Through the Bible with Les Feldick, Book 14

LESSON ONE * PART I

SALVATION: HELL VERSUS LAKE OF FIRE:

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

We were talking about believers coming up before the judgment seat of Christ, the Bema seat. Bema is simply the Greek word for judgment seat. It came from the Olympics - the seat of the judges. I stressed in our last lesson it's a seat of judging not for Heaven or hell, but rather for what rewards we will receive. This will only be for believers and the Body of Christ who one day will come before the Bema Seat for rewards. We will definitely get rewards based on our Christian walk in this life here on earth. Of course, the rewards are going to come to their fruition primarily in the Kingdom economy. When the Kingdom finally comes on the earth and becomes active, Christ will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the world wide Ruler, and we will be ruling and reigning with Him.

Now here is where the reward aspect comes in, as we reign and rule with Him, our level of responsibility is going to be based on our faithfulness here. And that is why it behooves us as believers to labor, to work, and serve for the rewards we will use in the Kingdom Age. I think most people would rather be active as opposed to being inactive and sitting on the sideline. I know I would. I couldn't stand sitting on the sidelines.

I would like to begin our study in Romans Chapter 8. We haven't finished our study of Revelation by any means, but remember, as soon as the Body of Christ is Raptured out and we receive our new bodies (and we will be looking at that in this lesson) we step out of time and into eternity. I know that is hard for us to understand, how even though seven distinct years are going to unfold here on the earth, yet that seven years multiplies into all the time in the world because we are out of time and into eternity. The reason I'm stressing this, is that in no way could the Lord deal with every Church Age believer individually in seven years. It would be impossible in our frame of time. But since we will be out of time and into eternity there will be no problem. Don't ask me to explain it, because I can't. But each of us as believers will have that specific, personal, quality time in front of the Lord for our rewards.

Now it's this point in time that I want to come into Romans, because in our study we are getting ready for the return of Christ to set up His Kingdom at the end of the Tribulation. The Book of Revelation specifies that it will be a thousand years. And
even though Revelation reveals it will be a thousand years, all the prophecies in the Old Testament reveal that this Kingdom on earth will be for how long? **FOREVER**! So then the only way we can look at it then, is that this thousand-year Kingdom is just an introduction to the eternal state. It will be interrupted of course, with a new Heaven and new earth, and the Great White Throne judgment for the lost. But even eternity is going to be based on the physical attributes and so forth of this thousand years reign of Christ. There will be some differences, as here in the thousand years you still have flesh and blood people having children. Where in the eternal state I don't think that will carry on. But I believe there will be tremendous activity and production all through eternity. We won't be sitting on a cloud floating around doing nothing except strumming a harp. But in Chapter 8, we come to where the believers, beginning with the rewards. But it's all looking forward to the time when Christ will return and set up His Kingdom for this thousand years, and we will be part of it. We will be playing our role in that Kingdom as we rule and reign under the Lord.

**Romans 8:14-16**

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. (or the children of God) For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself (Himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are (present tense) the children of God:"

**Romans 8:17**

"And if children (born from above), then heirs (now that brings us into a family relationship); heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; (Most of you are acquainted with laws on joint-heirship that mean what belongs to the husband belongs to the wife. And what is hers is his. So that's the way it will be with Christ, what's His will be ours and what's ours will be His)if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Now, I like these next few verses and very few people realize what these verses are teaching.

**Romans 8:18,19**

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time (and Paul knew what it was to suffer) are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be (future) revealed in us, For the earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."
When will you and I as God's children be manifest? When we come into this glorious Kingdom rule with Him. And remember to be manifested in Scripture is to be put under the spotlight. Our day is coming when we will be just literally put in the spotlight, and all of creation is waiting for that day. Even at this moment as you read this, creation is waiting for that day. Now verse 20:

Romans 8:20

"For the creature (creation) was made subject to vanity (the curse), not willingly (creation didn't have anything to do with Adam's sin), but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,"

So as soon as Adam sinned and the curse fell, what did God immediately come back and promise? The time of restoration. So then, all of creation is constantly looking for that day when the curse will finally be lifted. When we first started the Book of Revelation, we began to talk about these seven terrible years that are coming. The whole idea of these seven years is to bring the earth to a delivery. In Matthew Chapter 24, where Jesus said, "These are the days of travail," travail was connected with delivery. In this instance, it's the delivery of the planet from the curse. So from the very day it was subjected to the curse, God has begun to promise there is coming a day of redemption for it.

