

How to Understand the Bible III Pentecost and the First Resurrection

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We need to get our perspective in everything. Sometimes, when we get so close to something we look at it and it can be very, very small. But as we're looking at it, it can be very large.

Just like today, we have been fighting a few 'scout ants' coming into the house, because this is the time of the year that ants venture out. Even in the best house—as the Proverbs says—you can find ants and spiders even in the pallets. I looked at those little eenie-teeny ants, and they come across a crumb of bread, that's a big meal for many of them. You see them running off with this little itty-bitty thing, but to them it's a giant treasure of something to eat.

Likewise with understanding things in the Bible and understanding prophecies. There is no difficulty in understanding the Ten Commandments. Those are not hard to understand, everybody can understand them. ***If you're willing to keep them you'll have more understanding concerning them!***

You can take each commandments and all the statutes and judgments and lesser laws are subparts of those commandments. For example: All the commandments concerning the priesthood under the Old Covenant, all fall under the first commandment, and the second commandment—having to do with idols and the third commandment.

But every ritual falls under the first commandment, and then it branches out from there and you're not to have idols; not the priests nor anybody else. Then you're not take God's name in vain; not the priests especially, because he represents God, nor anybody else.

Then you have the Sabbath, and everybody can figure out the seventh day, even all your Sunday-keepers; they know which day is the seventh day, because they keep the first day. That's not hard to figure. But coming out from the Sabbath commandment, you have all the Holy Days, because the Sabbath commandment sanctifies that.

Then you have honor your father and mother, under which you have all the statutes:

- you shall not curse father and mother
- you shall not lay hand on father and mother
- you shall not be rebellious toward your parents

Those all come from that one commandment!

Then you shall not commit adultery and under that follows all the other commandments concerning various sex acts that people are known to commit (Lev. 18; 22 and other examples such as Sodom and Gomorrah, and so forth).

The same way with murder; it defines willful murder, planned murder, manslaughter. For you shall not steal, what kind of thievery. So, it expands out from underneath that. And likewise with prophecies. Certain prophecies are easier to understand than others. But in everything that we do—whether looking at

- the commandments of God
- the statutes and judgments of God
- the prophecies of God
- Old Testament and New Testament, and understanding the unity of Scripture

We need to always keep a perspective of:

- who we are
- where we are
- what we are doing

because we have nothing that we haven't received physically and spiritually!

Physically we have life. We have to live in a certain age. This age is perhaps the hardest and most difficult to live in, because there is the most apparent peace, but also the most apparent confusion.

For example: You can have every war, every disaster come right into your house through the television, radio, newspaper, e-mail, anything on line—*everything!* But if you lived off in an isolated community someplace where you had none of these things, you wouldn't know about it.

Example: When Krakatoa blew, it took a long time for people to understand that it was Krakatoa that was causing the problems with the climate around the world. They finally understood that.

So, if you lived in a little isolated community where you had virtually no contact with anyone, you did not read a newspaper, you did not have a computer, you were not online and didn't have a radio, telephone or television...

What I'm describing is an experimental group where they took two families and ask them if they would like to live as they did 150 years ago.

Yes, Yes, Yes! So, they had to go to Montana and they had none of things that I just mentioned. At first it was so difficult, because:

- they had to *go get* their water
- they had to *go get* their meat—shoot it, kill it, skin it
- they were given some animals for milk and butter
- the kids had no toys, no play games

They were so frustrated at first they were so uptight they didn't know what to do. One thing they did have to do is *work!* They had to fetch the water, fetch the wood, take care of the animals. If you don't take care of the animals the way they ought, they will let you know. A horse will bite you, a cow will kick you. I've milked cows, so if you're not milking them just right, that cow doesn't even have to look, it knows exactly where the bucket is and your whole labor of milking for 20 minutes is gone! Here comes this manure-ridden flip right in the middle of the milk and it's all gone.

'Freddy, where's the milk?' *Well, the cow knocked it over!* 'What did you do?' So, you're confronted with a whole different set of problems. When I was growing up on a farm, if I wanted to have fun I got my chores done and we had woods everywhere in Washington. I could go walk across anybody's property and go into the woods. One of the things that the kids and I used to do together was we climbed these alder trees and we'd sway them back and forth and we would play 'Tarzan.'

We did have some memory of movies and so forth. We would go from one tree to another tree, and we would go all the way across a certain area of the forest today, which we called *the woods!* Then we'd shinny on down and we had a great time doing that. When we wanted to see how far we could climb, there were these giant fir trees and we were able to climb almost to the top. My mom never knew anything about this! But even if she did, she would figure that I was capable enough of doing it anyhow. I remember being way up on the top of one of the trees and I could see everything at least a mile away.

My mom wanted me home and she had the strongest voice in the world. She would call as loud as she could, 'Fred-eeeeee!' When I heard that 'e' I could hear that three miles away. I had to answer back, 'com-inggggggg!' *She had to hear me!*

So, I was up in this tree, way up there over a 1 hundred feet and that's nothing today. That's almost a slam dunk! I got out of the big fir tree and ran on home, and so forth.

