Cor. 6:2 *"...Now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation."*
7. We plead and pray that fewer people would pass up their "Last Opportunity."

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## **Hades: The Last State of The Disembodied Spirit**

*Marlin Kilpatrick*

Luke 16:19-31; I Cor. 15:42ff

1. One of life's most intriguing questions is: What happens to man when he dies?
  - a. The materialist would claim that nothing happens, we just cease to exist.
  - b. The atheist cannot do any better than the materialist!
  - c. The agnostic is not sure, since he thinks there's not enough evidence to lead to a final conclusion.
  - d. The scriptures teach that at death, the spirit separates from the body and returns to God who gave it (James 2:26; Eccl. 12:7).
2. The last state of the disembodied spirit should be of vital interest to all because:
  - a. Our knowledge of this state will motivate us to make proper preparation for the hereafter.
  - b. Our interest in this state will help us to see the importance of teaching the lost their need for salvation.
3. There are several stages of life through which we all pass.
  - a. The first stage is a state of innocency, from birth to an age of accountability.

- b. The second stage is from the time of accountability until we die.
  - c. During the 2nd stage of our lives, we are all amenable to the law of Christ.
4. What, then, is the last state of the disembodied spirit?

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- I. WHEN WE DIE OUR SPIRITS ENTER INTO HADES, THE UNSEEN REALM OF THE DISEMBODED SPIRITS.**
- A. Hades is an intermediate state between this life and eternity.
  - B. Hades, a New Testament word, is the last state of the disembodied spirits and is equivalent to the Old Testament word, "*Sheol*."
  - C. At death our destinies are determined, fixed, and unalterable.
- II. HADES HAS TWO DIVISIONS.**
- A. Paradise — Originally a Persian word denoting the parks of Persian kings and nobles (Vine, p. 158). A place of rest and peace. Jews described it as "Abraham's bosom."
  - B. Tartarus — The place of wicked disembodied spirits which are "in torments." (Luke 16:23).
  - C. Between Paradise and Tartarus is a great gulf that is fixed. A chasm that is too deep to be filled and too wide to be bridged; it separates Paradise and Tartarus.
- III. THERE ARE SOME THINGS WHICH CANNOT HAPPEN IN HADES.**
- A. One cannot change his destiny. The great gulf forbids such a change (Luke 16:26).
  - B. One cannot prepare for eternity; no repentance and salvation can occur.
  - C. One cannot communicate with the living (Luke 16:27-29).
- IV. IN HADES THERE ARE SOME THINGS WHICH DO OCCUR.**
- A. In death, the spirit is conscious (Luke 16:19-26).
    - 1. The rich man could see, talk, hear, possessed memory, and experienced pain.
    - 2. The doctrine of "soul sleeping / soul extinction" is proved to be false.
    - 3. The spirits of the righteous are resting from their labors (Rev. 14:13).
    - 4. The spirits of the dying are continually entering into hades.

**V. THERE ARE FALSE DOCTRINES WHICH ARE REFUTED BY THE EXISTENCE OF HADES.**

- A. Biblical hades denies the doctrine of reincarnation.
  - 1. Spirits in hades cannot return to this world.
  - 2. One can die only once. cf. Heb. 9:27
- B. The doctrine of soul-sleeping / soul extinction is denied (cf. The rich man's experience).
- C. The Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory is shown to be false.

**VI. THE RICH MAN LEARNED SEVERAL LESSONS IN HADES.**

- A. He learned why he was lost (Luke 16:25,26).
  - 1. He was not lost because he was, in this life, rich and able to live "the good life."
  - 2. He was lost because of a lack of concern for the welfare of others.
- B. He learned that circumstances in this life may vary greatly from circumstances experienced in hades.
  - 1. In this life he had everything he could possibly desire (Luke 16:19).
  - 2. In hades he had lost it all.
- C. He learned it was too late to plead for anything (Luke 16:27).
- D. He learned it was too late to worry about the destiny of his family (Luke 16:27,28).
- E. He learned that the miraculous has nothing to do with salvation (Luke 16:30).

**VII. IN HADES WE SEE THE DESTINIES OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED ARE CONTRASTED.**

- A. In this life Lazarus had nothing, but now he has all that really matters.
  - 1. He had peace and comfort (Luke 16:25).
  - 2. He realized an unspeakable joy.
- B. The rich man enjoyed bliss in this life, but in hades he had only pain and a memory that brought regret and remorse.

**VIII. HADES ENDS WITH THE CALL OF THE RESURRECTION. cf. John 5:28,29**

- A. All people will be called to accountability for the way they have lived (Rom. 2:6; II Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12,13).
- B. A great change will take place — mortality for immortality (I Cor. 15:51-58)
  - 1. Our bodies are sown mortal, but raised as immortal bodies (I Cor. 15:44).
  - 2. We will have a new body (cf. I John 3:2).