Romans 8:21,22

"Because the creature (creation) itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption (that's where we are today, sin and death) into the glorious liberty of the children of God (that's us). For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

I want to stretch your thinking. What's involved in the term "whole creation," just man? No, everything! Everything that was created; even the rocks. You might say the rocks are stretching it some, but when Christ had His triumphant entry and they tried to quiet the crowd, what did Jesus say? "If you make these people be quiet the rocks will cry out." Even the rocks know the Creator. That's more than you can say about most human beings. So all of creation is waiting for that great day of deliverance from the curse.

Romans 8:23

"And not only they, but ourselves also,... groan within ourselves (if we are true believers today, what is our longing? Oh, for the Lord to come. As we see the world just falling apart, and literally going into the lap of the evil one more and more, how
can we help but cry out, "Lord come quickly." Because if He doesn't come soon, I can see even in our beloved America changes coming that will effect us as believers. So here we are), waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Now the redemption of the Soul and Spirit has already been concluded, but we are still waiting for the redemption of our body that Paul says, in I Corinthians Chapter 15, is corruptible. And it is going to suddenly become incorruptible. The moment it's changed and we go up into the presence of the Lord, receive our rewards and come back to become active participants of the Kingdom here on earth. Let's look for a moment at the Book of Colossians. I always like to point out that we who are believers today are already members of the Kingdom. The Kingdom today is not on earth, but rather it's in Heaven. But one day that Kingdom will come on the earth, and you and I are going to be part and parcel of it, because we are already in it. Here, Paul is praying for the Colossi believers. And in that prayer as Paul is winding it up he says:

**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 (that same language in Roman 8):"

**Colossians 1:13**

"Who (The Father) hath (past tense) delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath (past tense, it's already been accomplished if we are believers today. And He hath) translated us into the (what?) kingdom of his dear Son: "

The Kingdom is the Kingdom is the Kingdom. Whatever Kingdom that was promised to David and Solomon, and later to the twelve disciples, later made reference to in the Book of Acts, is the same Kingdom that is mentioned here in Colossians. And it's the same Kingdom that is coming upon the earth. Now to get a little hint of how our bodies will be. I personally like to think that we when we get into our new resurrected body we will all be the age that Christ was when He was in His earthly ministry, which was of course 30 to 33. So when someone elderly says, "Will I be gray-headed when I get to glory?" I don't think so. I think we will all be thirty-something with lots of vim and vigor of that age group. They don't know how good they have it. Do they? Now let's look at I John for a moment. Here is one little hint:

**I John 3:1**
"BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Now here it comes:

I John 3:2

"Beloved, now are (present tense) we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be (in other words we don't have a full understanding of how we are going to look and so on): but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." And we also read the next verse:

I John 3:3

"And every man (every believer) that hath this hope (that the Lord will be coming, maybe even today) in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

I always like to use the analogy that when my wife knows that we have company coming, what does she do to the old house? Well you clean, and straighten up, and get the guest room ready. Why? Because you are expecting a visitor. Now that should be the attitude of every believer every day. We should keep our spiritual house in order, because any day we could have a visitor. So we know we will be like Him. Now let's turn to Philippians Chapter 3. Paul always writes to the believer. And he says to you and I:

Philippians 3:20

"For our conversation (or citizenship; as we are already in the Kingdom) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:"

Philippians 3:21

"Who shall change our vile body (this one that is prone to sickness and death), that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body (the body after His Resurrection), according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Let's go to Luke 24 and take a quick look at His post-Resurrected body. Our body will be like His. I've told my classes over the years, if you want to get a good grasp (as much as Scripture reveals) of how we are going to operate in our new resurrected body, then study the forty days of Christ's post-Resurrection life. And remember, the disciples had no idea that Christ would die (although He had told them He would), much less that He would rise from the dead. That was totally hidden from them. So now it has happened, and they are still having a hard time accepting it.
**Luke 24:36-39**

"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them (the disciples), and saith unto them, `Peace be unto you.' But they were (what?) terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit, And he said unto them, `Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have,'" Today we speak of our make-up of being flesh and blood, but in the eternal state we will be flesh and bone.

**Luke 24:40-43**

"And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet, And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, `Have ye here any meat (food. Now this is amazing)?' And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did (what?) eat before them." Most people don't know that. He ate with that glorified body!