Today, same way with studying the Bible. We have more Bibles than ever before. More

translations of Bibles than ever before. We have online Bibles and study aides. We also have been blessed with more understanding because of two things:

1. Jesus said we would
2. God told Daniel that at the end-time we would understand

So, we do understand more! But again, that's not because of anything that comes from us, ***but it's because of something we have received!***

Here's the perspective we need to look at in everything, and that is also a *rule of life*. 1-Cor. 13 is where we begin to understand about understanding prophecies. Let's keep everything in perspective, which I'll point out as we go along.

- Are the Prophets going to be in the Kingdom of God, that is receive salvation? *Yes!*
- Though they gave the prophecies, was understanding them a salvational issue? *No!*

They were only to bring the prophecy!

Likewise with us. Here at the end-time we do understand more, but certain things are not salvational issues. This is what Paul brings out here in 1-Cor. 13, and here's where we need to get our perspective. Because so many things intrude into our lives, we tend to be very easily disturbed, problems confront us, and we have a lot of problems overwhelm us because we have information and communication coming to us that we wouldn't have otherwise.

1-Corinthians 13:1: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal."

Think of that! Just think how special this person would be in the world. So, if you have all of that and don't have love... If you don't love God and love each other then all your understanding of prophecy doesn't do you any good. How much good does it do?

Verse 2: "If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and understand all mysteries... [that's every little itty-bitty detail] ...and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."

This is the perspective that we need to come to when we're dealing with some of these, so that we don't get stuck on some little thing or stuck on some little problem or big problem and let that carry us away.

Our human nature is always there to egg us on, especially when you think you're right or you are right. I've done that and you've done that.

Verse 3: "And if I give away all my goods, and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I have gained nothing."

Here's where we all fall short. That's why God gives us this standard that we have to come back to in all cases, every case. Whether it's:

- knowledge
- study
- understanding
- personal relations
- husband/wife relations
- dealing with one another

We all have to come back to this, and we all fall short, because who is there among human beings that does not sin? *None!*

Mark 7:21: "For from within, out of the hearts of men go forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders"—*and things like this.*

This is why when we come to the Day of Atonement, and also the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles, everyone wants to have everything perfect *now*. Can't be, because Satan is still around! Everyone wants everyone else to be perfect in behavior, including themselves. *Can't be, because we still have human nature!*

This is why Satan must be put away, Day of Atonement! You can have all the best people in the world around. Look at Adam and Eve, they were the best of anything could have been of the whole human race before they sinned. But as soon as you introduce Satan the devil, what do they do? *They sinned!*

Satan has you sin because you think you're right, or you ought to do it, or it will be personal gain, whatever. So, until the Kingdom of God can be setup and rule the world, Satan has to be put away. That's why we have the Day of Atonement before the Feast of Tabernacles.

There's one other problem that needs to be changed: *the problem of human nature!* God has to change human nature back to what it was before Adam and Eve sinned. Which still has human nature and still subject to sin, but not to the degree that we see today.

1-Corinthians 13:4: "Love is patient..." Sometimes patience is short, but love will help you come back to where you need to be.

"...and is kind; love envies not... [that causes a lot of problems] ...does not brag about itself... [that causes a lot of problems ...is not puffed up]" (v 4)—that causes a lot of problems.

I got a call from a woman who has trouble in her marriage and she's had it for quite a while. I've also talked to the husband via phone and I told them about 1-Cor. 13 and then said, 'Look, the heart and core of all of our problems is selfishness, includes everything:

- mind on self
- mind on how you want it
- mind on how the other person doesn't do it the way you want to do it

So, until we all understand, including me, that we have to start with ourselves and realize that the problems we have are because of self. Whether it's relations with other people...

Also if we get into big 'twits' concerning doctrine or other things, it all comes to that. So, this is why we need to come back to 1-Cor. 13 quite often. Human nature goes along and agree with it and say,

Yeah, that's right' and what will happen? *You will go out and you revert right back!* Why? Do you want to? *No! But because of the weakness of human nature and just the way that it is!* What we need to do is realize that and then when something happens acknowledge it, repent and move on.

Verse 5: "Love does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth" (vs 5-6). *So, when troubles come, as bad as they are!*

Verse 7: "Love bears all things..." I've already mentioned Jeremiah several times. But if you read carefully the book of Lamentations, you have Jeremiah's plea to God recorded, that he was saying to God when he was in the sewer up to neck in human muck... "...bears all things..." *and I don't think any of us have had to bear that!* Whatever it is:

- lost husband or wife
- lost children

Today we're confronted with all kinds of problems, aren't we? Some of them, in order to bear them you just have to get away, because you can't carry it, because it's not meant for you to carry. So, don't try and carry it.

"...believes all things... [that are true, obviously] ...hopes all things... [for everything that is right and good] ...endures all things." (v 7).

Remember it says that *he who endures to the end, the same shall be saved!* So, the only way you're going to have the kind of endurance that you need is to have the love of God!

Verse 8: "Love never fails. But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall cease..." *Any of God's prophecies are not going to fail*, but that doesn't mean that we fully understand them all.

"...whether *there be* languages, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.... [our human knowledge] ...For we know in part, and we prophesy in part" (vs 8-9).

