Now let's get back into the Book and turn to Revelation Chapter 18. This is a Chapter we have skipped over previously because I was trying to chronologically bring out all the events that are taking place during this final seven years. Remember in our last lesson we were at the battle of Armageddon, where all the armies of the world had gathered into the land of Israel. Satan actually feels that he can, once and for all, get rid of the Jewish problem. I think that is the main reason he calls all the armies to the Middle East, not realizing of course that it's going to turn into that final battle between himself and the Almighty God. And as we saw in our last lesson, God destroys all these armies there in the land of Israel with a tremendous hail storm of hundred pound hail stones.

The analogy in Scripture of course, is like bringing the grapes into a wine vat. Some of the scriptures we looked at in Isaiah and Revelation show that His garments were sprinkled with red, and He gave the analogy that a person who walks in the winevat gets splattered with the grape juice. Also He brings all the nations' armies to the Middle East, packs them in primarily into the valley of Megiddo, and it will be liken then to a winevat. Now, as we come into Chapter 18, this Chapter gives us the full view of how the whole world system will finally come to its end.

**Revelation 18:1**

"And after these things (all the cataclysmic events that have been taking place, to include of course, the demise of the Anti-christ and all the armies of the world) I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory."

**Revelation 18:2**

"And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, `Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.'"

Many folks try to make you think that this Babylon spoken of here in Revelation, is the ancient city of Babylon that has been rebuilt and will become a tremendous trade center. I beg to differ with them on the basis of Scripture. Let's turn back to Isaiah
Chapter 13. This Babylon in Revelation is not speaking of any one city in particular. But, as we have been witnessing in the last 20 years or so, the world is getting smaller and smaller. With all of our vast communications systems, and the speed of transportation, anything that takes place is all of a sudden a world-wide news event. So it is with commerce and politics. We are talking about one world government lately and the great new age. Well, this is all because it's coming down to the place where, indeed, the whole thing can come to its end in just one very short period of time. So, when you see that word ‘Babylon' in Revelation, always think of the whole global picture, whether it be religion, politics, or the economy. Those three areas of activity comprise, you might say, the whole social fabric of the world tonight; it is all intertwined, and that's the world system. Since the world is getting so small and it's getting there so fast, the Bible can rightfully call that whole system now one word. Babylon! Now the other word for Babylon, or what we normally think of as Babel, is `confusion.' And as the world gets smaller and smaller, and all three of these are so closely related and involved together, what is rising proportionally? Confusion.

Jesus said in Luke 21:25, "...and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity;..." And is that what we are coming to? They are just filled with perplexity. They don't know where to go next. Within our own nation we have perplexity. But nothing compared to the perplexity of the whole world!

Now if you have Isaiah Chapter 13, here is the basis for my saying that the city of Babylon is not going to be rebuilt and become a center of commerce.

Isaiah 13:19

"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.” Now, this Babylon is talking about the ancient city, the capital of Nebuchadnezzar's empire.

Isaiah 13:20,21

"It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there."

It is so clear that the ancient city of Babylon, with all of it's beautiful hanging gardens and what have you, once it was destroyed, (you might say God had put such a curse on it) it would never be rebuilt. And God's Word stands. It's so interesting how many things are said in Scripture that, regardless what man may try to do, can't be done. And one of them is the Golden Gate. We call it the Eastern Gate. If you ever see
a picture of the eastern wall of Jerusalem, always be mindful that right in the center of that wall is the eastern gate. And it is always shut, and Scripture says, "that when God mandated it to be shut it would never again be opened until Christ returns." It's amazing that when you go back through history how many emperors and kings have said they were going to go to Jerusalem and open that eastern gate. But no one has ever succeeded. They either died or were defeated by some military power. And the reason the eastern gate is closed this very day is because Scripture says it would be. And so it is with Babylon; the Scripture says it will never be rebuilt!

Go back to Revelation Chapter 18. So this Babylon in Revelation is the whole global system. It's all the great commercial and cultural centers of the world that are included in that one word.

Revelation 18:3

"For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (her gross immorality) and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."

I was thinking about this verse this week. I make no apology that I'm a full-time rancher, and I have spent a lot of time out in those hot hay fields the last few days. It's been hot here in Oklahoma. But I couldn't help, as I was driving along on that tractor thinking about this verse and the word "delicacies." I think of the life style of the rich and famous when I think on this verse. And that won't be just in isolated areas, but world-wide. Even the communists in Russia have sumptuous places where they can live head and shoulders above the common man. And so it is all around the globe tonight, the rich and the famous with all of their high income. And some of these incomes are two and three million dollars a year. Personally, I can't envision any one man being worth that much every 12 months. But you see, this is exactly what the world is coming to. Oh, some of them are not that way, there are exceptions, but the vast majority of the wealthy fit that verse we just read exactly. Solomon would have called it, "vanity, vanity, all is vanity." But more and more this is what the world is coming to.

A few believers are also wealthy, but, for the most part, most of us in the Christian community are of very limited means. Now verse 4:

Revelation 18:4a

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying (now watch this closely), `Come out of her (that is out of this world system),..."
This doesn't just mean in the final hours of the Tribulation. This is speaking to you and I who are living before the Tribulation has begun. And here is the admonition to believers who may have some kind of a desire to be part of that lifestyle of the rich and famous. I wouldn't want any part of that kind of lifestyle. I've often said I would like to have enough that if I need a new car, I could go and pay for it with a check, and I would. But to have that kind of lifestyle and wealth I don't want it. Now let's read verse 4 again:

*Revelation 18:4*

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, `Come out of her, my people (see God doesn't expect the unsaved world to drop that life style, but He expects His own to shun it), that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

God is very patient tonight. When you look around you today, I don't care if you live in the sheltered mid-west, or on the coast; regardless where we are, we have these things right before our eyes. But the Lord's admonition is, *"Come out of her, my people, that you don't partake of her sins."* As you look at some of the things that are going on in our own country and around the world, don't you wonder how long God is going to put up with it? Sure you do. But it's His Grace and Mercy that is still flowing from Him. Do you remember that just before the flood came, the ark was ready, and everything was in it. What did God do for seven days? He left the door open and the gang plank down, so anyone of that Noahic generation could have come into the ark of safety. And that was His Grace. But not one took advantage of it. It's the same way today. One of these days, and I think we are getting so close, God's Grace is going to come to an end. He will drop the curtain, and in will come His awful wrath and vexation.

Let's go to II Corinthians Chapter 6 and this whole concept of separating ourselves from this ungodly wicked world. We've all heard it said that we are in the world, but we are not of it. We're here and Jesus, through the Apostle Paul, said that there was no way you could avoid dealing with even the grossest of immoral people because that's what the world is. So we must realize that they are all around us. We're not isolated, but we are not to be of it.

*II Corinthians 6:17*

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"
It isn't that He's putting a condition on our salvation, but as a believer now, it's still left up to us. I always maintain that under Grace, God never says, "**That you will or else.**" It's always, "**I beseech you brethren.**" "**Yield not,**" Paul says. But here again the invitation is for us to come out from among that ungodly set of circumstances and be separated. Look at I Corinthians Chapter 6. I'm afraid this is being lost sight of, even in our more fundamental Bible teaching and preaching churches. We've gotten to the place where the world can't tell a Christian when they see one. Christians can't tell a Christian when they see one. And it is simply because we have lost this whole concept of separation. We are to be different. And that doesn't mean we have to be oddballs or put our nose in the air and have no dealings with the world; but we are not to be of the world! Paul again is writing to the Gentile believers at Corinth:

**I Corinthians 6:19**

"**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?**"

We as believers have to realize that we have been bought with a price. We are something special in God's eyes and His program. And He can't use us if we are amalgamated with the world.

**I Corinthians 6:20**

"**For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God (how? With your body) in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**" Let's come back to I Corinthians Chapter 3, and we have that same thought:

**I Corinthians 3:16,17**

"**Know ye not that ye are the temple (the dwelling place) of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man (a believer) defile the temple (his own body) of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.**"

And that is the kind of temple you and I are. Whatever you do to the body, you're doing to the temple of God.
LESSON ONE * PART II

BABYLON - "THE WORLD SYSTEM"

Let's continue on with Revelation Chapter 18. Before we do, I would like to encourage you to get your Bibles and open the Word. Any of you, regardless of your background, can understand the Scriptures. We only hope to teach The Book where people can read the Scriptures and understand and enjoy them. It's a thrilling Book. Now, back to the Book of Revelation. God says the reason He is going to come down on this (Babylon) whole world system with His wrath and judgment is because of the following:

Revelation 18:5,6

"For her sins (her rebellion, her disobedience) have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double."

Revelation 18:7

"How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously [do you see the language? Isn't this exactly what the world system is trying to do? All of your commercials (I don't care what they are), what is their main thrust? Hey, whatever is out there, they want you to want it, whether we can afford it or not. And those who can profit from it, can go out, and as the Scriptures say, they can indeed live deliciously], so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, 'I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.'" That's what they think!

Revelation 18:8

"Therefore (God says) shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

Let's go back again and look at how the Old Testament prophesied some of these very things. This isn't just New Testament; this is Old Testament also. And, again, I like to recognize that there are a lot of Jewish people watching our program. I always like to take that into consideration, and use the Old Testament as much as possible, to show these all dovetail together. So, if you will turn to the Book of Jeremiah, Chapter 51. Again, remember the term 'Babylon' (as we are speaking of in Revelation and back in the Old Testament) has to be taken from the text. Early in the Chapters of 50 and 51, it
is indeed talking about Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon just before it fell. But like so many Old Testament prophecies, you have both the near-term and the long-term in view. So, as Jeremiah writes Chapter 50 that was the near-term. It's the judgment of God that's going to fall on Babylon as it was in Jeremiah's day. But now, as you come on down to Jeremiah Chapter 51 verse 7, the prophecy takes the long-term view, and we are looking at the Babylon that Revelation refers to, the whole world system. And that's the best way I can put it.

Jeremiah 51:7

"Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD'S hand, that made (what's the next three words? Not just the Middle East but all the earth) all the earth drunken (notice the next two words): the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad." Now the word `mad' here doesn't mean angry, but they have been mentally affected.

Jeremiah 51:8

"Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed (now that is what Revelation describes): howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed." But of course she can't be.

On our way back to Revelation, stop at Daniel Chapter 2 because all these Old Testament prophecies were looking forward to these same things that the Book of Revelation is explaining. That is why we can teach it with authority. All of the scriptures agree on these events. Now, here in Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar of the ancient empire of Babylon had a dream, and Daniel interprets it:

Daniel 2:31-33

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee: and the form thereof was terrible (or terrifying). This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay."

Remember I explained before that those were all metals. The head of gold was the Babylon, the silver was the Medes and Persians, the brass was Greece, and the legs of Iron were the Roman empire. There is that whole system of Gentile empires all depicted in that great image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream.

Daniel 2:34
"Thou sawest till (until a point in time. And then a stone) that a stone was cut out without hands (remember a stone or rock in Scripture is Christ. At least all the way back to Exodus, if not sooner, as when Moses struck the rock and water came forth. In the New Testament it tells us Who that Rock was. It was Christ. Here It's Christ at His Second Coming), which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay (in other words this amalgamation of the nations of the world, but especially the nations of the western world), and brake them to pieces."

I hope you are getting the picture in your mind. Just picture a huge Boulder coming down without the help of mankind, and It's coming down toward this great image that Nebuchadnezzar saw and It strikes it on its feet. Just bowls it over:

Daniel 2:35

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors (I know some don't know what this language is, but I think most of the people who listen to me understand that chaff is the light stuff that accompanies the grain. Threshing, and the wind, just simply blows it away. Now that's the picture that the Bible paints here of these nations and kingdoms of the world at the time of Christ's Second Coming. His coming will crush them like the Boulder bowling over this great image, and they will simply disappear from view like the chaff of the summer threshingfloor); and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them (these great global corporations are going to disappear from view. The great empires and governments, the White Houses of the world will be no more): and the stone (Christ) that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." And here again is the prophetic statement about His coming Kingdom. Now back to Revelation Chapter 18. We will look at verse 8 once more.

Revelation 18:8

"Therefore shall her plagues come in (how fast) one day (I'm a literalist; I don't think this is a long time; this is instantaneous), death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

Let's go back for a moment to Luke 21. I mentioned it in the last lesson, and we'll see how even the words of Jesus Himself, during His earthly ministry spoke of these things. When I speak of Jesus' earthly ministry, we need to remember that when we come to the letters of the Apostle Paul, they are the words of Christ as well. And here is where a lot of people get hung up. When I emphasize Paul and the Pauline doctrines, they will say, "Now wait a minute Les, I go by what Jesus said." Well where do you think Paul got his words? He got his words from Jesus, but under a
different set of circumstances. Jesus spoke in the flesh while He was here on the earth, while He was still dealing with Israel under the Law. But you see, Paul gives us the revelation of Jesus Christ Who has now finished the work of the Cross; He has defeated death and sin and Satan. He is now ascended and from His glorified position in glory, Jesus speaks to us through the Apostle Paul. So this is what I mean when I say this is what Jesus said in His earthly ministry:

Luke 21:25

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;" You just picture all of this. Don't read this as just a bunch of words. This is descriptive. The whole planet is going to be caught up in this traumatic event.

Luke 21:26,27

"Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

So this is all associated with Christ's Second Coming. Now go to Matthew Chapter 24. Let's look at verse 37. This is Jesus speaking while here on earth:

Matthew 24:37,38

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." To put that in plain English let's say, "As was at the time of Noah, so it's going to be at the time of His return."

"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,"

Remember I told you in the last lesson that God showed His Grace by leaving the ark's door open for seven days. But no one went in for safety and salvation. It will be the same way at the coming of Christ; life is going to be so full of activity. There is nothing wrong with eating and drinking proper things. There is nothing wrong with marriage. But it just simply depicts that the world is going to be so caught up in all their activities. When you talk to pastors and church people, they are so distraught because they can't get people involved anymore. Even young people. Why? They are too busy. I even run into it in my nightly classes. People will tell me, "I would like to come, but I'm too busy." Kids are kept busy with their activities, playing ball, and so
forth, and have no time for anything else. And that is the way it was back at the time of Noah.

**Matthew 24:39**

"And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

That wasn't just a heavy rain; it was instantaneous destruction. Look at it in Genesis Chapters 6 and 7. Every time I hear of murders (sometimes two or three a day even in a city as small as Tulsa. And it's about the same way in Ft. Smith, Arkansas as they report a murder almost every day) I remember what Jesus said: "As it was in the days of Noah." It's an indication of the time of His return.

**Genesis 6:5**

"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." Now verse 11:

**Genesis 6:11**

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence."