**Luke 24:44,45**

"And he said unto them, `These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.' Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,"

But here is just one little glimpse of how our new body will be. Remember, He was on the road to Emmaus and all of a sudden He fell in step with the two believers, visited with them and went into the house with them. And after He had finished that little sojourn there, in a split second He was gone back to Jerusalem with the disciples. He didn't need doors to come and go. He could appear and disappear when He wanted to. And that's the kind of existence we have ahead of us.
LESSON ONE * PART II

SALVATION: HELL VERSUS LAKE OF FIRE:

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

Now for this lesson we will digress for a little bit, and go over the plan of salvation. We have been talking so much about the future of the believer, and the coming of the Kingdom and our opportunities and responsibilities in it, but we want to make sure that everybody understands how to become a part and parcel of this great salvation. So let's deal with the plan of salvation and make it as simple as we can. It is so simple and plain and yet so complex that I maintain we will never understand all of it until we get to glory. And yet it is so simple that a six-year-old can comprehend it.

We must begin with the very first law that God gave to the human race, and it was a law. And we pick it up when Eve is confronted by Satan back in Genesis Chapter 3:

*Genesis 3:2,3*

"And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said (this is the first law for the human race, and of course she is quoting it, and not getting it 100% right, but mostly, and she says), `Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye (God didn't say the next word)touch it, lest ye die.'" In other words, sin would immediately bring about death. Go to the Book of Ezekiel Chapter 18. This is basically saying the same thing. This is the Lord God speaking:

*Ezekiel 18:4*

"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Let's see what the Apostle Paul says. Turn with me to Romans Chapter 3:

*Romans 3:23*

"For all have sinned (we already have), and come short of the glory of God;"

Now I maintain that salvation is only by faith. **And faith is taking God at His Word.** So the first thing we have to believe is what God says about us. And the first thing that I must believe is that regardless of how good I may be, or how good a family I may have come from. God says, "I'm a sinner." I've already sinned. And to me that is the very first step in the plan of salvation. Remember, salvation is an event. And
the Christian life, or sanctification or growth aspect, is a process that takes place as we mature. But we must begin as new babes in Christ. There has to be that "New Birth" and that can't happen until we recognize a need. Jesus used the illustration that well people don't need a physician. But who does? The sick! It's the same way in salvation. The person who thinks he is good enough for Heaven will never be saved. There are so many good people; you can't take that away from them. But they are so good, they never see their need of salvation. Therefore, they are headed for an eternal doom. Just as much as the most evil person that has ever lived. And the reason they are headed for eternal doom is that they don't believe that God has said that they are sinners.

Adam was created with a body, soul, and spirit. And as such, he was in fellowship with God. His soul which made up his personality was the mind, will, and emotion. And it was all in perfect agreement with the Creator. And then in the area of his spirit, he had fellowship with the Creator. He walked with Him in the Garden of Eden and so forth. Now with all of this under the perfect control of the Creator, naturally, the body was without sin as well. It had never had the opportunity. But when Adam sinned, then immediately, this whole personality of him became what the Apostle Paul refers to as a "sin nature." It's just bent to sinning. And immediately the spirit died, and when the spirit died it lost that fellowship and communication with God. And it became then dormant. I think the spark is still there, but it needs charging to come back to life.

I have used the analogy of your car battery. If you leave your lights on over-night and try to start your car the next morning, your battery will be dead. You can go out there with a pan of soap and water and clean that old battery, make it look like new, then get back in the car and try to start it and what happens? Nothing, because it's still dead. You've cleaned it up and made it look good on the outside, but it's still dead until you bring in some outside power. That's exactly what salvation is. You and I cannot clean up our life. And how many people think they can do that. I've had so many tell me, "When I get my act together, and my life cleaned up, then I'll become a Christian." That's not the way it works. God takes us just exactly like we are, as sinners. And He is the one that has to infuse that divine life and power which comes with salvation.

Let's back up a bit. When the person who is now only body and soul with the sin nature ruling supreme, then for the most part he's not in control of all that he does. I guess the words I'm looking for are "he's in bondage" to the sin nature and of course to Satan. Many people today don't like to give credit to Satan, but I give him full credit. He is powerful, he is only controlled by the more powerful Sovereign God. But never underestimate the power of Satan. The world tonight is operating under the influence of Satan. Now Paul explains in Romans Chapter 1 and verse 16:
Romans 1:16

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it (The Gospel) is the power of God unto (what?) salvation (Go back a moment to that dead battery. As soon as you put an outside power on it you have life. And here Paul makes it so plain that the Gospel is that generating power) to every one that (it doesn't say he that joins the church, gets baptized, takes communion, tithes, does good works. None of those things are in here. They are all okay in their rightful places but they have nothing to do with our salvation. But the power of God is imputed to the person that) believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