Let's understand that for all prophecies. Yes, we understand more than people have in the past, but what we understand is "...in part..." There will be things that are difficult to understand as we go along.

I know that when I first began preaching about the first resurrection being pictured by Pentecost, I remember one person saying that 'it took me five years before I understood it.' So, sometimes it takes a while. Part of the reason that we didn't understand that in our past church experience is because they kept it a day late.

Verse 10: "But when that which is Perfect [Christ] has come..." Have we arrived to perfection? *No!*

Look at even Moses, one of the most righteous men on earth, he lost his patience because of everybody around him. They just kept coming after him. We think that the Prophets of old and the men that God used were wonderful. No! They had their weaknesses. They had their carnality.

When you get right down to it, if you go back and examine Moses' life, what was he before he fled away? *He was a man-slayer!* We won't say murderer, but a man-slayer. Maybe he killed a man justly, we don't know; but it still was against the Egyptians. So, he had to flee away. What happened? God put him 'on ice' for 40 years tending sheep.

Then you read the cantankerousness that he had between him and his wife over the children and circumcision. She got angry and said, 'You're a bloody husband to me.' Those things are recorded so that we understand that we still have human nature and things like this are going to come along. But we have to rise above it, *and we can only rise above it with God!*

Then God said to Moses, 'I'm going to send you,' and Moses said, 'I can't talk.' God said, 'I'll send your brother Aaron to talk for you.' *Well, they won't believe me!* 'I'll give you a sign.'

You go through the whole thing and you see

all the weaknesses of Moses, and then at the end, God told him to go to the rock and *speak* to the rock. Previously God told him to take his staff and strike the rock. Moses was so angry that he was kind of in a fit of rage against the people. What would you do? Here, you're out in the desert and everybody is complaining. 'We need water, we're all thirsty and it's hot! We can't even sweat! Our animals are baaing! They need water.'

Moses goes to God and says, 'God, what am I going to do?' *Go speak to the rock!* So, Moses went to the rock and everybody was after him and he says, after 38 years, 'You miserable people! You expect me to bring you water out of the rock.' And Moses took his rod and whack! Whack! Bam! Bam! Out came the water.

God said, 'You're not going into *the promised land.*' How long would have Moses lived into the 'promised land' if he hadn't done that? God said that He would let Moses climb to the top of Mt. Nebo and He would let Moses look at it to the north, south, east and west. 'You're going to die on this mountain because you didn't believe Me. You beat the rock when I said to speak to it.' Beating is not speaking!

We all have our problems and difficulties. You can come down the line: 'Oh, if I were one of the apostles...' Look at James and John; they wanted to sit themselves at the right and left hand of Christ, and even got mom to go run a little political interference for them. That didn't work.

Look at Peter, who was an impetuous, self-willed man. He said that he would go to the depths for You, I'll do anything for You; I'll go to prison for You.' Jesus said, 'Peter, before this night is over you're going to deny Me three times!' *No, Lord, that will never happen!* Then Peter later made a great political mistake (Gal. 2). What we need to do is this:

Verse 10: "But when that which is Perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside.... [then Paul uses this as an example]: ...When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child..." (vs 10-11).

It's very interesting, all through the Old Testament how does God refer to Israel? *The children of Israel!*

"...I reasoned as a child; but when I became a man, I set aside the things of a child. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then *we shall see* face-to-face; now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known" (vs 11-12).

- Since we're imperfect, how can we

- demand perfection of other people?
- Since we have partial knowledge, how can we demand complete knowledge?
- Since we have partial understanding, how can we demand perfect understanding?

You can apply this to many aspects of your personal life, study and everything. I know that there are things that I understand that I, imperfectly, have conveyed to people that causes misunderstandings. I also know that sometimes just a simple, little misunderstanding of a phrase can cause someone to think it's something that it's not.

Here's another thing concerning the Word of God and prophecy. In the **Fourteen Rules of Bible Study** I always have it this way:

What is it that we know to this point? Don't try to understand the complicated things first, or even the complicated things later. Some complicated things we just have to say that we don't have a clear picture of it. So, we can't be dogmatic. But nevertheless, here's how we understand the Word of God and understand prophecy.

Proverbs 25:2: "The glory of God *is* to conceal a thing..." *That applies to many things!*

- How much have people uncovered technologically
 - ✓ by science?
 - ✓ by experimentation?
 - ✓ by trying to figure?
 - ✓ by trial and error?
- How many planes crashed before they figured out how to make them safer?
- How many people died in mines before they figured out how to make them safer?

But they kept researching, kept doing and kept going!

Same way with the Word of God! We read along and all of a sudden there's something that you just don't understand. It's hard to put it together. When we understand about the Passover, Sabbath and Holy Days, we do have a framework on which to hang a lot of the prophecies, that is true.

"...but the honor of kings *is* to search out a matter" (v 2). *Not just kings, but anybody!* God didn't make us robots where everything is funneled into us:

- we have to make choices
- we have to search it out
- we have to find out
- we have to learn by trial and error and experimentation

When we learn things by trial and error, those are

not necessarily salvational issues. So, we need to search out things. We can do that concerning:

- health
- exercise
- what kind of car you want to buy
- what kind of clothes you want to buy
- cooking and a recipe

Delores has been an excellent cook, really fantastic at it, but she's found something here in the last 8-10 years in whatever she bakes—bread, cookies or a crust—by trial and error, by experimentation...