Now what's violence? Murder! The killing of one another. When they talk about sex and violence on television, what are we talking about? This constant showing of the killing and murdering of fellow human beings. This is the way it was just before the flood.

**Genesis 6:12,13**

"And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, `The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.'"

How did He destroy them? Go to Chapter 7. Here's where I maintain it wasn't the flood that came from the 40 days of rain. That was merely part of it. The real cataclysmic event you will find in verse 11. And in Revelation these judgments will almost be as instantaneous as this was here. They didn't gradually drown as the rain and flood water came up. They were gone in a matter of hours.

**Genesis 7:11**
"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were (in that one day) all the fountains of the great deep broken up (so where did the cataclysmic events begin? In the earth! Tremendous volcanoes and earthquakes, cataclysmic and instantaneous destruction), and the windows of heaven were opened." So, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the end-times. Let's re-read verse 9:

**Revelation 18:9**

"And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,"

This 'her' used here in the female gender is the amalgamation of nations, with its religions, politics and governments, and economies. They are meshed together to make this global Babylon.

**Revelation 18:10**

"Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.'"

The businessmen and merchants are flying from one end of the world to the other to make their deals. I can just about imagine that every airliner is full lately into Soviet Russia because they think they can go in there and make a pocketfull. I read an article recently that one of the sleeping giants for world goods and services is Africa. There is great potential there for profit and business. So they are just rushing all over the world trying to capitalize on every situation where dollars can be made on these prospects, and all of a sudden it's all gone. Now verse 11:

**Revelation 18:11**

"And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:" It's all done.

When it mentions this city here in Revelation 18, just think of all the commercial centers all over the world: Tokyo, Singapore, Hong Kong, Tehran, Rome, London, Paris, New York, and Chicago (even Jerusalem is getting to be the center of a lot of activity). All of these great centers of commerce, business, and trade you can just about lump into one city. They are all intertwined with computer networks. Transactions can take place between Tokyo and Chicago in a matter of minutes.
Revelation 18:12

"The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,"

Now notice these are all commodities that are still in demand even today. The world hasn't changed. These are the things that people still long for. Then some of the delicacies of good food are listed in the next verse:

Revelation 18:13

"And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat (remember what I said about living it up and living deliciously, but it's all going to end), and beasts, and sheep, and horses,..."

Have you ever talked to someone in the horse business? They're fanatics, and that's all they talk about. You get into the wealthy horse owners and it's nothing for them to pay a million dollars for one. But, like everything else, it also will end.
LESSON ONE * PART III

BABYLON - "THE WORLD SYSTEM"

Now back to Revelation 18 again. As we look at these cataclysmic events that are associated with the end of the Tribulation and the return of Christ, I want you to keep them in your mind. Because at the end of this lesson I want to go back and show the graphic difference between this and the silent removal of the believer at the Rapture when there are no cataclysmic events, or great upheaval; we just simply one day will be gone. And I'm going to show you from Scripture, so there is no doubt in your mind that these are not one and the same event as a many folks believe.

I remember I taught the Rapture in a church we were involved in at one time, and one of the leaders came up to me afterwards and said, "Les I've always believed in the Second Coming, but I've never heard of it in two parts." And it shocked me, because I have never known it any other way. But now since I've been teaching for all these twenty some years, I've found many people know nothing of what we call the Rapture. They don't know the difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming. Keep that in mind as we look at these horrible cataclysmic events leading up to the return of Christ at His Second Coming. Now to Revelation 18:14-16:

**Revelation 18:14-16**

"And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her (by this great system, a conglomeration of religion, politics and government, and economics), shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city (great system) that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!'"

**Revelation 18:17-19**

"For in one hour (just one short period of time) so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning,... And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, wherein where made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.'"
Now come to Chapter 16. And here we get another graphic statement that alludes to the very same thing. Here, as the final great bowl judgment is poured out at the battle of Armageddon (that great plague of hundred pound hail stones), right in the middle of that bowl judgment you will find in verse 19 the following:

**Revelation 16:19**

"And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell (here's where I get the concept that the great commercial centers of the world, the Tokyo's and Hong Kong's, etc. as we listed them, are all going to go): and great Babylon (that whole consortium) came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

Those of us who know the Lord look around us and wonder how long is God going to be patient? We don't know how long, but one thing I know, and I can guarantee; one day His patience is going to end. His Grace is going to end. And His wrath is going to fall. Now back to Revelation 18 to wind it up:

**Revelation 18:22**

"And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters (today we would have to add the other musical instruments we have, but on that day they will all be quiet), shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone (the sound of production) shall be heard no more at all in thee;"

**Revelation 18:23**

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries (drugs. There will be a tremendous drug culture during the Tribulation) were all nations deceived."

Now verse 24, and here is another reason God's wrath is going to be so tremendous. This world system for the last 2600 years, all the way back to Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon; what have they done to God's people? They have been persecuting, and murdering them. And now here it comes:

**Revelation 18:24**
"And in her (this great system) was found the blood of prophets (Old Testament days) and of saints (believers of the New Testament Age, I think), and of all that were slain upon the earth.

Several weeks ago I gave you some figures that were shocking. Remember I told you 50 million people, civilian and military, lost their lives during World War II. I also told you that 50 million lost their lives during the 70 years that the communists ran Russia. And during the dark ages, 50 million believers also lost their lives. We sometimes think that wars are precipitated solely on the basis of patriotism, and you and I are of the mindset that if someone was to come and take away our freedoms we would all be willing to fight and die to keep them. And our men have done that down through our history. But the more you analyze much of the wars of history, they were manipulated by the super, super rich, because when you get into the area of war and war materials, who profits? The rich.

Now I'm not one of these who scream, "The rich this and the rich that..." Not at all, but I'm a realist. And I know that these things are manipulated. We know that the wealthy people of the world will finance both sides of a war. They don't care about the human misery. All they care about is how much can they get for their war material. And that is the basis today of most of the economies of the world, even our beloved America. What do you suppose is the backbone of our economy? Defense. The defense contractors. And I'm not against defense spending, for I know we have to have a certain amount of it, and I always want us prepared. But what I'm saying is the merchant and money men of this world are not concerned about the welfare of the individual on the street. They're concerned about how they can generate wealth.

The Scripture makes it so plain that, as they have gathered all this wealth, they have also come down, for the most part, on God's people. Just remember that all the events associated with Christ's Second Coming and His return to earth are cataclysmic, and judgmental, bringing this whole earth down to the place where everything that's materialism, and technological (all the efforts of man) will be gone. Here is a point I haven't made that I should. Who is the god of this world that is behind all of this? Satan. The god of this whole world system we have on the scene is Satan. He is the promoter of it, and all the misery that goes with it. And it won't be until he is defeated that these things can go down the tube. Go back to the Book of Zechariah to Chapter 14. And this is still the Second Coming. When the disciples stood on the Mount of Olives with Jesus and as He ascended, what did the angel tell them?

Acts 1:11

"...this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
Now what does that mean? He left from the Mount of Olives and He's coming back to the Mount of Olives. And I've said it like this more than once. **"He left head first, He's coming back feet first."** Remember, Zechariah is writing to the Jew:

**Zechariah 14:1,2**

"Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." And then in verse 3, when it looks like there is no hope:

**Zechariah 14:3**

"Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations (these Gentile nations that have been gathered to fight against the Jew), as when he fought in the day of battle." That refers to when the Lord fought Israel's battles back in the Old Testament. Then verse 4; notice how plain this is:

**Zechariah 14:4a**

"And his feet shall stand in that day (what day? The day of His Second Coming) upon the mount of Olives (where is the Mount of Olives? In Jerusalem), which is before Jerusalem on the east,..."

He will then prepare for the Kingdom, and we will come back to that at a later time. For now, let's go to I Corinthians Chapter 15. Drop down to those verses we know so well, verses 51 and 52. Remember the Apostle Paul is the Apostle of the Gentiles. That's Romans 11:13. And as the Apostle to the Gentiles, all of his writings are directed mostly to us Gentiles. And he always writes to the believer. So now, he writes to the believing Gentiles at Corinth, who were not the most magnificent testimony of the Christian faith, but nevertheless they were believers. **And, as he writes to the believers there at Corinth, he's writing to you and I today. That's the difference. You've got to watch as you read your Bible, to whom was it written!** When the Old Testament prophets are writing, they are writing to the Jew, the Nation of Israel under the Law. But when we come to Paul, he is writing to us Gentiles, who are not under the Law, but rather under Grace. We are under a whole different economy. We are now members of the Body of Christ.

**I Corinthians 15:51**
"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep (or die physically) but we shall all be changed,"

Whether we have died, or whether we remain alive at this time, we are going to have a resurrected body. We are going to have a new body, like His resurrected body. The body that can travel at the speed of light. A body that can go through a wall without a door. That will be able to eat and enjoy food, A body that can disappear out of sight. I always tell my classes if you want to get an inkling of what our new body is going to be like, just study those 40 days of Christ's life after His Resurrection.

_I Corinthians 15:52_

"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." Now let's break the verse down.

"In a moment" (a moment in the Greek is not a sixty second minute. It's the smallest divisible portion of time. So it's just a fraction of a second), _in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead (those who have died as believers in Christ. I don't believe the Old Testament believers are going to be in there. This is strictly an event for the Body of Christ) shall be raised incorruptible, and we (Paul writes as though he is to still be alive when this happens. What is so amazing about this Church Age Doctrine of the Rapture, and given only to the Apostle Paul, is that it's always been an imminent event. And so it is today. We don't know when He will return, but I don't think it will be long. Personally, I think it will be when the last person is saved during this Age of Grace) shall be changed." Remember we can't go to heaven in this old body, we must put on that body like Christ has. I always like to compare it to the caterpillar and the butterfly, but that takes time, and this will be in a twinkling of an eye. Now do you see any language about cataclysmic events, or the wrath of God being poured out here? No! It's just all of a sudden here it comes and we're going to be gone!

Let's come on over to I Thessalonians Chapter 4. Now in verse 13, and now the Apostle uses that same language that he uses so often as he writes to believers.

_I Thessalonians 4:13_

"But I would not have you to be ignorant (untaught, In other words, Paul says learn this, understand it), brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as other which have no hope." Now here it comes verse 14:

_I Thessalonians 4:14_
"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,..."

That's according to Paul's Gospel that He died for my sins, He was buried and He arose again! This is the only qualification for being in this number. Paul doesn't say if you believed and joined the church, and you have been baptised and you've done this and that. No! But only if we have believed Paul's Gospel. Granted, as we saw in an earlier lesson, when we become a believer, what does God expect? That we withdraw from the world and all of its appetites, but that's not qualification for salvation. Those are the things that follow salvation. But the qualification to be in that number is to believe the Gospel. Now if we have, and we are alive, then those who have died as believers...

I Thessalonians 4:14

"... even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

These people are in heaven in the presence of God in soul and spirit only. They are waiting for the resurrection day so they can have their new body. A lot of people think their loved ones are already walking the streets of gold, and are having a ball in glory. I can't find that in Scripture. They're in glory alright and in the Lords presence, but they can't have a resurrected body until the resurrection day! And that hasn't happened yet. Now verse 15.

I Thessalonians 4:15

"For this we say unto you be word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (or go ahead of them who have died) them which are asleep." And here is the reason why.

I Thessalonians 4:16

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God (I love it when people write and say they are waiting for the trumpet to sound. Aren't we all): and the dead in Christ shall rise first:"

I Thessalonians 4:17

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord (where?) in the air (there's nothing of him coming to Mount of Olives here. There is nothing of cataclysmic judgments here. Nor the wrath of God
falling all around us. But all of a sudden there is going to be a quiet disappearance:
and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

I Thessalonians 4:18

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Now let's go down into Chapter 5 and watch the difference in language. Here in
Chapter 4 Paul is including the believers with his own experience. The pronouns are
`we' and `you.' Now come into Chapter 5:

I Thessalonians 5:1,2

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For
yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

I Thessalonians 5:3

"For when (what's the pronoun?) they shall say, Peace and safety: then sudden
destruction cometh upon (what's the pronoun? Do you see that) them, as travail upon
a woman with child; and (and again) they shall not escape."

For those of us who are going to be in this great out-calling, Paul includes us in the
first person. But when he speaks of those who will be left behind to face the wrath and
awful cataclysmic events of the Tribulation, the pronouns are `they' and `them.' Now
you come on down to verse 9 and I guess it's time to close again.

I Thessalonians 5:9

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus
Christ,"

God hath not appointed you and I, as believers, to wrath. He hasn't designated that we
are going to have to suffer the awful events of the Tribulation before He comes. We're
not appointed to that, we will be taken out ahead of it.

I Thessalonians 5:10

"Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."
LESSON ONE * PART IV

BABYLON - "THE WORLD SYSTEM"

We have been looking at the Second Coming of Christ and all the accompanying cataclysmic events that will be with it. In our last lesson we showed the Rapture, on the other hand, will be a silent event (we will be here one moment and gone the next. At the actual return of Christ, there will be tremendous judgment and wrath poured out upon the planet. Let's finish Revelation 19, where we have Christ depicted as coming on the white horse in verse 11:

Revelation 19:11

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." Next he is depicted as having trampled the wrath in the wine vat.

Revelation 19:13-15

"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." I think verse 14 is referring to the Church Age Saints that will be that army, as well as an angelic host.

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations (there again is a reference to His judgment, His wrath, upon the empires and nations of the world we studied in Chapter 18) and he shall rule them (nations, as he sets up His Kingdom, and we will be looking at that in our next four lessons, as to who will be in that Kingdom. And of course there will be nations again, but only believers) with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." This will be at Christ's Second Coming:

Revelation 19:16-18

"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Now verse 17:

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven (that is they are flying in the atmosphere. Scripture speaks of three heavens. The first heaven is the atmosphere where the birds fly. The second heaven is the area of what we call space, like the moon and the stars.
And then the Apostle Paul refers to the third heaven, The very abode of God, `Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;'" Verse 18:

"That ye (these birds) may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great."

In other words, after the battle of Armageddon these scavenger birds and birds of prey will come and have a cleansing effect; getting the earth ready for the appearance of the Kingdom. It is well documented there is a certain type of scavenger bird in the Middle East that in the past few years has doubled its egg production. It now produces twice as many offspring as it once did. If that is true, it would indicate we are much closer to all of this. God is preparing these birds to be of such a number that they can consume this vast number of destroyed humanity. John writes in verse 19:

**Revelation 19:19**

"And I saw the beast (the man Anti-christ or the empire in which he ruled. Again, take it according to the context. Here we are talking about the emperor. The Anti-christ himself), and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army."