I'm not an easy believeism teacher. I do not ascribe to someone casually saying, "I believe Christ died for me." I don't buy that. When I talk about believing, I'm talking about totally entrusting our eternal destiny to the Word of God, to the power of the Gospel. Let's turn quickly to I Corinthians Chapter 15 and look at the Gospel. I have a fellow down in McAlester, Oklahoma who often tells me, "Les, you haven't shown anybody regarding the Gospel, in I Corinthians Chapter 15, in quite a while and it's about time." And I'm glad he does, because it is so easy to get a little lax sometime on this subject. But here in I Corinthians Chapter 15, the first four verses, you have the Gospel in the clearest definition that you can find in Scripture. I maintain it puts John 3:16 in the shade, because John 3:16 doesn't tell you everything. You have to read a lot in between the lines. But here it tells you everything:

I Corinthians 15:1,2

"MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel (do you see that, and it's the same Gospel that he is referring to in Romans 1:16) which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;" Positionally. We aren't driven about with every wind of doctrine. We are solid in this Gospel.

"By which also ye are saved (do you see that? A lot of people don't like that word, but it denotes salvation), if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain." In other words, you must know what you have believed. And here in verse 3 & 4 is the Gospel.

I Corinthians 15:3

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received,..."  

Paul is constantly referring in his letter to the fact that he received this whole truth of the Grace of God from the risen Lord, and from him, (Paul) it went out to others. Unless you understand that, you will miss the point. Paul several times tells us he was
the first to whom God revealed that the work of the Cross was not just Israel rejecting her King and Messiah and putting Him to death, but it was the fulfilling of the eternal purposes of God. That by that Crucifixion the whole human race would now have access to God's Plan of Salvation. It was culminated in His Resurrection as He came forth in power. And in a moment we will see that in verse 4:

_I Corinthians 15:3b,4a_

"...how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again..."

Now that's the Gospel. That Christ died for my sins, He was literally dead, three days and three nights in the tomb, and He arose from the dead. That's the Gospel! And you can't shortcut it, and you can't do anything with it but believe it or reject it. And that is where faith comes in.

Let's go to the Book of Hebrews for a moment to look at a couple of Scriptures. The first one will be in Chapter 9.

_Hebrews 9:22b_

"...without shedding of blood is no remission."

So that is where the death of Christ comes into play. He fulfilled that demand of God that blood had to be shed for the soul that sinneth. Don't forget that first law, _"The soul that sinneth shall surely die."_ That cannot be compromised. Turn to Chapter 11 and verse 6. I always call these two verses, the absolutes; that you can't do anything with them but face them head-on. You will either believe them or reject them. And the other one is this.

_Hebrews 11:6_

"But without faith it is impossible to please him (do you see that?): for he that cometh to God (for salvation) must believe (and that is what faith is. Faith is believing) that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

On our way back to the Book of Romans let's stop again in I Corinthians, this time in Chapter 1. One thing that Paul is constantly reminding us of, through out all of his letters, is this work of the Cross. How that Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again from the dead. What I say doesn't count. But what _The Book_ says means everything. Verse 17:
I Corinthians 1:17

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

In other words, Paul says, "I can't let anything detract from that finished work of the Cross." Nothing that the Church does, not even the rites of baptism or anything else dare detract from the Gospel, and that is the finished work of the Cross. Now verse 18:

I Corinthians 1:18

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness (to the lost person); but unto us which are saved it (the preaching of the Cross) is the power of God."

When the Holy Spirit begins to work on this dormant dead spirit with which we have been born (and when we get old enough to understand these things), the Spirit begins to convict us that indeed, we are sinners, and we have broken that law that the soul that sinneth will surely die. But you see God has given us a tremendous loophole, if I may call it that. And that loophole is, that yes, I have to die because I have sinned, but God has provided Someone who has died that death in my place. That's where understanding the Gospel comes in. That Christ died for me. He died for you. And as the Holy Spirit enlightens our understanding, and regenerates that old dead spirit, then this dead spirit suddenly realizes that I have died; the ego, the I, the Old Adam, was crucified; it was placed on the Cross in the mind of God, because God did it on our behalf. And as soon as we do that, He regenerates our spirit by that outside power, the fellowship is restored, and then He comes in and dwells in the person of the Holy Spirit. This old sin nature then become a new divine nature. This part of us that has been generated is now in concert with the eternal God. It begins to have its effect on the body and that begins our Christian walk. Then we come to the place of growing in Grace and knowledge.