God didn't come down and tell her to use barley flour. She just said that she was going to put some barley flour in, and she read how good barley flour was. Remember, the Bible talks a lot about barley flour. Now she uses barley flour and she makes everything twice as good. It's not all barley flour but it's about 50% and it improves everything. It's lighter and very nutritious. When she was doing that I said, 'What were some of the cake and grain offerings that you find in the Bible?' *Barley and wheat!*

You can look at your own lives and you can see that there are many different things in your life that you learned by trial and error, and God expects us to. That's how we learn.

Likewise, in searching the thing out with understanding prophecy, there are certain things that we learn by trial and error. Sometimes something may appear to us to be correct, but it may not be correct because there are other things that need to be considered.

There we have the proposition of how we're going to approach some of the questions that we're going to cover today: **Does the resurrection take place:**

- *before* the last trumpet, the seventh trump?
or
- *at* the seventh trumpet?
or
- *after* the seventh trumpet?

These are kind of a technical questions. As we've covered before:

- What is the difference between *the resurrection* and going to a *place of safety*?
- What did we learn in parts one and two?
- What does Isaiah 28 say?
- *Here a little, there a little; line upon line, line upon line; precept upon precept!*

When you read the Old Testament, you can read along and here an example in Isaiah. Here's a prophecy for the people living right then. Then all of a sudden it switches gears and here's something about the Kingdom of God, which isn't going to take place until Christ returns. Then it comes down to a prophecy about the first coming of Christ, then blends into a prophecy concerning the second coming of Christ. Then gets down to how God is going to deal with Israel.

All of those can be in one chapter and it can become very confusing. So, what you have to do is break it down into segments, because the segments are talking about different things. Let's break down Matt. 24, because we find the same thing there: *line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little*, and not everything follows in a chronological way. *That's important to understand!*

Christ's disciples come to Him and ask, 'When will these things be?' Then He tells them all the things that are going to take place. They've happened from that time until this. Matt. 24:10 starts coming into the time of the end.

Matthew 24:10: "And then shall many be led into sin... [offended (KJV) or committing offenses] ...and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another... that's been going on continuously] ...and many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many" (vs 10-11).

How many false prophets have there been from that time until now? *Hundreds of thousands!* Who knows!

Verse 12: "And because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of many shall grow cold." *That's the reason I started with 1-Cor. 13!*

Verse 13: "But the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved." *There are two ways of enduring:*

1. to the end of your life
2. to the return of Christ

Either way, you have to endure!

In our lives when we are young we never think about getting old. When we're old we start rusting out. We say we don't want to rust out, but you are going to rust out. As Christ told Peter, 'When you get old, someone is going to lead you around where you don't want to go.' Things happen, and you get old. *You have to endure to the end!* All the apostles had to endure to the end and none of them saw the things that Jesus told them about in the way that they expected them to happen. Will the apostles receive salvation? *Yes!*

Verse 14: "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come."

- What does that mean? *Exactly what it says!*

It says that we're to search it out and ask questions!

- When it says *all the world*, does it mean all the world? *In the end-time we can say, yes, it does mean all the world, because there's worldwide communication!*
- Does it tell us how long it's going to take? *No!*
- Does it tell us how long the events are that lead up to the end, before the end comes? *No!*
- Does it tell us what it means to be a witness?
- And to whom? *It say to all the world!*
- Do we have an intense proclamation of the Gospel in the world today through the Word of God being the greatest book that has ever been distributed to more people in more languages than any other book in the world? *Yes!*

That's one way of preaching the Gospel!

If a person has a Bible in their home and they never open it, that's not God's fault. God sent it, whether it was by your father, mother, aunt, uncle or you just bought it out of curiosity, whatever, you have it. The very fact that you have is a witness. Not a profound witness, but it is a witness.

When the day comes and someone says, 'Lord, I never knew.' *Did you have a Bible?* 'Yes.' *Did you ever read it?* 'No.' *If you would have read it, you would have known!* 'Yes.'

Everyone wants to know when the end is going to come. Down through history there have been many false alarms, many false prophets and all of that sort of thing, comprehended even beyond what we can comprehend today.

Verse 15—this is a change. This describes something at the end, and it runs from vs 15-22. "Therefore, **when** you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy place.'...."

- What does that mean?
- What does that require?

The temple was destroyed in 70_{A.D.} on the very same day that it was destroyed the first time in 586_{B.C.}: 9th and 10th of Ab. In both cases it was burned.

- What does the Holy Place require?