Look again at Zechariah Chapter 14. This is the best way to learn your Bible. Here is a beautiful, almost carbon copy of the Book of Revelation, concerning this last great battle before Christ's return.

**Zechariah 14:1-4**

"BEHOLD, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle;... Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations,... And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives,..."

Back to the Book of Revelation. All of these kings and their armies have come to the Middle East to destroy the Nation of Israel, and, of course, they are destroyed instead by the return of Christ. Now to verse 20. Everything will move quickly now in getting the earth ready for His glorious Kingdom - that earthly Kingdom that has been talked about from the onset of human history. But before the Kingdom comes in, He has to deal with these arch-enemies:

**Revelation 19:20**
"And the beast (the Anti-christ) was taken, and with him the false prophet (the leader of the world's religion during the seven years of Tribulation) that wrought miracles before him (remember they are the unholy trinity with great powers), with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them them that worshipped his image. These both (these two men) were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."

A lady asked a while ago (and I hadn't really thought about teaching it as a lesson), "What's the difference between Hell and the lake of fire?" Have you ever thought about that? There is all the difference in the world. A lot of people think that they are one and the same. And they are not the same. Hell will one day go into the lake of fire. But we will cover that in a later lesson.

So these two are cast alive in the lake of fire, not Hell, where lost people go today. These two will go to the lake of fire, where at this point in time there is no one there. Then verse 21:

Revelation 19:21

"And the remnant (that is those who survived the battle of Armageddon, and all the cataclysmic events) were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth (what is the sword to the Lord? Well it's His word): and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." That is those armies that had fought against the Christ.

Now let's go right on into Chapter 20, because as the soon as the Tribulation is ended and Christ has returned, we're going to set the stage now for that thousand years reign of Christ, what we call the Kingdom or Millennium here on the earth.

Revelation 20:1

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand."

This is another Chapter where that language is used, and do you remember what I said? It doesn't necessarily mean an iron chain, to confine a spirit being like Satan. Now verse 2. And John said:

Revelation 20:2

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years."
I'm a literalist. When the Bible says Satan will be bound a thousand years, that's exactly what it means. He's bound...

**Revelation 20:3**

"And cast him into the bottomless pit (that's not Hell, and it's not the lake of fire, but it's a unique place known only to God. The reason He can't send Satan to the lake of fire; that is a place for eternity. And Satan isn't ready for eternity yet. He's got one more opportunity at the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ. At that time, he's going to be released, and again he's going to have full freedom to deceive the nations that will be back on the scene once again. So rather than put him into the place that was prepared for him and his angels and his eternal doom, God confines him to a place for that thousand year period of time), and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more (what's the next word?), till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

He will then have an opportunity to test the new generations that will come on the scene in that Kingdom economy. In other words the Millennium becomes another period of testing. We have had six periods of testing all the way up through human history. And this one must be the seventh. God always does things in sevens. Even the citizens of the this Kingdom who will fill the earth during this thousand year Kingdom Age, will be normal flesh and blood people, having children, working, producing, but it will be in the absence of sin and Satan, and will be under the perfect righteous rule of Christ The King. That's what will make it so perfect. It will be the epitome of everything that man could hope or even dream of. But you and I won't be part of that flesh and blood population. From our place of authority as resurrected saints, God is going to give every believer an area of responsibility. And beyond that, I can't explain it. I gather that from His account of the talents. When the person that He had given ten talents to came back with ten additional, what was the Lord's response? "When I come into the Kingdom you shall rule over ten cities." So I like to think that the rewards of the believers are going to be various amounts of responsibility in that Kingdom economy.

I like to use an illustration like this: Most people like to have activity. I think that even some of the ancient philosophers have said, "Two weeks of idleness is about as much as the human body can take." Even after vacationing for two weeks, most of us are ready to go back to work. I think this will carry over into the Kingdom. And as I have said before, we won't be sitting strumming a harp on a cloud with nothing else to do. I think most of you, if you had the chance to get involved with something exciting or just sit on the sidelines and watch, would choose the former. Most of us would want to be involved. I think it will be the same way in the Kingdom.
Satan will be confined for that thousand years. Then he must be released to test this new generation of that thousand-year time.

**Revelation 20:4,5**

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment (rule) was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus (the martyred) and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."

Who are the rest of the dead? They are the lost. Now let's go back to John's Gospel, Chapter 5. Here we are in the midst of Jesus' earthly ministry. And this is Jesus speaking:

**John 5:28**

"Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice;"

Some people take that to mean there will be only one resurrection. They think everybody will come out of the grave at the same time. But I always maintain that you must compare Scripture with Scripture. Now maybe according to this one verse it may sound that way. But the rest of Scriptures say it's not going to be one single resurrection. So what do you do? You lay one against the others. In any kind of a doctrine, you don't just take one verse and lift it out and say, "Hey, this is it." But you compare from cover to cover the whole spectrum of Scripture. So let's go on with verse 29:

**John 5:29**

"And shall come forth, they that have done good (the people of faith), unto the resurrection of life (that's the resurrection of the believers. Revelation calls that the first resurrection); and then they that have done evil (the unbeliever or lost person), unto the resurrection of damnation." That's the second resurrection.

How many kinds of people do you have in those verses? Two! The believing, and the unbelieving. Yes, they will all be resurrected, but it doesn't say all at the same time. Let's qualify that statement. Let's go back for a moment to the Book of Daniel, to verse 8. Daniel asks the question:
Daniel 12:8-12

"And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, 'O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?' (then God said) And he said, 'Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried: but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.'" Now verse 13:

Daniel 12:13

"But go thou thy way till the end be (Daniel wasn't supposed to understand): for thou shalt rest (die), and stand in thy lot (now what does the word lot mean? A military term for company) at the end of the days."

That takes us all the way to the beginning days of the Millennium. Let's see what the Apostle Paul says in I Corinthians Chapter 15. All of Scriptures fits if you will just look for it. Jesus spoke as if they would happen maybe at the same time, but the rest of Scriptures state otherwise. And Jesus had a purpose for that. Remember the Church Age hadn't come on the scene yet. There will be segments that will be resurrected in their own time. That's why Revelation says the first resurrection is the resurrection of life, and the second resurrection is the resurrection unto condemnation."

I Corinthians 15:20,21

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept (or have died)."

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." In other words if you die and God is going to keep His promises, we must be resurrected.

I Corinthians 15:22,23

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Do you see how that fits with John Chapter 5? Certainly the lost will be resurrected. But now look at the next verse:

"But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."
Daniel would have said, "in his own lot." Order and lot both mean the same thing. It's a military term of organization. So every person that is resurrected is either going to be in the lot or order of the lost (which will be all one group), or they will be resurrected in Daniel's company, which will be the Old Testament saints. Or they will be resurrected with the company of believers that the Apostle Paul talks about, which is the Body of Christ, the Church Age saints. And we know from Scripture that the Tribulation saints are going to be in a separate resurrection or translation. And then those of you who really know your Bible, recall what took place on the morning of the Resurrection at Jerusalem, in the graveyard. Many who were asleep in the grave arose from the dead and became the first fruits of them that slept.

So I qualify the first resurrection then as, (1) the first fruits, those who came out after Christ on the morning of the resurrection. (2) Then the main harvest will be the Church Age Believers, you and I. (3) Then the Old Testament Saints who will come up on the scene a short time after the Kingdom has begun, and they will be the wedding guests at the great marriage supper of the Lamb. Now those three categories of Believers comprise the first resurrection. The lost are not going to be resurrected until after the thousand year Kingdom rule. Then they will be resurrected at the Great White Throne to be judged.
It's good to begin another lesson and teach the Word and put it as simply as we know how, so that folks can understand. I think there are many Bible believers who read their Bible, but they just don't understand what they're reading. And this is all I'm trying to do, to teach the Word. Well back to Revelation. I had a viewer call the other night who had just started watching our lessons. I told her if she was just joining us in the Book Revelation, then that would be almost like a kid that has been thrown into calculus class without ever having had 4th grade math. I love to have people start with me in the Book of Genesis and come all the way through, then all these things just fall into place. Let's continue with our study in Revelation. In the last lesson we were in Chapter 20 and verse 6, but I would like to come back for a moment to verse 1 for a very short review, so we won't lose track of how we have arrived at some of these points in time.

As the Tribulation has run its course, and the battle of Armageddon has taken place, Christ has returned and crushed all the armies gathered there in the Middle East. Now we are getting ready for the onset of the Kingdom. I can hardly wait. In fact, as I was thinking things over the past day or two, I was wishing that I had a four hour run without an interruption to teach the Kingdom. Anyway, we are ready now to introduce the Kingdom. And Revelation 20 is the first place that the Kingdom is brought down to a particular time frame. The Old Testament speaks of the Kingdom. Jesus spoke of the Kingdom. Paul makes reference to the Kingdom, but not in a time frame. But here in Chapter 20 comes the almost exclusive the term - 1000 years. Now it's put into a time frame that we can understand. Here in verse 1:

**Revelation 20:1,2**

"AND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the keys of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ...that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,"

Now look in these next few verses how many times by (inspiration of the Holy Spirit) the term 1000 years is brought out. I've stressed all the way from the Book of Genesis that when the Bible repeats something three or four times in short order, you sit up and take notice because it's doing it for a reason. And that is emphasis. They are emphasizing the fact that this Kingdom rule and reign of Christ will be a thousand
years. In verse 3 we find that after Satan has been chained and sealed, that he’s shut up
in a bottomless pit.

**Revelation 20:3**

"...that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be
fulfilled:..."

The thousand years has been used twice in two verses. After the thousand years, Satan
is going to be released, and we will be teaching that in another lesson. Now in verse 4,
John sees believers who have been resurrected, and brought up into the very heaven of
the heavens. Now he begins to list them:

**Revelation 20:4,5**

"...and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the
word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had
received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands (now all of these are
resurrected believers, and they are all grouped together here, I'm convinced); and they
lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is
the first resurrection."

Now that's four times we have used the thousand years in just four verses. After our
last lesson, when I was teaching on the resurrection, I had a person tell me during our
break that I had lost them in explaining the resurrection. So looking at verse 5 again, I
want to make sure you understand these resurrections. I'll try to go slower on this
subject, because I know during the last lesson I didn't get to explain it as well as I
wanted because my time was getting away from me.

We have all the believers all the way from Adam through the Tribulation who are now
resurrected and they are in the Lord's presence. But verse 5 says, "**But the rest of the
dead.**" You always need to remember that there are only two groups of people so far
as God is concerned. And they are the lost and the saved. So if the saved are already
resurrected and are in the Lord's presence, then the rest of the dead would have to be
whom? The lost. And so the lost will not have anything happen to them "**until the
thousand years were finished.**" Now that's just plain English. So they will stay in
their original state, which is, in Hell as we understand it. And they will be there for the
entire thousand years of the Kingdom rule and then they will be resurrected. And in
order to pick up that resurrection, which is called the second resurrection, we find that
in verse 14:
Revelation 20:14

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, this is the second death."

We will be teaching this in future lessons. The Great White Throne Judgment. But just to show you now that the two resurrections are separated by a thousand years, we have the resurrection of the just as Jesus talked about in John Chapter 5, when they will all be resurrected before the Kingdom begins. But the resurrection of the unjust, as He spoke of it in John Chapter 5 will take place after the thousand years are finished, and as a result of that Great White Throne judgment. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, this is the second death." The lost have died physically but now they are going to experience spiritual death, their separation from God forever. Here you have these two great groups of humanity, the saved who are resurrected in stages before the Kingdom begins. The lost of all the ages will be resurrected here at the Great White Throne, and then go to their eternal doom. Unbelievers will also be resurrected and get a body fit for their eternity in the lake of fire, even as we will have a body prepared for eternal life. Come back to verse 6 in Chapter 20. So in this first resurrection:

Revelation 20:6

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection (the resurrection of all the believers, Old Testament, Church Age and Tribulation): on such the second death (as we saw in verse 14) hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Revelation 20:7

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,"

Out of the first seven verses here in Chapter 20, a thousand years is mentioned six times. In order to qualify that, turn back with me to II Peter Chapter 3 for a moment, where again we have that term a "thousand years." And this is comparing Scripture with Scripture.

II Peter 3:8

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

When we first started teaching Revelation, I think I made the point that all the seeds that are finally coming to fruition here in Revelation were sown in the Book of
Genesis. Now when you come into this matter of seven days back in Genesis, how were they broken down? Six days prepared all of creation for the appearance of man. So six has always been the number of man all the way up through Scripture. Six days and God got everything ready for mankind. But then we have the seventh day. And the seventh day was a day of God's rest. Remember I told you when we first started teach, that for 6000 years man has pretty much run the show, at least he thinks he has. But there is that 7000th year left. I think you can see now that these combined are the seven days, so far as God is concerned, that we read about in II Peter 3:8. And the seventh day or the 7000th year period of time is the one that is right out in front of us, even as we speak. Now you know I'm not one for setting dates, but there are a lot of scholars that are now frantically putting all of this together, and I certainly won't argue the point with them, especially if they don't set any dates. But they are just showing how the whole program of God from Genesis to Revelation seems to be set in a time frame of 7000 years.

There is a well known gentleman who has come up with some interesting figures, and he is basing some of this on the Jubilee period of time, especially in Israel's history. A Jubilee was fifty years. And every fiftieth year was called the year of Jubilee. According to God's Law, when He started dealing with the Nation of Israel, the year of Jubilee was the year of new beginnings. All debts were canceled, and property reverted back to the original owner. Everything looked good. But Israel, as far as I know, never practiced it. The thing I want to point out is a Jubilee was fifty years. To this gentleman who had written a book, by the end of this millennium (or the year 2000), it will have been the 120th Jubilee since Adam. That will be the year of 2000. It would be the 70th Jubilee since the year that Joshua led the Children of Israel into Canaan. And it will be the 40th Jubilee from the time of the Crucifixion. And remember these numbers are indicative of a lot of things in Scripture. For example, the number 120 is three sets of 40. And 40 in Scriptures is a time frame that God has used over and over. But this gentleman says in his book, we must be careful not to tie ourselves to that and say this is when the Lord is coming. But regardless, I feel we are getting so very, very close. Another point regardless of when Christ comes at the Second Coming, we as believers will go in the Rapture seven years before that time.