Now, let's look at Romans Chapter 6. Here, Paul makes this so plain that we have to identify with what Christ accomplished on our behalf on the Cross. And it was through what He did. He fulfilled the demand of God that the soul that sinneth must surely die. He died my death. Now do you see that? And as He died my death and took that away, He also imparted eternal life in the area of the Spirit - this new Divine nature. And that is the part of us that will be one day ushered into His presence. And then we will pick up that new body that we talked about in the last lesson when the calling out of the Body of Christ, or the Rapture occurs. As such, then we become active in the overall plan of God in the Kingdom that is yet to come. In Romans Chapter 6, beginning with verse 5, where the Apostle uses plain English, Paul
talks about something being planted. Now when you plant something, what do you do with it? You put it in the soil. That's planting it. And when that seed goes into the soil and the moisture, and sunlight began to work, what happens to that seed? It dies! Now out of that death of the seed comes new growth. Now look what Paul says in verse 5:

**Romans 6:5**

"For if we have been planted (in other words, if our Old Adam has died, it has to be crucified) together in the likeness of his death (If we have been identified in His death then), we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Do you see that? Oh, it's so beautiful. Let's turn to John's Gospel and then we'll come right back to Romans and finish this lesson. Last night, as I was teaching, going through so many Scripture verses, one lady said, "I'm going to wear out my Bible in one night." And there is nothing I like better.

Here in the Book of John are the events just before the Crucifixion. All the preparations are beginning for the last Passover. Some Gentiles wanted to see Jesus in verses 20 and 21. He didn't invite them, because He was still dealing only with the Jew (with few exceptions) as the Abrahamic Covenant was still operating. Here He responds to Andrew and Philip by saying:

**John 12:23**

"And Jesus answered them, saying, 'The hour is come (He's ready to go to the Cross), that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn (grain) of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

So what is Jesus talking about? His own death, burial and Resurrection. That He had to die, and through that death He could then come forth in Resurrection power and impart that Resurrection life to those who would believe. Now to Romans Chapter 10 (a tremendous Chapter on salvation). Again, it's by faith and faith alone! For your salvation you can only believe that Christ died for you, was buried, and rose again. You claim that by faith, and immediately you are baptized by the Holy Spirit, you are sealed and you are placed in the Body of Christ. Don't ever try to add anything else to your salvation, because if you do, Paul tells us in the Book of Galatians Chapter 5 that when we do that, then Christ shall profit you nothing. So remember it's faith + nothing. Otherwise you are telling God, He didn't quite finish the work.

**Romans 10:9,10**
"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

**Romans 10:13**

"For whosoever (there is no one left out) shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." That's faith, but we have to put that faith into action by asking Him to save us - the sinners.
LESSON ONE * PART III

SALVATION: HELL VERSUS LAKE OF FIRE:

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

We are going to come back to the activities in Heaven, as the Tribulation is raging here below. I think many times a lot of believers don't have a good handle on what's ahead of us (except going to Heaven). But the Bible tells us what we can look for. If it's in here, then I think God wants us to know it. We will be looking at that aspect, beginning with Romans Chapter 7. We love to get letters from folk who tell us that they feel like they are a part of the class, and that's the reason we conduct the class the way we do, in a very informal atmosphere. We love to teach The Book, and never want to be guilty of trying to twist arms. We just try to show you the Scriptures and tie them together where they dove-tail smoothly. We trust you will be blessed by our teaching. In the television studio here in Tulsa, a couple of months ago, we were ready to video one of the lessons, when someone said, "Les, do you get nervous when the cameras begin to roll?" I told him that I wasn't in charge of the lesson. I totally rely upon the Holy Spirit. But, if I was in charge myself, then I would be nervous. And I do totally rely on the Holy Spirit for this teaching, as I do not have notes nor do I have my Bible marked. But it always thrills me to see people with their Bibles marked up. That tells me they are studying. So get your Bibles and let's study together.