- What is the Holy Place? *Where the Ark of the Covenant is!*

We know that 2-Thess. is a prophecy about *the man of sin, the son of perdition who goes into the temple of God and says that he is 'God!'* We're able to understand that that is ***the ultimate fulfillment of the abomination of desolation!***

"...(The one who reads, let him understand.)" (v 15). Jesus did not say that! How did it get there? *The only way it got there is because John—the last living apostle—was the one who finalized the whole New Testament, and he must have put it there!*

- Why would he put it there? *Because obviously in his lifetime it never occurred!*
- What are we dealing with here? *We're dealing with a new event that comes right up to the end!*

But also we're dealing with something that

I've mentioned, that the apostle whom Jesus loved, the one to whom He gave the vision of Revelation to give the outline of everything that connects all the rest of the Bible and end of the age together, did not understand Matt. 24:15. So, John inserted in there, "...(The one who reads, let him understand.)" John knew that this was going to go on down in time and that it was going to be read. ***Today we have more understanding of it!***

- Is the Apostle John going to receive salvation? *Yes!*
- Is he going to be in the Kingdom of God? *Yes!*
- Was that a salvational issue for John to understand this? *No!*

He didn't know when it would be, or how it would come about, so God inspired him to put it in here for us in the future: "...(The one who reads, let him understand.)"

Now, we've talked about the place of safety. Those who are in Judea flee into the mountains; they're not going to be taken by angels anywhere. They're going to get up and go!

Verse 16: "Then let those who are in Judea flee into the mountains. Let the one *who is* on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house; and let the one *who is* in the field not go back to take his garments. But woe to those *women* who are expecting a child, and to those who are nursing infants in those days! And pray that your flight be not in *the* winter, nor on *the* Sabbath; for ***then***..." (vs 16-21).

When you see the abomination of desolation take place ***then*** the Tribulation shall begin. This is a major event and gives us a timeframe that needs to be plugged in by other Scriptures. The Tribulation cannot begin ***until the abomination of desolation stands in the Holy Place!*** We know by Dan. 11 that that cannot be until the King of the North comes at the King of the South.

- How long is the Tribulation?
- Must we also have other Scriptures interpret this for us?

"...shall there be great tribulation, such as has not been from *the* beginning of the world until this time, nor ever shall be *again*. And if those days were not limited, there would no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be limited" (vs 21-22). That ends the section, vs 15-22.

Now we come to a new section, which goes back and picks it up again from Jesus' time up to the end.

Verse 23: "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here *is* the Christ,' or, '*He is there,*' do not believe *it*. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect" (vs 23-24)—*the saints called of God!*

Verse 25: "Behold, I have foretold *it* to you. Therefore, if they say to you, '*Come and see! He is in the wilderness*'... [that's happened before] ...do not go forth. '*Come and see! He is in the secret chambers*'; do not believe *it*" (vs 25-26).

Now comes the *real* coming! All of these others are false declarations. We have that today. There's a man in Florida who says that he's a re-incarnation of Jesus Christ and He has returned! All of his followers have '666' tattooed on them. Thousands believe him! All I can say is remember Jimmy Jones!

Now then, Jesus says how it's going to happen, v 27: "For as the light of day..." *The KJV says 'lightning,' but they now know that lightning is much more than they ever figured!*

"...which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west... [the light of day] ...so also shall the coming of the Son of man be" (v 27)

Now here is an inserted verse, v 28: "For wherever the carcass may be, there will the eagles be gathered together." *This is an enigmatic verse referring to the resurrection of the saints!* But it doesn't tell us about the resurrection, it's just referring to it. Carcass, or body: Who is the symbolic Body of Christ? *The Church!*

Verse 29: “**But immediately after the tribulation of those days...**”

We’re going to have to look at some other Scriptures to understand this, but let’s go on. This is one of the key things that we’re talking about in relationship to the return of Christ. We’ll come back to this so that we can have other Scriptures interpret “...**after the tribulation of those days...**” There are some other Scriptures that need to be considered so that we can understand the timeframe. This does not mean the end of the Tribulation, the complete three and a half years, as we’ll see later.

“...the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man...” (vs 29-30)—*which shall be interpreted by v 27!*

Verse 30: “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory:

When you read the next verse it appears like the resurrection is going to take place instantly! But is that so?

- When does the sign of the Son of man appear?
- How long does it appear before the resurrection?

This doesn’t tell us here! So, when you have Scriptures that do not give a clear timeframe, and other Scriptures interpret it, then we must let the other Scriptures and other precepts—line upon line and here a little there a little—put it together to interpret it.

Verse 31: “And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet...” [we’re going to see that there is the trumpet, the voice, the angel are all involved] ...and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

We have from v 27-30 as one section. Verse 31 follows along with it, but does not give us a timeframe. It appears to be immediate, **but is it?** So, we’ll let other Scriptures interpret it.

Now He changes back to the present time. What we have here, even in Matt. 24 you do not have a continuous chronological time-setting, but you have events that must be harmonized with other time-settings to give us understanding.

Verse 32 starts another section: “Now, learn

this parable from the fig tree: When its branches have already become tender, and it puts forth its leaves, you know that summer *is* near. In like manner also, when you see **all these things**, know that it is near, even at *the doors*” (vs 32-33).

Key: “...**all these things...**” *Not some! Not part! Not most! ALL*

Verse 34: “Truly I say to you, **this generation...**” *The apostles thought it was the generation they lived in!*

How long is a generation? *Generally considered 40 years, because God said of this generation, it shall die in the wilderness!*

So, from the time that Jesus was crucified until 40 years later it brought you to 70_{A.D.} that generation during Jesus’ time.