**CONCLUSION:**

1. It is natural that we should question what happens when we die.
2. It is far more crucial that we learn and obey the Gospel while we have life and opportunity.
3. Only those who have obeyed the Gospel may prepare for the life hereafter.

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"Hell"

Last And Everlasting State

Garland M. Robinson

1. The subject of HELL is a most unpopular topic.
2. Some who call themselves preachers never preach on the subject because it's unpopular and/or they do not believe it themselves. One said he had never met anyone he thought was going there.
3. People have all kinds of ideas about hell:
 - a. Hell is only for those who are the vilest of sinners.
 - 1) Rev. 21:27, anything that defileth.
 - 2) Rom. 6:23, the wages of sin is death
 - 3) Rev. 21:8, fearful, unbelieving, liars
 - b. God is too loving to punish sin.
 - 1) Rom. 11:22, the goodness and severity of God
 - 2) Heb. 10:26-31, fearful thing to fall into God's hands
 - 3) Heb. 12:29, God is a consuming fire
 - c. What we experience now, is hell on earth.
 - 1) If men think their life now is an experience in hell, they are in for a rude awakening come judgment day!
 - 2) Matt. 10:28; 25:46
 - d. Hell is an annihilation.
 - 1) Jehovah Witness and Seventh Day Adventists hold this position.
 - 2) Rev. 14:11, The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.
 - 3) Matt. 25:41,46; II Thess. 1:7-9, Everlasting fire.
 - e. Hell is the grave.
 - 1) There is life and consciousness beyond. The rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
 - 2) Why did Jesus die to save us from our sins if hell is the grave? John 14:1-3
 - f. Hell is just a state of mind.

- 1) Try explaining that to the rich man, Luke 16.
- 2) Every word of the Bible refutes this idea.
4. The Bible lends no support for the thoughts and traditions of men.

DISCUSSION:

I. THERE ARE THREE WORDS TRANSLATED HELL IN THE KJV BIBLE.

- A. *Hades* — found 11 times — place of departed spirits, the realm of the unseen.
 1. Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27,31
 2. Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13,14; (I Cor. 15:55, translated "grave").
- B. *gehenna* — found 12 times, hell fire, eternal hell.
 1. Matt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33
 2. Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6
- C. *tartaros* — found 1 time, torments. II Peter 2:4

II. HELL IS A REALITY.

- A. Jesus warned of the reality of hell.
 1. Matt. 10:28; 25:41,46
 2. Luke 12:5
- B. The apostles warned of the reality of hell.
 1. II Peter 2:4; I Peter 4:17-18
 2. II Thess. 1:7-9; II Cor. 5:10

III. THE BIBLE TELLS US WHAT HELL IS LIKE.

- A. A place of **FIRE**.
 1. "*Lake of fire*" — Rev. 20:15
 2. "*A Furnace of fire*" — Matt. 13:42
 3. "*Everlasting fire*" — Matt. 25:41
 4. "*Flaming fire*" — II Thess. 1:8
 5. "*Unquenchable fire*" — Matt. 3:12; Mark 9:44
 6. "*hell fire*" — Matt. 5:22
 7. "*fire*" — II Peter 3:7
 8. "*eternal fire*" — Jude 7
 9. "*fire and brimstone*" — Rev. 14:10
 10. "*lake of fire burning with brimstone*" — Rev. 19:20
- B. A place of **TORMENT**.
 1. Luke 16:23,25. "*being in torments ... thou art tormented.*"
 2. Rev. 14:11. "*And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night...*"
- C. A place of **DARKNESS**.
 1. Matt. 25:30. "*cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*"
 2. II Peter 2:4. "*For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment*"

D. A place of **SEPARATION**. Matt. 25:31-46

1. II Thess. 1:7-9, "...In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
2. Someone has well said: "Heaven will be heaven because God is there, and hell will be hell because God is not there"

IV. THE BIBLE TELLS US OF THE LENGTH OF HELL.

- A. Forever and ever. Rev. 14:11
- B. Everlasting punishment. Matt. 25:46
- C. Where the fire is not quenched. Mark 9:48