We realize that after we come through the Bema Seat in glory, the next aspect will be the wedding, which I feel will be in Heaven while the Tribulation is going on here on earth. The wedding will be between Christ the Lamb and the Body of Christ "the Church" Paul (especially since he writes concerning the Church), makes so much of Christ and His Body which is the Church. In Romans Chapter 7 we can only apply this to one verse and that is in verse 4:

Romans 7:4

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law (that is the Law of Moses. We are dead to that, it no longer has any power over us) by the body of Christ (we are not dead to be forgotten but);that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Now, of course, that begins in this earthly sojourn. As soon as we become a child of God, and we become a member of the Body of Christ through faith in the Gospel, we are already connected to Christ. We have become joint heirs with Him, and He is the Head and we make up the members of the Body. We find more of this in the Book of Ephesians. Ephesians is where Paul gets into some of the deeper aspects of our
position in Christ. The Book of Ephesians is not a simple Book. It's very deep. But here in Chapter 5, Paul comes into the analogy of the husband and wife relationship here on earth, as being a correlation with Christ as the Head or Husband of the Body of Christ, that composite of Church Age Believers. Now I for one (I don't expect everyone to agree with me on everything, and they don't have to) don't believe that the Old Testament Believers will be members of the Body. They were part and parcel of their relationship to their Jehovah God. The Body is unique to this Age of Grace. Those who have come by faith trusting in the finished work of the Cross, or the Gospel as we saw in our last lesson. And the Body will consist of mostly Gentile believers with some Jews but not many. Here in Ephesians, Paul is writing in regard to the human husband and wife.

_Ephesians 5:21,22_

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear (reverence) of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

I know there are some ladies out there raising their hackles at that statement, saying, "Now wait a minute, we believe in equality between the sexes." That is all well and good. But God has still mandated this husband and wife relationship as is such, that the husband is the head of the wife. I've always told my classes over the years that does not mean that she can be his slave, or that he is someone who can lord it over her. The very next verse makes it so plain how this relationship is to be equated. And that is as the Lord is to the Church. That is how the husband is to be to the wife. And then the wife is to be to the husband as the Church is to Christ.

_Ephesians 5:23a_

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church:..."

Now there is that analogy. I have always asked my classes if there is anything uncomfortable or miserable about being in the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head? Of course not. He has nothing but the purest love for us. He has come that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. And that is exactly how the husband and wife's relationship should be. The husband should live totally to the benefit of his wife. And she should not take advantage of that, but rather respond to it. When God created that first human couple; never throughout all of human history did God command the wife to love the husband. Not once. Not even here in the Book of Ephesians. But it's the other way around:

_Ephesians 5:25_
"Husbands, love your wives (that's a commandment. A lot of people think the only commandments are the Ten. But that's not so. When the Bible stipulates something like this, it becomes a commandment), even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"

Any time you keep that analogy in view you can't go wrong. Now backing up to Adam and Eve. If God mandated from creation that the husband was to love the wife, but doesn't tell the wife to love the husband, what do we know He put into the woman? That responder. Do you see that? And that is exactly the way He has created us. That if the man will love the wife, God has put within the female of the species that ability to respond. And that's what makes a marriage work. And this is constantly referred to as an analogy that as Christ is with the Church, so the husband is with the wife. Coming back to verse 23 and finishing it we find:

Ephesians 5:23b

"...even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." That is the Body of Christ.

Let's come back I Corinthians Chapter 12 for a moment. Here Paul makes such a beautiful description of this Body of Christ. And remember only Paul uses this term. Jesus never referred to a group of believers as His Body. Never! That is strictly a Pauline doctrine - that we are members of the Body of Christ.

I Corinthians 12:12,13

"For as the body (human body) is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ."

"For by one Spirit (capitalized, so it's the Holy Spirit) are we (not just the most spiritual, or the ones who are most holy, but) all (that includes every believer and they have been)baptized (by the Holy Spirit) into one body (the Body of Christ),...."

Can human hands touch that? No! This a baptism that no organization or denomination can adhere to. This is something that only the invisible, Almighty Spirit of God can do. And it happens the moment we believe the Gospel. That's one of the results of our salvation. Immediately, the Holy Spirit places us into the Body of Christ. This whole wide congregation of genuinely born-again people, become part and parcel of this Body.

You can go into a strange community, and assemble with a group of genuine believers, and how long are you a stranger? Not over five minutes. I imagine you here
in the class have already experienced that today. I know I have. I remember years ago
I was invited to go down into Central Iowa and teach a group of young people, and
I didn't know a single person. I was sort of filled with trepidation as I was driving, and
I wondered what this was going to be like. But the minute I got into that living room
full of kids, it was just like I had known them all my life. That's the beauty of the
Body of Christ, we are never strangers very long.