“...shall in no wise pass away until **all these things** have taken place” (v 34).

Verse 15: “...(The one who reads, let him understand.)

John undoubtedly inserted that in 95_{A.D.} because the temple had been destroyed and there was no abomination of desolation standing in the Holy Place; no man of sin the son of perdition. So, John wrote that in there for a future time. But also, it gives us a clue that many of the events spoken of in Matt. 24 did take place.

- Were there false prophets?
- Were there wars?
- Were there rumors of wars?
- Was there affliction?
- Was there martyrdom?
- Did they preach the Gospel in their lifetime to a great extent to the vast part of the world?

Yes! But since there was not abomination of desolation taken place, not all the things occurred. That’s why John put it in there, to let us know that it would be a future event.

The phrase *this generation* refers to which generation’ obviously not the generation during the apostles’ time. So, it has to refer to *the very last* generation. That’s how we interpret and understand it.

To emphasize the point, that just because things do not happen in the way that we think they should happen, or like in the way the apostles thought that they would happen... I have a whole section of that in the commentary about how that figured into the writing and finalizing of the New Testament, as well. {Note that there are three commentaries

on the canonization of the New Testament in *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*}

But just to let everyone know, Jesus says, v 35: “The heaven and the earth shall pass away, **but My words shall never pass away.**” *There’s the stamp of authority on it*, which tells us that if it doesn’t happen with *all* these events—and *all* means that we must put other things from other prophecies in line to make sure that we understand all these things—that it’s going to happen!

Here’s another warning. It’s awfully hard for preachers who are sold on themselves, and in preaching prophecy, to really grasp. Some do it to dismiss and say that ‘we can’t know.’ But we are to search things out so that we can understand as much as we can and grow in grace and knowledge so that we can put it together.

Verse 36: “But concerning that day, and the hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.” *That was at the time they were speaking!*

Someone will say that I Jesus was God in the flesh, then does God know everything? *Yes!* ‘Why didn’t Jesus know?’ *It says in another place that ‘not even the Son of man knows.’* The Father hadn’t revealed it to Him. He revealed it to Him when Jesus came back to heaven, and then revealed it to John in the book of Revelation.

Could it be that the exact details of it the Father didn’t reveal until after Jesus was successful in divesting Himself from being God to becoming a human being, to be born of the virgin Mary, to live His life, preach the Gospel and crucified and dead and buried in the tomb three days and three nights and then resurrected back to heaven? *Very possible!*

If that answer doesn’t satisfy you, my advice is make sure you make it to the resurrection and make sure that when you see God the Father you can ask Him and then He will tell you.

Sure enough there’s going to be someone who is going to be picky and say, ‘Aha! Is God the Father hiding something from Jesus?’ Well, it doesn’t say that He hid it from Him, it’s just that He hadn’t told Him. Can God the Father, Who is greater than Jesus, keep something to Himself? *Yes!*

When you sit in the seat of God then you will know. Until then you don’t sit in the seat of God, so you don’t know. Can we accept what Jesus said as true? *Yes, of course!* Could it be that He and Jesus discussed it, but they hadn’t settle on the final day? Could that be?

I’ve given sermons on that God will delay something because of repentance! So, the final

outcome of it is going to be when God the Father determines it. So, God hasn’t divulged it, even though they may have discussed it previously.

Verse 36 ends a section, and this becomes important. Verse 37 gives a time-setting of the time of the end before all these events begin to take place.

Verse 37: “Now, as *it was in* the days of Noah, so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man. For as in the days that *were* before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark” (vs 37-38).

Do we have that today? *Yes, turn on any business news and we have everything about the economy, buying, selling, building;* how the housing market is, how the commodity market is, how the stocks and bonds are going. All of those things are all included in here. If a disaster comes, prices go up, if another disaster comes, prices go down. Just like they manipulate oil. The least little thing they bump it up.

Everything looks ordinary to people who don’t understand. Do we have that today? *Yes!*

Verse 39: “And they were not aware until the Flood came and took *them* all away; so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man.”

- What sets off the coming of the Son of man?
- What is going to signal the coming of the Son of man, before the sign and the light in heaven?
 1. the abomination of desolation
 2. being taken to a place of safety

It does not have to do with the resurrection, though it may give the appearance of a resurrection. That is going to signal the days, as we will see, of the coming of the Son of man.

It’s not just a single day. This has to be before the Great Tribulation; just right before:

Verse 40: “Then two shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and one shall be left; two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Watch, therefore, because you do not know in what hour your Lord is coming” (vs 40-42).

- Can the Lord come upon you at any time? *Yes!*
So, you have that meaning.
- Can the end-time events come upon you when you’re not expecting it? *Yes!*

Verse 43: “But know this, that if the master

of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have been watching, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready. For the Son of man is coming at a time that you do not think” (vs 43-44). **Does this give us any time-setting whatsoever? No!**

Luke 17 tells us more about going to a place of safety. Luke 17:20: “Now, when the Pharisees demanded of *Him* when the Kingdom of God would come...”