We are living in exciting times. Scriptures doesn't set a date and neither will I, but it's imminent. It could happen at any time. Everything is coming to pass so quickly, and the world is falling apart right before our eyes. And we are reaching the perplexity of the nations. I read an article by one of our congresswomen recently, and she made the statement that she's finding as she travels around the world that nobody in any government on earth is having any fun. Do you know what she meant? The problems of this world are so overwhelming that people in government are almost pressed down. There is seemingly no solution to the world problems. It's all because we are
winding down and we are getting closer and closer to the time when Christ will take us out. Then there will be a lot take place in that next seven years and one of them will be the marriage of the Lamb. We will be studying about that in a future lesson. We will also study about the Bema Seat for the believers' rewards. So we still have a lot to study before we are through with these end time events. Come back to Revelation 20:6 again:

**Revelation 20:6**

"...but they (resurrected believers) shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years,"

This is the first resurrection. Now let's again come back to I Corinthians Chapter 15. The great resurrection Chapter, where the Apostle Paul deals with Resurrection in plain simple language.

**I Corinthians 15:20**

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits (plural) of them that slept (or have died),"

**I Corinthians 15:21**

"For since by man came death, by man..(as he points out in verse 47),"

**I Corinthians 15:47**

"The first man is of the earth, earthy (Adam): the second man is the Lord (Christ) from heaven." Now let's look at verse 21 again:

**I Corinthians 15:21**

"For since by man came death (by Adam), by man (the second man or Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead."

You know I have never heard of a religion in the world which teaches resurrection as Christianity understands it. They all speak of a life hereafter, but they don't teach resurrection as part of their salvation like Christianity does. Resurrection is very unique. In other words, when Elijah raised the widow's son, that was not resurrection. He merely brought that lad back to life, and then the son at a later time died again. The same thing happened with Lazarus. Jesus called him forth from the grave, but he wasn't resurrected. He was brought back to life. Lazarus also had to die again. So keep
this concept clear, that resurrection is that unique Sovereign act of God, whereby He will bring back from the dead a human being who has died, not just to die again, but back to a life of eternity. As I stressed back in Genesis, when God breathed into man and he became a living soul, that separated man from all the other categories of life. Because man is immortal in the area of the soul.

That is why Revelation speaks of the resurrection of the just to a life of immortality in God's presence, and the lost who will be resurrected to a life separated from God, or the second death, but they, too, will continue on throughout eternity. I know there are groups that teach that when a lost person dies they are annihilated. But that doesn't come close to lining up with Scripture. They're going to suffer and experience feeling and regret forever. And Christ was the first Person to ever experience Resurrection. And that is why He is called here the first fruits (Plural) of them that slept. Now for a brief moment turn to the Book of Leviticus Chapter 23. Here we have, as far as I know, the first mention of the firstfruits. Here Israel is being given the various aspects of the Law as they are gathered around Mount Sinai.

**Leviticus 23:9,10**

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, \`Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:'''

Now is a sheaf one stem of grain or many? It's many. And we will pick this up in our next lesson. But remember what we are talking about: *The first fruits of the harvest.*
LESSON TWO * PART II

FIRST RESURRECTION - "WHO GOES INTO KINGDOM:"

GENTILE BELIEVERS

Let's turn to I Corinthians Chapter 15. We have now been teaching for nearly twenty five years now and have started our fourth year on television. I've always given the illustration of Peter when the Lord was trying to lead him up to the house of Cornelius in Acts Chapter 10. I always use the analogy that Peter left his heel prints in the sand all the way from Joppa to Caesarea. In other words, he really didn't want to go, but the Lord forced the issue. Well, that's the way I was about going on television. I certainly didn't think that I was television caliber, and I still sometimes wonder, but the Lord kept pushing and pushing and even though I left heel prints, yet here we are.

I remember several years ago a gentleman was leaving our class in McAlester, Oklahoma, and he said, "Les why in the world aren't you reaching more people then just the 40 or 50 people that come to your classes." I told him this is all that I ever expected, and I have always been content to teach small groups. I have even told people who try to help enlarge a class not to worry about numbers. I'm not hung up on numbers, I would rather have 15 people that are hungry and want to learn, than have a thousand people who want to be merely entertained. And that is still how I feel. We don't know for sure just how large our television audience is, but whether it be large or small we just trust we can teach the Book in such a way that you can enjoy it, like you never have before.

Last lesson we were talking about the two resurrections. We have the resurrection of the just which will happen before the reign and rule of Christ, and the resurrection of the unjust which will come after the thousand year reign and rule of Christ. But right now we are talking about the resurrection of all the believers, from the very onset of Adam back in Genesis up until the very end of the Tribulation. So before we go back to the firstfruits in Leviticus, let's look again at the Resurrection Chapter in I Corinthians and read these verses we looked at last lesson:

I Corinthians 15:20-22

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits (plural) of them that slept (or died)." For since by man (Adam) came death, by man (Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead." For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive (the Power of God will resurrect the believer, and also later will resurrect the lost)."
I Corinthians 15:23

"But every man (here Paul is dealing with the believer) *in his own order* (and that word `order,' is a military term speaking of a company, or battalion, or organization): *Christ the firstfruits; afterward* (not simultaneously, but at a later time) *they that are Christ's at his coming."

That is the group that Paul is most concerned with. And that is the Church Age. The Grace Age Believers, The Body of Christ. You and I as believers.

I Corinthians 15:24

"Then cometh the end,..." Now we know that will be **after** the Tribulation.

Go back to Leviticus Chapter 23 where we left off in our last lesson. The Nation of Israel is receiving instruction of the laws, and the feast days. The Jews still celebrate these feast days even today. Maybe under a little different setting but they still have these feast days. The first one was the Feast of Passover, then Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the third one is the Feast of the Firstfruits. The Feast of Firstfruits came about the time of barley harvest. Barley was the small grain that would ripen first and be the earliest in the spring.

Leviticus 23:10

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:"

There again the word is plural. I know we are living in a nation that is more urban than rural, but I think we still have enough rural background in most of us that we understand a little bit about small grains such as wheat, barley, oats, and so forth. When that beautiful green field is approaching the ripening stage you get a tinge of gold and yellow. And you know the crop is approaching maturity. Then all of a sudden in that sea of green you will see a gold stem with the heads being just as bright gold as they can be. And you will see several of them that are ripe scattered in that green field. The rest of the crop is still a few days away from harvest. The Jew was to go into that grain field, pluck those ripe stems until he had a multitude and could make a sheaf. Then he would take that sheaf, and present it to the priest as a wave offering.

Everything that is sown in the Old Testament comes to its fruition in the New Testament. So what we have here is not just a picture of a grain harvest, but of a
spiritual harvest. Remember when Jesus was in His earthly ministry, He used this analogy to His disciples. He told them, "Look out unto the fields, they are white unto harvest." He wasn't talking about wheat or barley. He was talking about mankind. Mankind was ready for a harvesting of a spiritual sort. So now you can begin to tie the two together. Here we have a gathering of these ripening stems of individual barley, not the whole field. Yet there was enough they could make a sheaf of it. Now keep that thought in mind and come back with us to the Book of Matthew Chapter 27.

I remember when I first came to Oklahoma and was teaching. I hadn't been here very long, and a dear old saint came and asked me this question. He said, "Les, what are these people who came out of the grave when Christ was on the Cross?" I told him I had never heard of such a thing. He said, "The Bible says they did." And I said, "While He was on the Cross?" And the gentleman said, "Yes." I wouldn't doubt that he will watch this program, and remember he asked that question. But you see that is so typical of the average Bible reader. We read, and yet we don't really read. Here is where he got that idea:

**Matthew 27:50**

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost." So here Christ is indeed on the Cross.

**Matthew 27:51,52**

"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,"

That is as far as he had read. And if that is where you stop, what's your impression? It happened while He was on the Cross. But you see he hadn't read far enough. Now let's look at the next verse.

**Matthew 27:53**

"And came out of the graves after his resurrection,..."

Now the casual reader probably won't catch that. They didn't come out while He was on the Cross, but after He had been resurrected Himself. Because you see, Christ had to be the very first. He is the first to have ever been resurrected. Then in order to make that sheaf analogy come to the full, what had to happen? There had to be other examples of resurrection, and so, evidently, some of these Jewish believers were
resurrected from some of the cemeteries around Jerusalem. They came into the city and appeared to probably some of their friends and relatives. The Scripture is silent and so we have to assume that Christ in His resurrected body ascended into heaven, then these saints did also. These saints were not like Lazarus, because they didn't die again. They have been given immortality. That makes them "The sheaf of the firstfruits." That's the beginning of the first resurrection.

Now let's look at Leviticus in Chapter 19. Keep this harvest analogy in your mind. The Lord says, "The fields are white unto harvest, but the laborer are few." Now imagine a forty acre field, and they have taken out the firstfruits of the grain as we read about in the Book of Leviticus Chapter 23. Christ has been resurrected from the dead. Those that came out of the grave after His Resurrection, they now make up the firstfruits of the spiritual.

**Leviticus 19:9**

"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly (or completely) reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest." Why? Because there is a physical need as we will see in verse 10:

**Leviticus 19:10**

:And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God."

But although there was a physical need, the spiritual analogy is, that after the firstfruits have been taken out, then the main field would be harvested with the exception of the corners, and a few gleanings, stems that were left lying on the ground. So this main harvest represents about 98% of the total harvest. Now with your concept of history, all the way up through the Old Testament, without putting an exact number on it, how many believers do you think there were? Precious few, because you want to remember the Gentile world had no knowledge of salvation. And even in the Nation of Israel, there were very few who were true believers. You remember how many of them would follow Baal, and would worship other pagan gods. So even in Israel there were relatively few true believers. Now when you come on this side of the Cross, with the advent of Christianity and the Church Age, what have you had? There has been your main harvest. During the last 2000 years God has garnered the greatest percentage of His total harvest.

Look at the Book of Daniel for a moment. The main harvest would be the Church. And when I speak of the Church I'm talking about the Body of Christ that the Apostle Paul refers to. It doesn't matter what your denominational handle is, as long as you are
in the Body of Christ, you will be included in this main harvest. Remember we still have the corners left, and we still have the gleanings. So there is a third aspect of resurrection that is still future. Daniel 12:11:

Daniel 12:11

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away (that's the mid-point of the Tribulation, which is 1260 days into the Tribulation, and 1260 days to the end of the Tribulation), and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and (not sixty but) ninety days (1290 days)." Now we have an extra 30 days.

Daniel 12:12

"Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days (1335 days)."

Now we have another 45 days added to the 30 days. For a total of 75 extra days between the return of Christ and the end of the Tribulation. Now look at the next verse:

Daniel 12:13

"But go thou thy way (the Lord is speaking) till the end be (this extra 75 days as well as the Tribulation): for thou shall rest, (in the grave) and stand in thy lot (remember the word `lot' is almost identical to the word `order' in the New Testament, and it's a military term for organization, or company) at the end of the days."

So what do you have? 1. We have Christ and the firstfruits back at the time of His Resurrection. 2. Then you have the 1900 + years of the Church Age (where believers will be resurrected one day soon in what we call the Rapture). 3. Then you will have a multitude of people who will be saved during the Tribulation period. But they won't be in number like the Church Age. They are likened to the corners and the gleanings. So I like to feel that Daniel and the Old Testament saints, and the Tribulation saints will equal the corners and gleanings.

By the time you have the sampling (firstfruits) and the main harvest, and your gleaners have come in and cleaned up the corners, and the spare stems that are left, what do you have? **The First Resurrection. The field has has been swept clean.** Now have I made that plain? I hope so. All the believers of all the ages, from Adam to the end of the Tribulation. Now I would like for you to come back with me to The Book of Revelation again:
Revelation 20:6

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection:... but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Now the question came up in our last coffee break. That in verse 4, it sounds like just Tribulation people will reign and rule with Christ, and I was glad that someone caught that. Because that is probably true, but again you have to take Scripture with Scripture, and you can't make a doctrine, or identify anything with just one verse. Come back to Revelation Chapter 5, and here we have a verse that I would say includes all of us believers in verse 10.

Revelation 5:10

"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and (what) we (an all inclusive word) shall reign on the earth (with Christ)." We can also look at Chapter 19 verse 7:

Revelation 19:7

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb (remember the Lamb is to married to the Body of Christ) is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

Revelation 19:8

"And to her was granted that she (the Body of Christ, the Church) should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

Go over to verse 14 in this same Chapter. Here we are now included in this army that is coming with Christ at His Second Coming.

Revelation 19:14

"And the armies (Heavenly congregation) which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

Now can you tie all of that together? Not only are the Tribulation saints going to be included in that reigning and ruling with Christ for a thousand years but we are also included. Since we are talking about the Church Age believer in the Kingdom as this Kingdom will come on earth, come back to the Book of Colossians. Now Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles does not dwell a lot on the Kingdom, not nearly as much as the Old Testament does, and the Gospels as they pertain to Israel. But nevertheless we are
involved in the Kingdom. Don't think for a moment that we won't be. In Colossians Chapter 1 (and again I'm going to run out of time in the middle of a subject). But if the Lord tarries there will be another lesson, and if He doesn't, we won't need it. Here in this passage Paul has been praying for the Colossi Gentile believers.

**Colossians 1:12**

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet (or prepared us) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath (past tense) translated us (you and I as believers) into (what?) the kingdom of his dear Son:"

We are already members of the Kingdom. But always remember, where is the Kingdom tonight? In heaven, in the Person of Christ. When He was on the earth John the Baptist approached Jesus and what did He say? "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand." Why? Because the King was at hand. So when the King went back to glory, then the Kingdom is again in heaven (and we don't refer to Him as the King in the Church Age, but as Savior and Lord.) But always remember the Kingdom won't stay in heaven, but will come back to the earth, and Paul says, "**We will be with Him. Part and Parcel of that Kingdom.**" So we are indeed a part of this coming Kingdom, which will then be on the earth.
LESSON TWO * PART III

FIRST RESURRECTION - "WHO GOES INTO KINGDOM:"

GENTILE BELIEVERS

I don't claim to have any special revelations, and I don't think I teach The Bible that much different than a lot of men who are far more important and educated than I am. But I trust that I am able to make it a little easier to understand. We have been talking about the Kingdom the past few lessons. Christ has returned, the Tribulation has run its course, and I think the questions that come into everybody's mind are, "Who is going to go into the Kingdom? Are they going to be flesh and blood? Will they be having families? Will they be reproducing?" And the answer to all these question is, absolutely! This Kingdom will be on the earth, and will be 'Utopia,' (that's the word the secular world likes to use). So let's take a few references out of the Old Testament to show that this Kingdom idea has been on God's mind from the very onset of the Book itself, but especially after the call of Abraham.