So as we are baptized into this Body by an invisible, unfeeling, act of God, it is
something that we take by faith. Now continuing:

_I Corinthians 12:13b,14-16_

"... whether we be Jews or Gentiles (remember, they are the only two groups on
earth), whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

"For the body (the physical) is not one member but many." And now he describes the
members.

"If the foot shall say, `Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body;' is it therefore
not of the body?" Why of course not. They both are.

"And if the ear shall say, `Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body;' is it therefore
not of the body?"

Paul is making it very simple. No one in the Body of Christ can say, _"I'm of no
use."_ And no one in the Body of Christ can say, _"I'm at the top of the
heap."_ Regardless of our role, whether we are visible or just the little toe which most
of the time is covered by the shoe, yet we are just as important in the sight of God,
and in the Body of Christ as something out front and visible. And that is the point Paul
is making here. That everyone of us are equally important in our role and function.

_I Corinthians 12:18_

"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased
him."

In other words every believer is in a place that God puts them. And it's up to us to
simply say, _"All right, Lord here I am, use me."_ I've told people that you have to be
careful when you say that, because you might be surprised how all of a sudden He
will take hold, and start using you. So the Body is comprised of all the believers. And,
since we are members of the Body and we have a common goal, it behooves us then
to get out there and get busy and serve Him. Not only for the good of the Body, but
also for the rewards we will received from our Lord. Now back to Ephesians Chapter 5, the whole function of the Body is to respond to the Head. Which is Christ! Use your own physical body as an example. If you stub your toe, where do you hurt? All over. And if you mash your finger with a hammer, the same thing. Why? Because all these nerves go up to the central nervous system that responds to every part of the body. It's the same way with the Body of Christ. He is the Head, and if a believer over in China is hurting, every believer around the world should hurt with him. That's just the way it is supposed to work.

**Ephesians 5:25-27**

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;" Husbands should be willing to die for their wives. And that of course is the epitome of love isn't it?

"That he might sanctify (set it apart) and cleanse it (the Body of Christ needs a constant cleansing just as sure as the physical body does. But instead of using water to cleanse, the spiritual Body is cleansed how?) with the washing of water by the word." The Word of God! And that is why I love to get people into the Book so they can see these truths.

"That he might present it to himself a glorious church (or Body), not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

That's the whole concept of walking the Christian life. We are not to be careless. We are not to take the attitude that I'm saved, so what. That should never be the believers' attitude. Our attitude should be, I want to do all I can to bring glory to His name. And that brings about the old question about man, "What is the chief end of man?" To glorify God and enjoy Him forever. And that should be our constant desire to bring glory to Him. Now for a moment let's go to the Book of Colossians in Chapter 1.

The Lord is filling up the Body of Christ, and we feel that it is getting awfully close to the midnight hour. When the last one will be brought into the Body, and then the Body will be complete. That is when we feel the Rapture will take place. Here in Colossians Chapter 1 are beautiful verses, but let's jump in at verse 13:

**Colossians 1:13,14**

"Who (speaking of God the Father in verse 12) hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" In whom (The Son) we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:"
Remember our last lesson on Salvation? The death of Christ made possible our whole plan of Salvation. Paul then say in verse 15.

**Colossians 1:15**

"Who (God the Son) is the image of the invisible God (now that would take another hour and a half to cover completely. God is what? Invisible. The Spirit God. The Triune God. The Godhead, as He refers to later in this Book, all are invisible. But at the appropriate time what happened? One member of the Godhead took on visibility), the firstborn of every creature:"

**Colossians 1:16**

"For by him (The Son) were all things created (remember in Genesis we found that God the Son did the creating. All three Persons of the Godhead were there, of course, but it was the Son Who was the Creator), that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, (The Son) and for him:"

**Colossians 1:17-19**

"And he (The Son didn't just come on the scene at Bethlehem, which a lot of people think. But rather, He has always been and) is before all things, and by him all things consist (He is holding all things together)."

"And he is the head of the body, the church (do you see that?): who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him (The Son) should all fullness dwell;" And that word `fullness' is better translated `complement,' it adds to or completes. What is the completion of the Son? It's the Body of Christ. There is another verse along that same line in Ephesians Chapter 1:

**Ephesians 1:22,23**

"And hath put all things under his (The Son's) feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body (the Church and His body are used in unison over and over), the fullness of him that filleth all in all (or the Church is the complement of the Son)."