They understood the Scriptures. Read Isaiah and it sounds like if you just read all of those things that it was going to come during Jesus’ lifetime. Even the apostle said, ‘Will You at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?’ They thought that was the Kingdom of Heaven. They didn’t understand that it was going to be over the whole earth. Though some of the prophecies in the Old Testament tell us that it will be.

“...He answered them and said, ‘The Kingdom of God does not come with observation’” (v 20)—*just going out and looking for it!*

Verse 21: “Neither shall they say, ‘Behold, *it is here!*’ Or, ‘Behold, *it is there!*’ For behold, the Kingdom of God is *standing* in the midst of you” — *referring to Himself!* Jesus is the King, hence the Kingdom of God!

Protestants interpret this: *The Kingdom of God is in the midst of you in your heart!* So, the Kingdom of God comes into your heart. You’re going to have to have giant heart in order for that to happen.

Let’s be careful in reading certain things as we go along.

Verse 22: “Then He said to the disciples, ‘**The days...** [plural] ...will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it.”

This can refer back to the days of Jesus’ ministry, but that’s not likely because we’re talking about His coming. So, we’re going to see there’s more than one day involved in His coming, which also helps us to understand the phrase: **after the tribulation of those days!**

Verse 23: “And they shall say to you, ‘Look here,’ or, ‘Look there.’ Do not go, neither follow *them*. For as the light of day, whose light shines from *one end* under heaven to the *other end* under heaven, so also shall the Son of man be in **His day**” (vs 23-24).

We can say *a day in prophecy equals a year*. But could it also be longer than that? When we’re

dealing with time, times and half a time and number of days, yes, we can say that day equals a year in fulfillment.

Now, this is an insert, v 25: “But first it is necessary *for Him* to suffer many things and to be rejected by this generation. Now, as it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in **the days of the Son of man**” (vs 25-26)—*plural!* So, there are days that also have to do with the coming of the Son of man.

Verse 27: “They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day *that* Noah went into the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed *them* all. And it was the same way in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on **the day that** Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed *them* all. This is how it shall be in **the day that the Son of man is revealed**” (vs 27-30).

It doesn’t say ‘standing on the earth.’ *It says revealed!* What is it that reveals it? We saw already *the abomination of desolation* and now we have *being taken to a place of safety*.

Verse 31: “In that day, let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, come down to take them away; and likewise, let not the one who is in the field return to the things behind. Remember Lot’s wife” (vs 31-32). *All she did was look!* ‘It will just take me a minute.’

Verse 33: “Whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose *his life* shall preserve it.” *You lose it in Christ!*

Verse 34: “I tell you, in that night...” *We’re talking about a time just before the Tribulation begins!* Things are normal; that’s what Jesus is talking about. There is a semi-normality of things up to a certain point and then BAM! something happens!

“...there shall be two in one bed; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two *women* shall be grinding together; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two men shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.’ And they answered, saying to Him, ‘Where, Lord?’ And He said to them, ‘Where the body *is*, there will the eagles be gathered together” (vs 34-37).

Jesus didn’t tell them where, He just gave them a parable concerning it.

Let’s see how these events are going to be keyed. There’s going to come a time in heaven when these things are going to take place. Then we’ll tie

that in with Rev. 6. Then we will look at the time of the Tribulation.

Revelation 12:7: “And there was war in heaven...” *this is a war that is going to come!*

Clear back in 1980 I wrote an article about space wars in prophecy where I speculated that maybe they will have a huge space station and *the beast himself possessed of the devil* will go up there and part of his proclamation that he is ‘God’ and then be cast down.

“...Michael and his angels warred against the dragon, and the dragon and **his angels** warred.... [the demons] ...But they did not prevail, neither was their place found any more in heaven” (vs 7-8). *They were cast out; this is the signal event that brings us to the time of the end!*

Verse 9: “And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. And I heard a great voice in heaven say... [here is where it begins to usher in the events leading up to salvation]: ...‘Now has come the salvation and the power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God. But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb... [there’s going to be a martyrdom] ...and through the word of their testimony... [which includes all of them and the two witnesses] ...and they loved not their lives unto death. Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in Them. Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath *because* he knows that he has **only a short time**’” (vs 9-12).

- Isn’t Satan and the demons already on the earth? *Yes! They’re going to mount up in a war!*
- Will everyone hear the “...great voice...”? *I don’t know if it’s going to be heard on earth! We don’t know!*
- How long is a short time? *We’ll get an answer in just a minute!*

Verse 13: “And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man-Child.” *That means he’s going to persecute the Church! An intense persecution begins!*

I can’t help but think of the ‘crystal night’ or the ‘night of crystal’ in Germany. All of a sudden the edict went out against the Jews, and in a ‘crystal night’ they started persecuting the Jews, breaking the

windows of their shops and have them put on the yellow Star of David and move them into a ghetto. So, they’re going to come against that Christians and they are going to come against Israel and the Jews.

He persecutes the woman, so there’s a period of persecution that precedes a martyrdom. Just exactly like it was in WWII against the Jews. There was the persecution and then the assembling to the rail yards and sent off to the places of death, or to a work camp.