I stressed many months ago that the Abrahamic Covenant you see was the Covenant between God and the Nation of Israel. He would make them a special, separated nation of people. He would put them in a geographic area of land and then, at the appropriate time, He would come to be their King, and set up the government. That comprises the Kingdom that everything is looking forward to. Let's begin this lesson in Psalms Chapter 2; we have looked at some of the verses several times in the past. But in Psalms Chapter 2, we have the format of prophecy more or less laid out, and the rejection of the Messiah in verse 2. Then how God just literally ridicules mankind (in his frustrations, mankind thinks that he can rule without God in verse 3). So God laughs at mankind and will have them in derision in verse 4. And then in verse 5:

Psalms 2:5,6

"Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." That's the Tribulation. And then the next verse brings in the Kingdom.

"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."

Now that's the Kingdom as it will be centered in Jerusalem where, of course, Zion is. Now verse 8:

Psalms 2:8
"Ask of me, and I shall give thee (The Messiah, The King) the heathen (or Gentiles) for thine inheritance (in other words it isn't just going to be a Jewish Kingdom, but will include the whole human race), and the uttermost parts (not heaven, but what?) of the earth for thy possession." So this Kingdom is going to be on earth. All Scripture defines it as such. Now as we leave Psalms, come to Isaiah Chapter 2 for a moment.

Isaiah 2:1

"THE word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem." See Jerusalem is at the very center of all of this.

Isaiah 2:2

"And it shall come to pass in the last days (that final thousand years), that the mountain (or Kingdom) of the LORD's house shall be established, in the top of the mountains (over all the other nations and empires that have previously existed), and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations (plural) shall flow unto it (the Kingdom)."

We will come back to Isaiah 11 at a later time, but for now come to Matthew. As I have stressed before, we haven't taught the four Gospels yet. We were ready to begin that study, but we had so many requests for me to teach prophecy that we skipped the four Gospels, and have been teaching prophecy for quite some time now. But in about five or six hours we will be completely finished with prophecy, and then we will begin our study in Matthew and finish the Gospels, and the Book of Acts. But for now, in Matthew Chapter 3 we have John the Baptist coming on the scene in verse 1.

Matthew 3:1,2

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea. And saying, `Repent ye (why?): for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

Why was John saying that? Because the King was there. Christ was on the scene, and He was about to present Himself to the Nation of Israel as their promised Messiah and King. So they were to prepare spiritually with repentance, and the baptism of repentance that John preached. The term, "The Kingdom of heaven" is frequent throughout the Book of Matthew. Let's look at a few of them. In Matthew Chapter 4, Jesus has begun His earthly ministry:

Matthew 4:17
"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent (why?): for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Now come on over to Chapter 9. This is all to fulfill the promises made to the Nation of Israel through the Abrahamic Covenant. And now here it comes, the nation is there, they're in at least part of the promised land (not all of it yet), and now Jesus has come to present Himself as their King.

Matthew 9:35

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages (of Israel), teaching in their synagogues, and preaching (what?) the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people."

When you come into Chapter 10 (we will be looking at this in detail when we come into the New Testament), Jesus chooses the twelve in verse 2. Come down to verse 5 and read the following:

Matthew 10:5,6

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them (now watch this), saying, 'Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'"

Why did Jesus do that? Why did He qualify it in such a narrow frame of reference? Because the Abrahamic Covenant had nothing to do with anyone but the Nation of Israel. He knew that because He was the Framer of it. He was the One Who made that Covenant. Don't think for a minute He was confused. Several years ago, I was listening to a preacher of a large church in the midwest. I was never so shocked in my life at what he said. He was using this passage for his sermon subject, and he said, "You know at this point in time, Jesus was still bigoted as He wasn't taking the Gentiles into consideration, and He didn't fully understand the scope of His ministry." And I'm almost quoting him word for word. Imagine that, but you see what the poor gentleman couldn't comprehend was, that Jesus fully understood, and had a heart for the Gentiles, but it wasn't time for their ministry yet. He had come to fulfill the promises that He had made to Israel all the way back to Abraham. So He commanded the twelve not to go to anyone but Israelites. You remember when He spoke to the Canaanite woman? It was the same reason. She was a Gentile. He said, "I can't give to you Gentiles that which belongs to the children (that is Israel)." After He says to go only to the lost sheep of Israel, we see in verse 7:

Matthew 10:7
"And as ye (the Twelve) go, preach, saying, `The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

The Kingdom is mentioned over and over. Let's stop at Chapter 19. This isn't intended to be an in-depth study of Matthew. But now in Chapter 19 as we have gone up through Jesus' three years of His earthly ministry, and the twelve have been dutifully going with Him everywhere He goes. Now, in verse 27 (and you know I like to point out that these twelve men were just as human as you and I are. They weren't super spiritual. They were common, ordinary fishermen and so forth), we read the following:

Matthew 19:27

"Then answered Peter and said unto him (Jesus), Behold, we have forsaken all (their occupations), and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?"

Peter wasn't talking about his salvation, he knew he had that. He had already believed that Jesus was the Christ. So what's he talking about? He wanted to know what their reward would be for following Jesus (leaving everything else behind). Look at Jesus' answer:

Matthew 19:28

"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, `That ye which have followed me (the twelve, but we must leave Judas out), in the regeneration (that's when you restore something back like it was. The earth back like it was in the Garden of Eden) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory (and according to Psalms Chapter 2, it will be in Jerusalem), ye (the twelve, we will have Matthias in the Book of Acts) also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging (or ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel.'"

Now isn't that so plain? When the Kingdom is set up and the Nation is now under their King, under The King will be twelve original Apostles each ruling the twelve tribes, there in Jerusalem. There in the land of Israel. Let's look at another verse or two. This comes back to the closing days of the Tribulation, but that is all tied to the beginning of the Kingdom.

Luke 21:25,26

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the
earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Now that's the end of the Tribulation. Look at what the next verse says:

**Luke 21:27**

"And then shall they (the Jews. What's the next word?) see (lock that word in for I'll come back and make a point with it) the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

**Luke 21:28**

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Remember, He is addressing the Nation of Israel.

**Luke 21:29-31**

"And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the (what's the next word?) kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

Now come on over to the Book of Acts Chapter 1. Of course, the Crucifixion has come and gone. Christ has been raised from the dead. He has spent forty days with the eleven. And now verse 3:

**Acts 1:3**

"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days (they saw Him. How? With their eyes), and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:" Now verses 6 and 7:

**Acts 1:6,7**

"When they therefore were come together (Jesus and the eleven, on the Mount of Olives), they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" Notice He didn't tell them there wouldn't be a Kingdom, but rather:

"And he said unto them, 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.'"

Don't think Peter had forgotten about the promise of both him and the others sitting on the twelve thrones we read about earlier.
I just had a thought. I'm going to give you something to look for. I want you to search the four Gospel accounts, and see if you can find a single time that the twelve referred to the Lord as "Jesus." I think you will have an eye-opener.

So the Kingdom has been the theme throughout all of Scripture. That this Kingdom is going to come on the earth where Christ will be the absolute King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Satan, as we have seen, is going to be bound and there will be no sin. But the question is, "Who is going to go into the Kingdom?" There are qualifications, of course. Come back to John's Gospel Chapter 3. A portion you all know forward and backward. And you have heard dozens of sermons on it. And here we have Nicodemus in verse 2:

**John 3:2**

"This same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Notice Nicodemus was head and shoulders ahead of most of the Jews of that day. He recognized that these miracles were telling him something. And he knew that Jesus was Someone special.

**John 3:3**

"Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except (or unless) a man be born again (or born from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" Now what does that tell you. Who can go into the Kingdom? ONLY BELIEVERS!

There will be no unbelievers in the Kingdom. Come back to Matthew 24. Several lessons ago, I had my timeline on the board showing the seven years of Tribulation. And at the mid-point of the Tribulation we see the Anti-christ coming in and defiling the temple at Jerusalem? Matthew 24 verses 15a and 16:

**Matthew 24:15a,16**

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,... Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:"

I call this the escaping remnant of Israel. They go down to the mountains to the southeast of Jerusalem. They won't be the whole nation but as I taught you before, only the remnant. And in those mountains God is going to protect them for the last 3
1/2 years. Then as this remnant of Israel who have gone out to the mountains in unbelief (in that they have never recognized Christ as their Messiah), when they see Christ coming with glory and power at His Second Coming they will believe. So they, too, will get to go into the Kingdom.

Let's look at this remnant as they see Him coming from the view of Zechariah. Remember, I told you earlier in the lesson in Luke 21:27 to remember that word `see' - in that they would see Him:

**Zechariah 12:10**

"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications (remember this is the house of David, no Gentiles are there): and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced (His Crucifixion),..."

They will suddenly not only have their physical eyes opened but also their spiritual eyes. And they will recognize that this coming manifestation of The Christ, The Messiah is the One Who died back there on that Roman Cross. Let's look at one more verse in this lesson:

**Zechariah 13:6**

"And one (this remnant of Israel) shall say unto him, `What are these wounds in thine hands?' Then he shall answer, `Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends,'"

Then this remnant of Israel will experience that new birth that Nicodemus was told he had to have in order to go into the Kingdom. This remnant, by far, will be the largest number of people to survive the Tribulation. This then will be the seed stock of the Nation of Israel as they come into the Kingdom. All twelve tribes will be represented here. Isaiah tells us, "**Will a nation be born in a day.**"
LESSON TWO * PART IV

FIRST RESURRECTION - "WHO GOES INTO KINGDOM:"

GENTILE BELIEVERS

Turn in your Bible to Isaiah 24. We continue our study on who goes into the earthly Kingdom after the Tribulation. Remember at that time the earth will be restored back to the way it was in the Garden of Eden before sin entered. It will be glorious and beautiful. As we saw last lesson, the remnant of Israel that God had protected all during the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation will believe when they see Christ coming with power and great glory at His Second Coming. They will see the nail prints in His hands, the wound in His side and by sight, believe and know that He was and is their Messiah. They then will go into the Kingdom. Also remember this remnant is a mixed group of Jews we saw in Matthew 24 as they fled Jerusalem. They will then become the seed stock for the Nation of Israel. They are not the 144,000 Jewish men who preached during the Tribulation.

They will also, by far, be the largest nation in numbers to go into the Kingdom. So now we have the Nation of Israel established. Now let's pick up the Gentiles whom God hasn't forgotten. Even though the Age of Grace was primarily to the Gentiles yet even in the Tribulation, God has been preparing Gentiles to go into the Kingdom in ordinary flesh and blood bodies. Remember the Kingdom is going to see a tremendous population explosion. So by the end of that thousand years when Satan will be released for a little season to test those born during this Kingdom Age, there will be probably as many people on earth then as there are now. So in Isaiah Chapter 24 we will pick up these Gentiles. We will begin at verse 1, and again, it's a graphic description of the Tribulation as we have been studying it for the last several lessons.

Isaiah 24:1,2

"BEHOLD, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." We have been talking about all the cataclysmic events that will be taking place during the Tribulation.

"And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him." In other words, everyone is going to come under this tremendous cataclysmic seven-year period of events.

Isaiah 24:3,4
"The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away (under these judgments), the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish." Even their wealth is not going to protect them.

Isaiah 24:5,6

"The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws (the basic laws of morality laid down back in the Ten Commandments), changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." In other words, they have been totally disobedient to everything that God has instructed.

"Therefore hath the curse (that began with Adam) devoured the earth (it's because of sin that all of these things take place), and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned (yes there could be tremendous amounts of nuclear energy released), and few men left."

And despite all the cataclysmic events that happen, there will be survivors in just about any catastrophe that happens. There are normally some survivors. When we dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, there were people who survived that blast and they were at ground zero. When there are terrible earthquakes, where there's a building collapse and it doesn't look possible for any one to be alive, they always find survivors. And so it will be at the end of the Tribulation. They will be scattered around the planet from every nation that you can think of.

Now let's try to figure out in the statement of verse 6, "and few men left." How many is a few? You can use any percentage you wish to figure a few. We have tonight in the world around 5 1/2 billion people. But for sake of easy mathematics let's round it off to 5 billion. I think 10 percent is too high for a few. When I think of a few I think of something less then 5 percent. So what would be 5 percent of 5 billion people? 250 million people. Let's bring it down to 1 percent and you still have 50 million. That is still a lot of people.

Don't forget the fact that at the beginning of the Tribulation God sealed 144,000 young Jews who will preach the Gospel of the Kingdom. Their main message will be, during almost all of the Tribulation, "The King is coming to set up His Kingdom." Many people will believe and be martyred. However some people will believe and survive. Then some people who won't believe survive. So all of survivors combined are the, "few men left" we read about here in Isaiah. Let's go to the Book of Matthew and pick these survivors up again and see what happens to them. Remember, no unbelievers can go into the Kingdom. Because Satan is going to be locked up, and we will start out with a generation of parents who are believers. In
Matthew Chapter 25 we have the perfect description of how God is going to do it. Here we will be dealing with a point in time where the supernatural will be almost common-place. And so Christ is going to bring supernaturally all of the **survivors**, from all over the world, to Jerusalem. So, beginning in verse 31, this is Jesus speaking:

**Matthew 25:31**

*"When the Son of Man shall come in his glory (now watch the language here), and all the holy angels with him (that includes you and I; this is at His Second Coming), then shall he sat upon the throne of his glory (His Kingdom rule in Jerusalem)."

**Matthew 25:32**

*"And before him shall be gathered all nations (the biggest percentages of the population of the nations have been killed, as this is at the end of the Tribulation. But we still have the survivors, who are representative of their nations): and he (The King) shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."* Here Christ the King will separate the believers from the unbelievers.

**Matthew 25:33**

*"And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."*

**Matthew 25:34**

*"Then shall the (what's the next word) King (notice He is already on the throne here ready to start ruling over the Kingdom) say unto them on his right hand (believers), `Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the (what?) kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:'"

That is nothing new to you is it? What does Ephesians Chapter 1 tell us? When were we chosen and in the mind of God? Before the foundation of the world. God in His foreknowledge knew exactly which one of these Gentiles would hear the Gospel of the Kingdom from the 144,000 and believe. Now in verse 35, the following is not what saved them but what distinguished them as believers:

**Matthew 25:35,36**

*"For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat (food): I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."*
Matthew 25:37-40

"Then shall the righteous (these surviving believers) answer him, saying, 'Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?' And the King shall answer and say unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren,...'"

That word 'brethren' is the secret here. Jesus was a Jew so His brethren were Jews. So who is He referring to? The 144,000 that had preached the Gospel of the Kingdom during the Tribulation. It wasn't their good deeds that saved them. It is never good works that save anyone. They were saved by their faith in this message that was preached unto them. And as soon as they were saved what were they willing to do? **Help these people who had brought this saving message to them.**

Remember during World War II, who helped and hid the Jewish people from the Nazis? Christians. Why? Because it's a Christians' nature to do things like this. So here, Jesus is showing that these 144,000 are going to suffer privation all through their ministry. Go back to Revelation Chapter 7 for a moment, where the angel says:

**Revelation 7:3**

"Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

That was like, I suppose, when God put a mark on Cain, that no one could take his life. And it's the same way with these 144,000. They were sealed so that they could not be killed. Suffer, yes, but they couldn't be killed. Reading on you will see that there were 12,000 sealed from each of the twelve tribes. To see how all of this fits with Matthew Chapter 25 come down to verse 16. These are the privations that Tribulation believers, as well as the 144,000, will suffer during this seven-year period.