V. THE BIBLE TELLS US WHO WILL BE IN HELL.

- A. The devil and his angels. Matt. 25:41; II Peter 2:4
- B. The wicked and nations that forget God. Psalms 9:17
- C. Those who don't know God. II Thess. 1:8
- D. Those who do not obey the Gospel. II Thess. 1:7-9; I Peter 4:17-18
- E. Those whose names are not written in the book of life. Rev. 20:15
- F. The unprofitable servant. Matt. 25:30; Rev. 21:8
- G. The unrighteous, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind (homosexuals, sodomites), thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners (I Cor. 6:9-10).
- H. The fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, liars. Rev. 21:8
- I. Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like...they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal. 5:19-21
- J. The alien sinner. Matt. 7:21; I Peter 4:17
- K. The hypocrite. Matt. 15:7-9; Acts 5:1-11
- L. Those who add to and take from the word of God. Rev. 22:18-19
- M. Unfaithful members of the church. II Peter 2:20; Heb. 6:4; Luke 6:46

VI. THERE ARE SOME THINGS NOT FOUND IN HELL.

- A. No light. Matt. 22:13; 25:30; II Peter 2:4,17; Jude 1:6
- B. No mercy. Luke 16:24-26; Matt. 5:7
- C. No water. Luke 16:24
- D. No earthly possessions. Luke 12:16-21; I Tim. 6:7
- E. No travel. Luke 16:26

- F. No desire for company, friends or family. Luke 16:28
- G. No unbelievers or infidels! Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:10
- H. No faithful Christians. II Tim. 4:8; Rev. 2:10

VII. **CHRIST DOESN'T WANT ANYONE TO GO TO HELL.**

- A. He died to keep us from going to hell. Rom. 5:8-9; John 3:16-17; Heb. 2:9; 9:22
- B. He is "not willing that any should perish." II Peter 3:9
- C. Our Lord plainly taught that the righteous would be rewarded and the wicked would be punished. Matt. 25:46
 - 1. He taught that either heaven or hell would be our eternal home.
 - 2. We must choose where we will be in eternity.
 - 3. Marshall Keeble often said, *"God votes for you, the devil votes against you, and you hold the deciding vote."*

CONCLUSION:

- 1. If we really believe Hell as we say we do, why take so many chances doing things we know will send us there?
- 2. People are so reckless with their lives and souls.
- 3. Church members are often reckless:
 - a. Refuse to study — II Tim. 2:15.
 - b. Refuse to work — I Cor. 15:58
 - c. Refuse to attend church services — Heb. 10:25
 - d. Refuse to do good — James 4:17
 - e. Refuse to do all that God commands — II John 6
- 4. If we could see but a glimpse of the horrors of hell, we would conclude we never want to go there.

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Heaven, The Final Abode Of The Righteous

Charles Blair

- 1. Where do we go when this life is finished? It is a question which has occupied the minds of all reasonable people throughout the ages.
- 2. Those who have chosen to follow God, from the garden of Eden forward, are blessed by the awareness that heaven, that home with God, is at the end of the journey of life.
- 3. It is the eternal home, one that will never end. We all then must work hard to get as many as we can to go with us to enjoy eternity with God.

4. May our study together awaken in all of us that desire to be with God when this life is finished.

DISCUSSION:

I. OUR MINDS MUST OPERATE IN FAITH BECAUSE WE HAVE NEVER BEEN TO HEAVEN:

- A. At the heart of faith is the realization that God rewards those who diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6).
 1. If one does not believe that God exists, then why live your life as though there will be life after death?
 2. We hear in our day a steady "drum beat" from those who live immoral lives that there is no God. Whether it is the issue of prayer in schools, houses of congress or some gathering of people in a public way, the message is there is no God.
 3. Two quick points to consider.
 - a. Only a fool would say there is no God (Psalm 14:1; 19:1-3).
 - b. Those who live immoral lives KNOW at some point that people who live this way will face the judgment of God (Rom. 1:32).
- B. We have never seen God or heard His audible voice. Our acceptance of Him then must arise from the evidences He has provided for us to know that God is and thereby cause a desire in our hearts to one day be with Him.
 1. The physical world attest to the existence of God and anyone with a reasonable mind cannot deny His existence (Rom. 1:20).
 2. Where does the moral stamp on man which is not existent in the animal world come from? If man has evolved, then why are we not at a better moral plane of living?
 3. The idea of evolution is that man is climbing to a higher plane of living. Why then did not World War I end the concept of man fighting with man. Think of all the bloodshed, violence and hatred which fills our world.
 4. Even though man himself is not getting better (evolution), he still recognizes that there is something different in man than in animals.
- C. Since we have never seen God or heard His audible voice, then how has God spoken to us today?
 1. God used the prophets as men that would speak for Him to convey His will (II Peter 1:20,21).
 2. God has in these last days spoken to us through His Son (Heb. 1:1,2).
 3. Again, we have not heard the audible voice of Jesus.
 4. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles (John 14:16,17).