The devil is cast down, then after the period of persecution—we don’t know how long that will be—and there is a difference that is going to take place. When that happens and they are taken... Everything is seemingly normal up to that point. This happens and he persecutes the Church and then:

Verse 14: “And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly **to her place in the wilderness...**”

In the sermon series *The Rapture Hoax* this is not heaven, which is never referred to as a wilderness.

“...where she is nourished *for* a time, and times, and half a time, from *the* face of the serpent” (v 14)—*three and one-half years!*

How long is a ‘short time’? Three and a half years plus how ever long the persecution is, we don’t know.

Verse 15: “And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her *to be* carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth. Then the dragon was furious with the woman **and went to make war with the rest of her seed...** [who are not taken to a place in the wilderness] ...who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (vs 15-17). *This begins the martyrdom of the saints!*

The *KJV* says *remnant of her seed*, which means a small amount and that the greater amount are taken, but here it’s just the opposite. It’s the smaller amount taken to a place of safety and the greater amount are left back.

We don’t know how long we are to the end. We don’t know the duration of time. We don’t know how many people are going to be converted between now and then. We don’t know what God is going to do with all of the Churches that are now scattered, how much He’s going to give them effective preaching, evangelizing, witnessing and all of this sort of thing.

But whatever it is, it is making "...war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." So, this shows a factor that is entirely neglected by those who believe in the rapture.

Let's see if we can bring it up to *after* the tribulation of those days. We have to put this together here. We know that the casting down of Satan, the abomination of desolation standing in the Holy Place, and the martyrdom against the saints go one, two, three! Let's see if we can put this into some sort of perspective.

Rev. 6 has to do with the seven seals, and only Christ is going to open them. What I want us to do is look at the events that take place. I'll just summarize it:

- the white horse: symbolizing false religion
- the red horse: symbolizing war

When the red horse comes out this is the signal point right here.

- abomination of desolation
- Satan cast down
- beginning of the war against the saints

those three converge on:

Revelation 6:4: "And another horse went out that was red; and *power* was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth, and *to cause* them to kill one another; and a great sword was given to him."

Seals 2-5 come just one after the other. What follows immediately?

- *famine*: third seal
- *death, the grave*: fourth seal, one-fourth of the earth

Which fourth we don't know exactly, but let's just put in there probably against Israel, the modern descendants, not the Jews in the Holy Land.

- *martyrdom if the saints or the war against the saints* (Rev. 12): fifth seal

Since this is in vision, how long will it be? Now we have a little length of time here, because they're ferreting out all the saints. They're told to rest yet until their fellow servants and brethren should be killed just as they had been.

Here is the next signal event. How far into the Tribulation is it that this event occurs?

Verse 12: "And when He opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as *the hair of*

sackcloth, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell to the earth... [v 14]: Then *the* heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place" (vs 12-14).

When the heaven departs as a scroll that is the sign of the Son of man appearing in heaven, beginning as a new, a previously unseen sun that had never been detected before. What happens then? *I'll give you one clue:*

What happened with the plagues and things that took place in Egypt? *There came a point in time where God separated out the children of Israel from the rest of the Egyptians!*

Here is a point of time when God separates the children of Israel from the rest of the world. That begins with the sealing of the 144,000. How far down into the three and a half years are we?

Hosea 5:13: "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then Ephraim went to the Assyrian and sent to King Contentious. Yet, he could not heal you nor cure you of your wound, for I *will be* to Ephraim as a lion, and as a strong lion to the house of Judah. I, *even* I, will tear and go away. I will take away, and none shall rescue him. I will go; I will return to My place until they confess their guilt and seek My face; in their affliction they will seek Me earnestly" (vs 13-15).

We're talking about the children of Israel. What happens when the children of Israel get in trouble? *They always turn to God!* This gives us some kind of timeframe and we'll pick it up in part 4:

Hosea 6:1: "Come and let us return to the LORD, for He has torn, and He will heal us; He has smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; in the third day He will raise us up... [that's after two years] ...and we shall live in His sight" (vs 1-2)

Is this telling us that the Tribulation against Israel is only two years, while the whole Tribulation at the end is three and a half years?

We are dealing with two different things. After the Tribulation of those days against Israel and Judah, shall the sign of the Son of Man appear in heaven. Then what do we immediately have by God? A separation of Israel from the rest of the world, just like He did with the children of Israel in Egypt. He begins salvation to them with *the 144,000* and then with others in the world with *the great innumerable multitude.*

We haven't yet come to the resurrection! We'll have to catch that in part 4.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 13:1-3
- 2) Mark 7:21
- 3) 1 Corinthians 13:4-12
- 4) Proverbs 25:2
- 5) Matthew 24:10-34, 15, 35-44
- 6) Luke 17:20-37
- 7) Revelation 12:7-17
- 8) Revelation 6:4, 12-14
- 9) Hosea 5:13-15
- 10) Hosea 6:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Leviticus 18; 22
- Galatians 2
- Isaiah 28
- Daniel 11

Also referenced:

Commentaries from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, a Faithful Version*

- The Canonization of the Old Testament
- Background to the Canonization of the New Testament
- John's Final Canonization of the New Testament

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