**Revelation 7:16**

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;..."

Remember, if people don't take the mark of the beast during this time, they won't be able to buy or sell, and seven years is a long time if you can't buy groceries. Seven years is a long time if you can't make a house payment, buy gasoline, or pay a doctor bill. So they will end up hungry and thirsty, and naked. Come back to Matthew Chapter 25. So the 144,000 suffered these same privations during the Tribulation.
They were thrown in prison and they're going to be hungry, and the only sustenance they had was from these believers. These believers, although they will have little to spare, will sacrifice to help these 144,000. Then Jesus said:

**Matthew 25:40**

"...Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." This is the only setting in which this text fits. You can't put it into anything else. It's simply the response of these believers who have survived awful events of the Tribulation. Then in verse 41 Jesus addresses the goats or unbelievers.

**Matthew 25:41-45**

"Then shall he (Christ) say also unto them on the left hand, `Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (and they will ask why): For I was an hungred, and ye gave me not meat (food): I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, `Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?'(and look at the Lord's reply): Then shall he answer them, saying, `verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these (the 144,000), ye did it not to me:'" And now He gives each group what they deserve in verse 46:

**Matthew 25:46**

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." And although the Kingdom is stipulated a thousand years it is still the beginning of eternity.

I had a gentleman call the other night who said, "Les, I have problems with what takes place in the Kingdom and what takes place in eternity. What's the difference?" I told him there were a lot of great theologians who debate the issue in their books as to what's in the Kingdom Age and what's in eternity. I can just simplify that by saying, "Always remember that all the situations concerning the Kingdom are an introduction to the eternal." Now that's the way I see it. It will be interrupted, by a new heaven and a new earth, but I think eternity will be based on pretty much the same set of circumstances that we have in the thousand years. So when Jesus tells these people that are going into the Kingdom that they are going into eternal life, indeed they are! Let's look at a few more of the attributes of the Kingdom. Turn to Isaiah Chapter 11:

**Isaiah 11:1,2**
"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." Jesse was the father of David and Christ is always considered the Son of David. So we are speaking of the Branch here as the Messiah, the Christ.

"And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD." Those are all attributes of the Spirit and also indicative of the Christ.

Isaiah 11:3,4

"And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth (this is where the Beatitudes come into play, and become the constitution of the Kingdom): and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked (He did that at Armageddon)." And in verse 5 we come back again into the Kingdom.

Isaiah 11:5,6

"And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." This is all on the earth. Animal lovers ask me if there will be animals in heaven? Yes, here it is.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." Where did that little child come from? From believing parents.

Isaiah 11:7-9

"And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox (as it was before sin entered). And the sucking (nursing) child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' (adder's) den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: (Kingdom) for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."
LESSON THREE * PART I

BEMA SEAT: GREAT WHITE THRONE:

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

Let's recap our last lesson for a moment about who will go into the Kingdom. First we will have the remnant of Jews that God is going to protect during the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation. They will be Jews that we read about in Matthew 24 that were escaping to the mountains at the mid-point of the Tribulation. They were a cross-section of the population of Jerusalem, from children and young pregnant women to retired older people. They will be the seed stock to repopulate the Nation of Israel. Second, there will be the survivors that believed the Gospel of the Kingdom as presented by the 144,000 that survive the Tribulation. They too will be a cross-section of society. This group will be Gentiles and will be the seed stock to repopulate all the nations, except the Nation of Israel. This Kingdom Age will last a thousand years and there will be only believers in this Kingdom. Satan will be locked up, the earth will be like the Garden of Eden. There will be no sin there. And Christ will be the absolute Ruler, a benevolent Dictator if you want to call Him that. It's going to be a glorious time. There will be no sin, sickness, or death, and you will have a population explosion that the world has never seen before. We also know that since the curse has been lifted, there will be no more pain in childbirth, which I think will encourage large families.

Regarding other aspects of the Kingdom, I've had many people ask me if they will see their dog or cat again in heaven (they want me to say yes)? But I have to say, "Not the one you had here." But there will be animals in the Kingdom. I'm sure that among those animals, people will have pets. I'm a dog lover myself, and have loved dogs ever since I was a kid. I had one for 15 years and I sure got attached to her. But I know I won't see that little black dog in the Kingdom economy. But there will be animals. That is why I had you turn to Isaiah Chapter 11. We touched on this in the last lesson, so let's just review a little. I like to show everything from Scripture. If I can't show it from Scripture then it's just my own idea. But when you can, I trust you will read it and believe it as this is the inspired Word of God. I take it literally. When you take the Scriptures literally you satisfy a lot of questions (and why not take it literally). If you read the account of Washington and his men crossing the Delaware on that cruel winter day, back there in the early days of our nation, do you spiritualize that and try to dream up something totally different? Of course not. You take it literally, and you take it so literally that you can almost feel the cold and pain they went through. And you need to do the same thing with Scripture. Don't read and then try to dream up something that it must have meant. Just say, "This is what it says, and I believe it." So looking at the animal part of the Kingdom again, let's go to verse 6:
Isaiah 11:6

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid (baby goat); and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."

Can you picture all of that? Just take it literally. The animal kingdom as we know it today would be in total opposition. That lion would eat that little calf in a second. But here they are lying down together. Do you see the difference? I'm always trying to get people to read their Bibles carefully. Don't just read it to be reading it. Here we have wild animals all of a sudden cohabiting with domestic animals! And unbelievable as it may seem, who is in the midst of them? A little child. Immediately you should ask yourself, "Where does this child come from?" Well, like the children today it came from parents, a father and a mother. Let's read on:

Isaiah 11:7

"And the cow and the bear shall feed (together); their young ones shall lie down together: and (now here is the secret of the whole thing) the lion shall eat straw like the ox."

Now let's compare Scripture with Scripture. Come back to Genesis Chapter 1. This is why I say the Kingdom will be a reversion back to the Garden of Eden, before the curse came in. Now the comparison. Isaiah says the day is coming when these wild meat-eating animals are going to eat the same diet of grasses that cattle do today. In Genesis 1:28-30 we read (here God is speaking to Adam):

Genesis 1:28-30

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.' And God said, 'Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat (or food).'" Now verse 30:

"And to every beast of the earth (that also includes the animals we read about in Isaiah), and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: (or food) and it was so."

You won't see God give permission (I don't think even to the animal kingdom) to kill and eat meat for food until after the flood. Noah was then instructed that he could kill
and eat the meat of these animals. But definitely before Adam sinned, none of the animals could eat meat, only green herbs. So that is what is here in Isaiah 11. The whole animal kingdom, including the most ferocious, carnivorous meat-eating species are going to change their diets and live peaceably with animals they once would have eaten.

Isaiah 11:8

"And the sucking (or nursing) child shall play on the hole of the asp, (which of course was a very poisonous serpent) and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' s(adder's) den."

Here we have had three children mentioned in just two verses. The inspired Word of God tells us that when this Kingdom is set up there will be human beings coming in at the front end of the Kingdom who are going to reproduce. They have to. We know by the time we get to the end of the thousand years, there are multitudes of people on the earth. We will be looking at that in a later lesson. Where did they come from? They came from believing parents who started at the beginning of the Kingdom.

Coming out of the Old Testament we came to the time of the Cross, and now we are in that undetermined period of time known as the Church Age. It will end when the Church is Raptured, or called out. And then began that seven-year period of time called the Tribulation. After Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation we come into this thousand years of what we call the Kingdom Age. It will be on earth in which these things will take place that we are reading about. All through this period of human history everything has been under the curse, and we have no question about wild animals and their behavior, and children should never play with them. And then at the end of the last lesson and I recapped at the beginning of this lesson who would be going into the Kingdom. All of these people I showed you will be different than you and I. We will have our new resurrected bodies, flesh and bone. These believing survivors of the Tribulation will have the same bodies that they had before - flesh and blood. They will then be the parents of these children we just read about with the wild animals in verse 6 and 8 of Isaiah Chapter 11. Let's look at verse 9:

Isaiah 11:9

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (a mountain in Scripture, especially in the Old Testament, is a Kingdom. Always look at the text): for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

Let's look at some more Old Testament references of the earthly Kingdom. Go to the Book of Amos Chapter 9 (in our next lesson I'm going to explain the opposition to
his line of teaching about a literal earthly Kingdom that will come on the earth. We call this opposition Amillenium). Hopefully we'll show you that we are not throwing you a bunch of smoke, but that we can rest assuredly that even in the very early days of Christianity they all held to this view of an earthly Kingdom that someday would be on the scene. We have a lot of people who watch and are in my classes, who are handed books that are in opposition of the earthly Kingdom, the Book of Revelation and so forth. Now look at Amos 9:11,12:

**Amos 9:11,12**

"In that day (in other words when Christ is setting up His Kingdom) will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they (Israel) may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen (Gentiles), which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this." In verse 13, Here it is:

**Amos 9:13**

"Behold, the days come (when this Kingdom is finally set up), saith (Who?) the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper (what does that mean? Intense reproduction, remember there will be no curse, so they won't have to put up with weeds and insects, fungus and moles, and pests and all the things that hinder good crop production), and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." And God goes on to say that with His dealing with His people Israel, as we have here in the Old Testament:

**Amos 9:15**

"And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God." Go to the Book of Zechariah, Chapter 14 verse 8:

**Zechariah 14:8**

"And it shall be in that day (when the Kingdom is in operation), that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea (the Mediterranean sea), and half of them toward the hinder sea (Dead Sea): in summer and in winter shall it be." In order to pick up on this you have to go back to Ezekiel Chapter 47. Ezekiel sees this same river, beginning in verse 1:

**Ezekiel 47:1**
"AFTERWARD he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar," Notice this river has its source under the temple in Jerusalem. Now verse 8:

**Ezekiel 47:8-10**

"Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea (that is the Dead Sea): which (when these waters) being brought forth into the (Dead) sea, the waters shall be healed,"

"And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither (from the temple area): for they (the waters of the Dead Sea) shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh." Now look at verse 10:

"And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it (this is the Dead Sea, and we know that from the term Engedi) from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea (the Mediterranean), exceeding many."

When we were in Israel, we stopped at the oasis of Engedi at the Dead Sea and some of our group went swimming. Someday, this will again be fresh water. In Matthew Chapter 19, here again is the promise of this coming Kingdom when Peter says to the Lord:

**Matthew 19:27,28**

"...Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'"
LESSON THREE * PART II

BEMA SEAT: GREAT WHITE THRONE:

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

I hope you have begun to study your Bible since you have joined our Bible study. To really study and compare Scriptures with Scriptures takes dedication, but this is the only way you can study correctly. This can make a tremendous difference in your lives and everything you do and say. We have been studying the Kingdom, and I have become aware that there are a lot of folk that stand staunchly against the concept of an earthly Kingdom. They have spiritualized the Scriptures, and everything that pertains to the Kingdom is spiritual in their eyes. Consequently, they refuse to accept the fact that the Bible is teaching a literal physical, political, earthly Kingdom. There will be families, and tremendous reproduction beginning with believing parents.

Just the other night a fellow in one of our classes showed me a little book that his pastor had given him. All I have to do is read through these and I see the same things over and over. I make no apology for the fact that I read the opposition. It's almost like being a football coach. Right after the last game is over you must scout the next team you play. Well, that's the way I do it. I have the Book of Mormon at home. I read and study it so I have a good idea what's in their book. I've read quite a bit out of the Koran so I know a little about it. I read a lot of what Armstrong has written, and I've always read Jehovah Witness material, because I want to know where they're coming from. It's the same way with these people who are absolutely contrary to, and in opposition of, this concept of an earthly Kingdom, and Christ's Second Coming ahead of it.

I would like to take this lesson to enlighten people because, as one of my dear students who is the Dean of one of the colleges of one of our universities here, came up to me and said, "Les you're breaking new ground, you're throwing things at some of the students that we have never heard before." So let me try to enlighten each of you on the opposing views with regards to end-time events:

1. Pre-Tribulation and Pre-Millennium. These are of the same persuasion as myself. What we are talking about is the return of Christ. We believers in the Church Age believe that Christ is going to come from heaven to meet us in the air, to take us out before the Tribulation. So we speak of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church. But then we speak in the next term of the Second Coming of Christ actually coming to the Mount of Olives, as being Pre-Millennium. That means that Christ will return to earth before this thousand years' Kingdom on earth is established.
2. Amillennium - This the opposing view. And in the English language when you put an A in front of something, what does it mean? `No,' or `without.' So you have the Pre-Tribulation, Pre-Millennium concepts of the Scriptures, versus the Amillennium - that there is no such thing as an earthly Kingdom of a thousand years. There is no return of Christ to set up an earthly Kingdom.

Several years ago, there was a pastor in the town of one of my classes who was strictly Amillennial (I had a lot of his church members in my class. But as you know, I never try to get people to just follow me. I just have a free-lance Bible study and we teach people in whatever denomination they are in, and they continue to attend their own church). So to refute my teaching the pastor handed out a little typewritten two-page publication ridiculing my stand on the Millennium, the Rapture and so forth. I read it a couple of times to see what he was thinking. What it said was that this whole concept of the Rapture and the Tribulation, and the setting up of an earthly Kingdom had its beginning with some little teenage girl in Spain who had dreamed it all up. It sounded so good that a lot of people listened. and out of that they concocted this whole idea of the Millennium. So several of those people wanted to know if there was any basis for this, because you don't find any teaching concerning the Rapture and the Millennium back at the time of the reaffirmation of Luther, Calvin, and so forth. And that is true.

People do not understand that for the first 250 years of Church history (from about 40 or 50 AD to 300 AD), the Church stood solidly on what we call Pre-Millennialism. They had a different word for it, Chilioiism, from the word Chilioi in the Greek, which meant 1000 years, just like `mille' means a thousand. So the words mean the same thing. During those first 250 years, we had all kinds of Church fathers who stood adamant on the fact of the soon departure of the Church, beginning with the Apostle Paul who actually thought it would take place in his lifetime, and the writing of Barnabas who was a contemporary of the Apostle Paul. And John, and Justin Martyr, and others in their writings stood on the millennial earthly rule of Christ, without any apologies.