5. Part of the work of the Holy Spirit was to remind the apostles of those things which Jesus taught them (John 14:26).
 6. Once we got to the "unity of the faith," then the direct messages from the Spirit of God ceased (Eph. 4:13; I Cor. 13:8-10).
- D. If you believe that the scriptures are from God, then you must turn to those scriptures to "hear" from God.

II. ANYTIME YOU TAKE A TRIP TO A PLACE YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN, THEN SUCH TRIPS ARE PREPARED FOR BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

- A. We will get pictures, talk to others who have been there; get brochures, etc.
1. What kind of clothing will you need?
 2. How much money and so forth.
 3. We make every effort to find out as much as we can before we ever leave for our destination.
- B. Since heaven is the final abode or dwelling place of the righteous, would we not make the same effort to find out about this "Place"?
1. There are no pictures.
 2. Some have died and been resurrected when the Lord was here on earth but we have no recorded words of what they saw or felt.
 3. One man, whom many think to have been Paul, went to the third heaven, where God is but when he came back he was not allowed to tell us what he saw or what he felt (II Cor. 12:2-4).
 4. We then have no information as to others who have been there.
- C. What we are left with is what God has told us through His Written Word.

III. LET US BEGIN OUR SEARCH BY LOOKING BACK TO THE OLD TESTAMENT:

- A. When God first created Adam, he placed him in a garden (Gen. 2:8).
1. It was a garden which had trees and rivers (v.9).
 2. When man was placed in this beautiful garden, his job was to dress and keep it.
- B. Many years later, when the herdsman of Abram and Lot were fighting with each other, Abram came up with this solution.
1. He allowed Lot to choose which place to go.
 2. Consider now this description of the land of Canaan.

- a. Before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah the beauty of the land itself was even as “the garden of the Lord” (Gen. 13:10).
- C. When Jesus was dying on the cross, He made this promise to the thief dying with Him.
 - 1. This day you will be with Me in paradise (Luke 23:43).
 - 2. How do we define this word, “paradise”?
 - 3. It means a “park”, an Eden.
- D. When the man was caught up to the “third heaven”, the meaning there is the abode of God. (II Cor. 12:3)
 - 1. This “place” was called paradise, the same word used in Luke 23:43.
- E. As surely as God uses human language to describe the horrors of hell, so then He must use human language to describe for us the beauty of heaven itself.
 - 1. What better words could we find than “garden”, “trees”, rivers, park.
 - 2. Are there not places of desolation on planet earth?
 - 3. Yet God chose those words which appeal to the mind of man and the beauty of the earth which God created a few thousand years ago.

IV. WHEN WE GET THERE, WHAT WILL WE LOOK LIKE?

- A. One obvious fact is that we cannot go beyond what God has revealed since that it is how He speaks to us today (II Tim. 3:16; II John 9).
- B. The scriptures indicate we do not know what we will look like in eternity.
 - 1. I John 3:2
 - 2. All speculation is therefore, useless.
 - 3. We know these matters are in God’s hands and not our judgment.
- C. Our bodies must be changed in order for us to have immortality (I Cor. 15:51-53).
- D. When Moses and Elijah left paradise and came back to earth to talk with Jesus about His coming death, Peter recognized both of them even though he had never seen them.
 - 1. Whatever the soul looks like, we will recognize one another on that “far away strand.”

V. WHAT IS MOST ATTRACTIVE ABOUT HEAVEN, IS THAT WE WILL FINALLY BE WITH GOD:

- A. Take time and think of all the positive attributes of God which are manifested in the scriptures.
 - 1. Love
 - 2. Kindness
 - 3. Patience
 - 4. Goodness

- B. All such characteristics of God will finally come to our view. Have you ever spent time around someone who left the impression that they were a lovely person?
 - 1. Such people one finds great joy in being around.
 - 2. What will it be to be around the One who is love?
- C. Heaven will be with our Savior.
 - 1. "Face to Face" (song).
 - 2. Remember the account of the ten lepers?
 - 3. Will it not be wonderful to have an opportunity to say "thank You" to the Son of God who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood (Rev. 1:5).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. There is a coming a day when the child of God will finally find his rest (Heb. 4:1).
 - a. The idea of rest here is to lie down, that is rest from what one was doing.
- 2. In verse 3 and 4, all of it together is the idea of settling down, never to roam again, in the sense that Israel settled in Canaan.
- 3. Life is indeed filled with changes (Eccl. 3:2-8).
- 4. With God we are in a garden where we will never grow old, again.
- 5. In Hebrews 4:2, those who will be excluded are those who did not live before God in faith. We will all be in eternity somewhere, the choice is ours.

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