Now the amazing thing is during that same period of time, there was not one single writer in opposition to it. But one of the strongest opponents was Whitbe. If you need a bibliography of that, call me, and I can give them to you. This Whitbe, who was totally Amillennial, wrote that Pre-Millennialism was passed down amongst the Christians for 250 years. He admitted it. Another one of great Amillennialists was a man by the name of Allis. And he, too, admitted that in the early Church writings there was nothing but the concept of Pre-Millennialism. So we are prone to ask what happened if, for 250 years, that was the teaching. You know the twelve disciples looked for the Kingdom. I've shown you that more than once. Let's look at it again. Go to Acts Chapter 1, because I always like to use as much Scripture as I can. The
Lord has been crucified and raised from the dead and has spent 40 days with the disciples. Now verse 3:

Acts 1:3

"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs (that He had risen from the grave), being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the (what?) kingdom of God:"

The Kingdom is the Kingdom is the Kingdom. You might say it's (this time when the earth would be regenerated, the curse lifted, and it would be the Utopia that everybody is looking for). It's been on the mind of man since the dawn of human history. Now verse 6:

Acts 1:6

"When they (the disciples) therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the (what?) kingdom to Israel?'"

Now in the thinking of the Jews of Jesus' day, what Kingdom stood out as the high point in all of Israel's history? David's and Solomon's beautiful Kingdom. Solomon's especially, it was arrayed in such glory. What did the Queen of Sheba say? "The half hasn't yet been told." Well, the twelve understood that this kind of a Kingdom was once again going to be brought back to the Nation of Israel. But instead of a Solomon it would be a greater than Solomon, it would be the Messiah who would be their King. Then they are asking Him, since all of this has been accomplished: He had died at the Crucifixion, and raised from the dead; will he now give them the Kingdom? In the last verse we looked at in our last lesson, there was the promise that Christ had made to the disciples. Let's look at it again. That is what makes Bible study so beautiful, how it all fits together.

Matthew 19:28

"And Jesus said unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration (many people just slip over that word without really knowing what it means. If you have a dead car battery and want to restore it's original power, what do you do? You generate it. A generator generates a flow of electricity into that battery making it like new. That word means the same thing here. One day the earth will be regenerated (made like it was in the beginning) when the Son of man (The Christ) shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also (the disciples) shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'"
All of this written in the four Gospels especially rests on the Abrahamic Covenant. We need to look at that for a time. So go to Genesis 15. I call this the Chapter of Israel's title deed. Most of you already have that written in your margins. Here God has come down and, as He did in the Old Testament, He appeared unto Abraham. And he literally went through the rites of transferring title deed to Abraham. And after He had done that, verse 18:

**Genesis 15:18**

"*In the same day* (God transferred the title deed to Abraham) **the LORD** made a covenant with Abram, saying, *`Unto thy seed (Abraham's offspring) have I given this land, from the river of Egypt (near the Nile) unto the great river, the river Euphrates:`"*

The Euphrates goes through present day Iraq, down to the Persian Gulf. Then all the way back to near the Nile river in Egypt, up to the Mediterranean Sea north and back to the Euphrates river. That's all going to be Israel's homeland when the Kingdom comes in. Israel has never had it yet. David and Solomon got part of it, but not near all of it. Tonight, Israel just has a small amount of the land that God gave Abraham, but the day is coming when the Land of Israel will actually cover that whole Middle East. But this title deed will not be fulfilled until Christ sets up the Kingdom. And the twelve apostles will sit under Christ's throne there in Jerusalem, ruling over the twelve tribes just like it says in Matthew Chapter 19. That's the Kingdom as the twelve apostles understood it.

Paul speaks of the Kingdom and since the Kingdom is not now on earth, but in heaven, Paul then speaks of our citizenship being in heaven. And he says so in Colossians 1 so plainly:

**Colossians 1:13**

"*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:"

When Christ returns to the earth with His Kingdom, where will we be? With Him. That's the whole concept of Scripture, that when the Kingdom is set up we'll come back with Him. We won't have physical bodies of reproduction (male and female) like the survivors of the Tribulation. Jesus said we will be as the angels, but nevertheless we will be bodily present and will reign and rule with Christ. So the early Apostles believed in this earthly Kingdom. Paul taught it. John taught it and wrote the Book of Revelation.
Well, what happened then that this opposing view crept in. You want to remember that shortly after 300 A.D. something fantastic took place. Emperor Constantine, the Roman Emperor, embraced Christianity. And when he did that, what did that do to the Church? It exploded in numbers. People came in by droves, because after all it was the thing to do. Then the Church fathers, Origen being the first one, were down there at a big seminary in Alexandria Egypt. When he saw that Christianity was exploding across the Roman Empire, he reflected back - the Jewish temple had been totally destroyed; the Jews had been uprooted out of their homeland and sent like vagabonds and Gypsies throughout the Roman Empire. So he got the great light bulb explosion in his mind that evidently God was all through with the Jew. He would have nothing more to do with them, and consequently, all of the promises that God had given to the Nation of Israel and to Abraham were now blotted out, and instead, God gives all those promises to the Church.

What does that do? It destroys all end-time prophecies, because as I stressed when we first started prophecy several months ago, all prophecy is directed solely to the Jew. So when you take the Jew off the scene, what do you do with prophecy? You throw it away. And that's exactly what they did. They took away all references to end-time prophecy, and would say it can't be, because Israel is no longer a viable thing. Then some years after Origen there came a great Roman Catholic Bishop named Augustine. He was a tremendous man, and sometimes I even make reference to some of his writings. But Augustine also followed this concept that since Christianity was engulfing the whole world, that is how the Kingdom would be brought in, and there would be no more need for the Tribulation or the Second Coming because the Church is the literal Kingdom. He even went so far as to feel that Satan was defeated and locked up at the time of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. With that, they were already in the Kingdom.

It wasn't too long after Augustine, as the world was already starting to slip deeper and deeper into sin, that they realized their concept wasn't true. Then Augustine precipitated what we call Amillennialism. That all the promises given to Israel had now been given to the Church. And there were no prophecies left to fulfill.

Then the reformers came along. Martin Luther, Calvin and all the rest. That was about 1511 AD. They were so caught up in this whole concept of salvation and faith, doing away with the excesses that Roman Catholicism had brought in at that time, that they didn't get to the place where they considered what we call eschatology or end-time events. Even from the Reformation there was nothing taught concerning the end-time. And then a fellow by the name of Joseph Mede, who lived from 1586 to 1638, began to write concerning the Nation of Israel going back to the land, and that there would be a thousand-year reign. Few paid much attention to him. But from Mede on, more and more men began to recover what we call millennialist teachings. Then, about the
middle 1800's, a gentleman from England by the name of John Darby (who many feel wrote one of the best translations of the Bible that has ever been written), became the tremendous proponent of what we call Pre-Tribulation, and the Pre-Millennial coming of Christ.

Since Darby, there have been literally thousands of tremendous theologians. And with everything that is happening on the earth tonight, we can see the whole prophetic plan coming together, and it's much easier to embrace these things now than to say, "Well, God's all through with the Jews." But let me remind you that there are large groups in Christendom (I suppose at least 80%), who still hold to Amillennialism. They still have not come to the place where they recognize that the Nation of Israel is visible. In fact, most of these groups will say, "The Jews in Israel tonight have nothing to do with the Israel of Scripture." And, as you know, I disagree with that thinking completely. I maintain the Jews in Israel tonight are the fulfillment of this Book. They are the very stamp that this Book is true and we can rest on it. And now with Israel back in the land, and the Jews planning to rebuild the Temple, the whole world political and economic system is being set up according as we see it in Scripture. So I make no apology for my stand on the Millennium, on Christ's return, on the Rapture and Tribulation or everything else that I have been teaching. Amillennialism is fine for those that want it. But as for me, I believe otherwise!
LESSON THREE * PART III

BEMA SEAT: GREAT WHITE THRONE:

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

Now let's come back to Revelation Chapter 20 once again. And now the Kingdom has run its course of Utopian rule. No sin. No death. Now it's a possibility that it could happen, I'm going to maintain that it's not going to happen. But the thousand-year reign of Christ is another time of testing. You have to realize if you've been with me these past three and a half years (and many of you have been with me the better part of twenty years), that as we've come up through human history, God has changed His dealing with the human race. Now God didn't change. But He changed in His dealings.

In other words, when Adam and Eve were in the garden, God dealt with them under those circumstances. The garden was theirs to enjoy. God communed with them everyday. And everything was pretty simple. Then all of a sudden sin entered. And then what happened? A whole new ball game. Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden. All of a sudden they have to work with the sweat of their brow. Sin, and the curse is now on the scene. And that's certainly far different than it was in the garden. And that went on until it got so bad that God destroyed the whole human race with the exception of Noah and his family. Then they come out of the ark and what happened? Another whole different set of circumstances. Totally different than it was before the flood. And so that goes on. And then the next great event in history is the Tower of Babel. All those new generations of people coming out of the sons of Noah have gathered in rebellion. **That's what the tower of Babel really is. It's a place of rebellion.** And again, God intervenes and confuses all their languages and what happens? God scatters them.

Then He calls Abraham, and again it's something totally different. He now is going to deal with one special little race of people. That's why they are called "**The chosen race.**" They're Covenant people. Again, that's totally different than what He's ever done before. Then along comes Moses about 1500 BC. At God's direction, Moses gives Israel the Law. You and I have no idea what it was to live under the Mosaic Law. That put such pressure on the Jew, and you need to remember it was far different than the law practiced by Judaism today. To live under the pure Law of Moses, was to live under the constant threat of what? Death! If they picked up sticks to build a fire on the Sabbath Day they knew that death was waiting for them. One act of adultery would result in the same thing. **There was no mercy. That was Law.** Then along comes the Apostle Paul and to the amazement of the Jew in his day, as well as the Jew
to this day, Paul proclaims that you are not under Law, but under Grace. That's a whole different set of circumstances.

When you get into the millennial thousand-year Kingdom Age it too, is a different program altogether. If you were comparing all of them, it would be more like the Garden of Eden than any of the others. But rather than two people involved, we are going to have literally billions. The world's population is going to explode. So the Kingdom will run its course, and remember only believers go into the Kingdom. Never forget what Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." So there will only be believing people in the Kingdom, and they will start having children. Satan is locked up during this time. We saw that in Revelation 20. Let's look at it for a moment, and pick it up in the text at the onset of the Kingdom. John sees this in the Spirit of Prophecy:

**Revelation 20:1,2**

"AND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him (how long?) a thousand years," There's that concept again of the thousand-year period of time. Now verse 3:

**Revelation 20:3**

"And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more (what's the next word?), till (a time word) the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

So why is God going to release Satan after this thousand-year reign? He's got him off the scene and they have had a thousand years of Utopian rule, and everything has been glorious and perfect. Why let that rascal out again? Well, why did God bring Satan on the scene in the first place? To bring the human race to a place of choice. That's why God gave each of us a will. Historically, young boys and girls were matched for marriage by parents or grandparents and I guess it worked better than they do today. But under our culture, can you think of anything worse than to have someone choose your mate for you? After all, we are under the concept that we will look for our mate until we find one that we really love. And when we find the right one, and he or she loves in return, what do we think we've got? That marriage made in heaven.

The same concept is what brought God and the human race into the picture. **God didn't create robots. He created a being with a free will, and emotions.** And so God said, "I'm going to extend my love to these creatures, I won't force them to
love me in return, but I'm going to expect love returned." Do you see the difference? He had every right to expect the human race to love Him back, because after all, He loved them first, but He didn't force them. So we know that the sad commentary of the human race is, "They spurned God's love for the most part." And all because they would rather follow the adversary. If God had not permitted Satan to come into the picture, mankind would have never had a choice. They would have had no will to exercise. They would have been like robots. He would have been the only way and the only choice.

It's the same way here in the Kingdom. For a thousand years it will be beautiful, and all of these new children coming on the scene with that old Adamic nature, but no power of Satan to trigger it. So there has been no rebellion, no wickedness, no sin. The King is in absolute control. But have they ever made a choice? No! They have had to be obedient to the King, because of the circumstances. So at the end of the thousand years, we'll have all of these billions of new generation children, some of them almost a thousand years old. They have been obedient by virtue of no choice. But now God is going to give them a choice to choose of their own free will just like he gave you and I. God is going to let Satan come back and they can either follow him or remain true to God. Do you have the picture? Satan must be loosed for a little season. In verse 7 we pick it up after the thousand years has run its course:

Revelation 20:7

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison," Remember there are, I think, billions of people in the world at this time.

Revelation 20:8a

"And shall go out to deceive the (what's the next word?) nations (now these nations are back up to full complement and are now going to be exposed to the tempting of Satan) which are in the four quarters of the earth,..."

You might say how could this be possible since they have had it so perfect for a thousand years. Listen! How good did Adam and Eve have it. They also had it perfect. I always like to tell my classes that Eve had the best husband there ever was. On the other hand, Adam had the best wife there ever was. A lot of people think I have, but Adam had a better one. They were perfect. But under those perfect, ideal circumstances, Satan came and did he succeed? You bet he did. And how did he succeed? He couldn't say to Eve, "Listen honey, I can bring you a better man than Adam." That isn't what he said. He didn't go to Adam and say, "I can find you a better wife than Eve." That's part of the temptations that confront people today.
They're not satisfied with their present spouse, because old Satan tells them there might be a better one out there.

Satan knew they had everything that the human race could possible want, except for one thing. And what was it? That they would be like God. That was **THE LIE** and temptation, and that's going to be his same ploy here. He will come to this generation of people and they're going to say, "Well, wait a minute, we have it so good." But he will say, "You're not like God, wouldn't you like to be just like God?" And they will fall for it again. Verse 8 continuing, remember old Satan has gone forth to deceive the nations:

*Revelation 20:8b*

"...Gog and Magog (that northern confederation of nations we have studied before), to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

Tremendous amounts of people. They will be under Satan's control, because he is their leader at this time. Who are they going to have to battle and conspire against? Christ, The King. It's almost like a repeat of the battle of Armageddon. They will arrange themselves again around Jerusalem, and will try to destroy Christ and His Kingdom. Satan never gives up. Look what happens.

*Revelation 20:9*

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city (Jerusalem): and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them."

We don't know whether all of them have rebelled or most of them, but we do know "**the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.**" This will probably be the vast majority of them who will be zapped right off the scene. We have now come to the end of human history as the Bible knows it. From this point on we go into eternity. Time has now come to its final end. It has been seven thousand years from Adam!

*Revelation 20:10*

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone (that's not hell. We'll look at the difference between hell and the lake of fire in the next lesson), where the beast (the Anti-christ) and the false prophet (the leader of the world religious system) are (notice these other two, who are human, have already been in the lake of fire for the full thousand years), and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."
People who preach that hell and the lake of fire are annihilation and that's the end, are evidently not reading this verse. The Book says the lake of fire is going to be the eternal abode. Verse 11. We find Satan is now off the scene, the earth has come to the end of its usefulness so far as human history is concerned. And I like to think that here is where we pick up the verses of II Peter Chapter 3. I know among the scholars and theologians there is a lot of controversy as to whether these verses apply to the end of the Tribulation, or to the end of the thousand years. I personally think they are at the end of the thousand years. Because the present day earth, even after it has been restored for the Kingdom Age, will be totally destroyed. Not with a flood again, but by fire. And then we will have a new heaven and a new earth. Because heaven is still going to be on the earth. That flies in the face of a lot of people's thinking, but it's still true.

**II Peter 3:10**

"But the day of the Lord (and remember the day of the Lord scripturally goes all the way from the Rapture into eternity. That whole period of time is considered the day of the Lord) will come as a thief in the night (after this semicolon you can leap a thousand years in time with a punctuation mark); in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements (that make up the planet) shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

It's amazing that Peter, the uneducated Galilean fisherman, used the same language that science uses today. What words am I talking about? Elements, the fervent heat, and in verse 11 the word `dissolved.' These are words you use when you get into physics and chemistry.

**II Peter 3:11**

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation (manner of living) and godliness."

The world in general doesn't take that into consideration. They think it will just keep on going. We were talking in our class the other night and the conversation came up about how much concern the 20 and 30-year-old young people have about spiritual and eternal things. Bless their hearts, for the most part it's not very much. I'm not putting all young people in that group, but the vast majority fits into it. They don't seem to comprehend that this old world is not going to keep going. Peter says, "We should take all this into consideration" Now verse 12:

**II Peter 3:12**
"Looking for and hastening (or actually be a part of hastening His coming. And the way you and I can hasten His coming is literally win people to the Lord. Because the faster they are won to the Lord, the sooner the Body of Christ will be full and then that will be the triggering mechanism for bringing it all in) unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements (everything that makes up the earth) shall melt with fervent heat?"

II Peter 3:13

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Go back to Revelation Chapter 20. I want you to see this same kind of setting. The thousand years have ended, we are ready for eternity, and heaven and earth have fled away. They have been burned up. But as soon as we get to Chapter 21, in the very first verse John says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth..." So that's coming in the future. But for now let's look at the Great WhiteThrone.

Revelation 20:11

"And I saw a great white throne (you've heard of the Great White Throne), and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

And as this Great White Throne is set up some place out in the area of space. It's not in heaven and not on the earth because they are being burned up. But here's this Great White Throne of which Christ is the eternal judge. And now John says as he see this great multitude coming before the Great White Throne:

Revelation 20:12a

"And I saw the dead,..."

Now several lessons ago we talked about the two resurrections. The first resurrection was the resurrection of the just or saved. But the second resurrection was the resurrection of all the lost and that it would take place at the end of the Kingdom rule. This is the bringing out of hell all the lost of the ages. They too will have resurrected bodies even as they stand before this Great White Throne. Remember, Jesus said in John Chapter 5 that the lost would also be resurrected.

John 5:28,29
"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

This is the resurrection of damnation. The lost from all ages. Those who have never embraced God's saving Grace. And here they come.

Revelation 20:12b

"...small and great (kings and emperors, and the greatest of the great. But also the smallest of the small), stand before God (so many times the term 'God' is used right in conjunction with Christ and here is a good example. It's God, but it's also Christ who is the Judge here at the Great White Throne); and the books (plural) were opened: and another book (singular) was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according their works."

If they have any argument whether their name is in the Book of Life, Christ will show them where their name should have been but it's not there. Remember Jesus said in His earthly ministry that they are going to come before him some day and will say, "But Lord didn't we do this and that in your name." And what will He tell them? "Depart from Me I never knew you." And what's going to be His proof? The Book! And their name is not in the Lamb's Book of life. Then Christ goes to the books (plural) and will judge their works. A record is kept of the works of men, both lost and saved. But here we are dealing only with the lost. And God hasn't had any trouble keeping track of people and what they do and for what motive they do it. We will pick this topic up again in the next lesson. Remember the Great White Throne is only for the lost.
LESSON THREE * PART IV

BEMA SEAT: GREAT WHITE THRONE:

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

We are ready to finish this book with this lesson. In our last lesson I didn't finish the Great White Throne the way I wanted to, so we will finish that in a later lesson. Now, please turn to II Corinthians; let's study the Bema Seat. You and I as believers are not going to be here for the Tribulation. I'm convinced of that, and I have enough Scripture to back me up. The believers will be taken out before the Tribulation begins. So as believers you don't have to be filling your cellars with food and trying to get ready for the calamities that are coming as far as the Tribulation is concerned. We may go through some tough times; we don't know what's ahead of us, but we don't have to prepare for the Tribulation.

So with that, I want to pick up with what happens to the believer while the Tribulation is unfolding here on earth And of course we have to go to the Apostle Paul's writing when it comes to anything dealing with the Church or the Body of Christ. So now turn to II Corinthians Chapter 5. And let's begin at verse 6. I like to use as many verses as we can and yet not so many that we run out of time. Paul, writing to you and I as Gentile believers, says:

II Corinthians 5:6

"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body (this body of flesh), we are absent from the Lord:" The Lord is present in the person of the Holy Spirit, but we are not in His presence per se. Now verse 7:

II Corinthians 5:7,8

"(For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

Now the question has come up recently, "What happens the second the believer dies?" Well here it is. Remember the soul and spirit are not one and the same, but they are intertwined like Siamese twins, and the moment we die our soul and spirit is present with the Lord. We go from this body immediately into His presence in the area of soul and spirit. However, not bodily. The body is going to go into the grave the Apostle Paul tells us, to await the resurrection day. Paul makes it very plain, yet simple here, that the only way we can be present with the Lord is to be absent from this body. And then verse 9:
**II Corinthians 5:9**

"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."

We have to be careful here, the word `accepted' as it's used here does not mean with regard to salvation, but with regard to our behavior as a believer. And again, just bring that down to the family relationship on earth. If you want a happy home where everything is running along rather smoothly, your children must be pleasing to you. Because as soon as you've got a black sheep or a renegade son, or a rebellious daughter, what's the situation at home? It's not very happy. But when the children are all that we want them to be and they are pleasing us, it's the same way in the spiritual. When a believer is obedient to what God expects of His children, then we are pleasing to Him. And that is exactly what Paul is talking about here. That whether we are in this body or have passed on to glory, that we might be pleasing to Him. Now verse 10:

**II Corinthians 5:10a**

"For we (believers) must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ;..."

I think that word `judgment' is an unfortunate translation in our King James, because the word here in the Greek is Bema. It was the Bema seat. Paul took that from the Olympics. Paul made many references to the Olympic games. So the Bema seat at an Olympic game was the place of the judges. As you watch a tennis match on television they have judges who sit on the line of the tennis court, and it's up to the them to determine if a shot has gone in or is out of bounds. Now in so many cases you could say the judge is sitting on the Bema seat. They are sitting on the seat of a judge.

Now as Paul uses this analogy then, the Bema Seat, on which Christ will be sitting as the Judge, is not to determine heaven or hell. It's not to judge us for our sins, because the believers sins have already been judged totally and completely at the Cross. We will never again have to face our sins. Now this doesn't give license, not by any stretch of the imagination. We won't come before the Bema Seat shaking in our boots wondering if we are going to make it or not. I had a gentleman in one of my classes share with me not too long ago that his father-in-law, I believe, was getting rather elderly, and had come to spend the remainder of his life with his daughter. The gentleman relating the story said, "Les would you believe that this fellow was a highly thought of well-known evangelist in his denomination. And yet I can still hear the old fellow as he walked across our living room bemoaning to himself, `Will I go to heaven when I die.'" Here he had been preaching to thousands of people throughout his lifetime, yet he didn't have an assurance of where he would spend eternity. Isn't that sad? There are multitudes like that. They profess salvation, and say, "Oh, yes, I believe in Christ," But then they turn right around and think they have to work, work,
work, hoping that somehow they can still make it. This is not the Gospel of Grace that the Apostle Paul preached. The Gospel of Grace says that Christ releases the power of salvation at our believing (and when I say believing I'm not just talking a mental accent. I'm talking about a genuine Holy Spirit opening of the heart, and we can without any reservation say, "I know that Christ died my death. I know that He rose from the dead, and that He had power to overcome sin and Satan."). That's the kind of faith God is looking for. When He sees it, our sins are judged, and we are cleansed of them. Then He seals us, and sets us on our way working, and serving Him. As a believer, the whole concept here is that we live a life well-pleasing now as a child, with the idea of gaining a reward for meritorious service. Finishing verse 10, we must all appear before the Bema Seat:

**II Corinthians 5:10b**

"... that every one (believers) may receive the things done in his body (while we as believers in this life), according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

So we will stand before Him to see if we are going to receive a reward. Let's follow that back to I Corinthians Chapter 3. Here again the Apostle is writing to the Gentiles of Corinth, so basically he is writing to you and I. Again he uses the pronoun `we.'

**I Corinthians 3:9**

"For we are laborers together with God (now he points the finger at the believer and says): ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." You are something that God is working on.

**I Corinthians 3:10**

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me (Paul is speaking in reference to his own ministry), as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation (Paul is speaking about a building situation), and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

In other words the foundation is there. And that is the basis for any kind of a building. But now comes all the various workers that are going to put their little bit into this building. Now verse 11. Notice Paul doesn't claim to be the foundation:

**I Corinthians 3:11**

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."
He is the basic foundation of all our works. And you can't begin to build on that foundation until you have experienced His salvation. There is no such thing as working for that. But after God has imparted salvation and the power of God has been released into our very existence, then He expects us to serve him. That doesn't mean we have to be a Billy Graham, or go to the foreign mission field, or have to be teachers or something like that, but in Romans 12, we've got all these areas of service that believers can fill. I've told my classes, over the years, every single believer has at least one gift that can be used in God's service. Many times people are exercising their gift and seeing all the fruits of it and they come to me and say, "Well, Les, I wish I had a gift." You've got a gift and you're using it! Just keep on doing what you are doing, whatever it may be. People who are elderly and can't get out and do much anymore, they can serve the Lord in just prayer alone! Prayer changes things. Older people could literally turn a nation around if they would pray. Others may have accumulated enough wealth that they can judiciously give and further God's work.

Now, I don't buy this thing of, "I'll just put it out there and God's knows my heart." No, God has given every individual intelligence and discernment. You give where God directs you and give where it will be honoring to Him. Don't just throw it out there someplace and think, "Well, this is good enough. I've given in the right attitude." No, you are to be judicious even in your giving. There's all kinds of places and ways to serve God. Ministering to the poor and sick are two ways. These are gifts of serving. Now, as we serve, come to verse 12:

*I Corinthians 3:12*

"Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood hay, stubble;"

As we enter into this life of the Christian walk or service, God provides opportunity for six building materials. Wood, hay and stubble; gold, silver and precious stones. Those are the ones that are available. Now, of course, a lot of believers never get anything more than wood, hay and stubble. That's as far as they ever get. But you see, others will get out and put forth some effort and energy and they're going to drum up some gold, silver and precious stones. Here's the way you have to look at these six materials; which ones can withstand the flames of the judgment fire? I'm not talking about Hellfire, I'm talking about the Judge's eyes. He's going to have eyes of fire that are going to penetrate our works at the Bema Seat. Which ones are going to survive those flaming eyes. Well, not the wood, hay and stubble because that's going to go up in a puff of smoke. It's the gold, silver and precious stones, whatever that may be. In other words, the things that have lasting value. The things that have really made a difference, maybe in your home, in the community, in your church, or whatever. That's the gold, silver and precious stones. Now let's read on again in verse 13:
I Corinthians 3:13

"Every man's work (it's the masculine gender, but includes everyone as a believer. Not for salvation) shall be made manifest (like being put under a spotlight. As we come before the Bema Seat to see what our rewards are going to be, we are put in the spotlight. Then the penetrating eyes of Christ will burn off the draught showing if you have gold, silver or precious stones left): for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

I Corinthians 3:14

"If any man's work abide (survives His scrutiny) which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive (not salvation, but) a reward."

I know a lot of people are turned off by the concept of rewards, but it's very scriptural. The Scripture maintains that you and I are literally to work for rewards. Verse 15, but:

I Corinthians 3:15

"If any man's work shall be burned (that has no reference to hell. That just simply says that if all we have is hay, wood, or stubble ... we didn't do things for the right reason for example. And the Lord looks at it, and our works shall be burned up and disappear), he shall suffer loss (not his salvation, but of his reward): but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

This person will be there, but he will not have earned the reward. Now let's go over to Chapter 9. Here Paul is again going to use one of his many allusions to the Olympics. Paul must have truly loved the Olympics. Here he's writing to you and I, the believers:

I Corinthians 9:24,25

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all (they all take off at the starting gun. But how many receive the prize?), but one receiveth the prize? (now who determines the winners? Judges who sit on the Bema Seat) so run, that ye may obtain."

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things (what's he talking about? Their training period, while they were getting ready for the race. They maintained good diet, exercise, and they didn't overdo anything. The Scripture says, "that in all things be temperate." We wouldn't have so many of these health problems if people were just temperate). Now they (these athletes) do it to obtain a corruptible crown (you know what corruptible means, it doesn't last); but we an incorruptible."
Paul says, "We don't run and work for something that is going to pass off the scene in short order. But ours is what? Incorruptible!" And even though Christianity has been on the scene almost 2000 years, the rewards that those early believers earned are still there. They are still waiting, and when we get there our rewards will be there also. Have you stopped to think about God's rewarding for the believer at the Bema Seat, at the end. We don't receive rewards as we come along. And do you know why? Because the next generation will benefit from everything that you and I do in the Lord's service (if this world keeps going). The same is true for the wicked person. His activity is going to effect people of the next generation, and generations to come.

Sometimes I think of that dear old Pastor that first asked me to teach in Sunday School. Do you know that someday, whatever I've been able to accomplish is also going to go to his credit. And someday down the road, people whose lives I have touched, whatever they do, is one day, going to come to my credit. And so it is with every believer. And that's why it will all come at the end. And now, I'd like to give this illustration. If you throw a pretty good sized rock into the middle of a fairly large pond of water, how far do the effects go? To every inch of shore line! And so it is with the believer. Everything we do will ripple out and have an effect on more and more people. Now verse 26: The Apostle Paul then says:

*I Corinthians 9:26*

"I therefore so run (that I may win the prize.),..."