Remember you have that marriage relationship only as a positional thing, there is no reproduction in all of this so far as sexuality is concerned, this is all in the vein of position. But here, the Body of Christ, of which you and I are members, becomes the
complement of Christ. Let's go all the way back to Genesis Chapter 2. Here we have Adam, and up to this point in time Adam is still alone. We learned that Eve was within him. He named all the animals, and no doubt they came with their mate, and Adam must have been heartsick, because he didn't have a mate. And so God says in verse 18:

**Genesis 2:18**

"And the LORD God said, `It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet (a complement) for him.'" So as Eve was the complement that completed Adam in that relationship, so the Body of Christ is that complement for which Christ is still waiting and looking for. And when that Body is full, He will bring it unto Himself. Now back Revelation.

**Revelation 19:7,8**

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." It is unfortunate they have used the word wife instead of bride, because in verse 8 we know it's the bride.

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

Now several lessons ago, we looked at this Chapter in verses 11 through 16. We now have the Second Coming of Christ to the Mount of Olives as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Verse 14.

**Revelation 19:14**

"And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." Those are the saints! And as I've said so often, at the Rapture He comes for the saints. At His Second Coming He comes with the saints. That separates these two events completely. Members of the Body, but also citizens of the Kingdom.
LESSON ONE * PART IV
SALVATION: HELL VERSUS LAKE OF FIRE:
NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

Now let's turn to Revelation Chapter 20. We know that we will come back with Christ at His Second Coming, when He will then set up His Kingdom. Then at the end of the thousand-year reign let's see what happens. So now let's look at verse 7. We have touched on this before, so this will be just a brief review.

Revelation 20:7

"And when the thousand years are expired (that thousand years of Christ's Kingdom rule here on earth. There has been no sin and all has been glorious. But also remember it will be a time of testing, because of this new generation of children that have been born from the believers who were the survivors of the Tribulation (as we saw in Isaiah 24:1-6 where few men were left, and in Matthew 25:31-46 where Christ is separating these survivors at the beginning of this Kingdom rule). The children that are born during this thousand years of Kingdom rule still have the old Adamic nature, but have had no need to use it because Satan has been locked up, and they are under the rule of the King. But on the other hand, they have never had to make a choice. Everyone else, from Adam to the last saved soul, had to make as far as salvation is concerned. Eve, remember lived in a perfect environment and was tempted and so it will be for these children who have been born in this perfect environment), Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,"

Revelation 20:8,9

"And (Satan) shall out to deceive the nations (the nations have been repopulated) which are in the four quarters of the earth,... together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about (Jerusalem) and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them." Christ destroys all of these rebels.

Revelation 20:10

"And the devil that deceived them (these children born in the Kingdom Age) was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet (world religious leader)are (remember these two were cast into the lake of fire at the end of the Tribulation as we saw in Revelation 19:20), and shall be tormented day and night
for ever and ever.” So the Anti-christ, the false prophet, and Satan are the first that will be cast into the lake of fire. But now at the Great White Throne judgment we see that the lost also go there.

The first Resurrection, although it comes in at least three different segments, is still called the first Resurrection and is only for believers. 1. We have Christ and the firstfruits. 2. The Body of Christ (that's you and I as believers) which is by far the largest group, and then we have 3. The Old Testament and the Tribulation saints who were killed. So there you have all the believers of all the ages in what the Bible calls the first Resurrection.

Here in verse 11 we come to the second resurrection or the resurrection of the lost from Cain to these children that are deceived by the devil here in verse 10. Many people don't understand that lost people are also going to be resurrected out of hell as we know it. We will look at that in just a moment. But now let's look at verse 11, where we find the Great White Throne. It is only for the lost. You and I as believers will not come before the Great White Throne.

Revelation 20:11

"And I saw a 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 we saw earlier, I think that's what Peter was talking about in II Peter:

II Peter 3:10,11a

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved,..."

And then we are going to see in Revelation 21:1 that this earth is going to disappear from view, because in that verse we see a new Heaven and a new earth coming on the scene. We will be talking more about that in the next lesson. But now coming back to the Great White Throne in Revelation 20:12

Revelation 20:12

"And I saw the dead (of all ages), small and great, stand before God (in their resurrected bodies);..."
Their bodies won't be glorious like ours. But theirs will be fit for the lake of fire. Remember, their bodies will not be consumed or burned up, but their bodies will be tormented forever and ever. They will have all of their senses and feelings. As awful as it is, and it is awful, that's why most people have quit talking about it. But that still doesn't take it out of Scripture. Don't forget, the finished work of the Cross has made it possible for every human being to escape this lake of fire judgment. They will realize when they stand before God they made their choice for this punishment. We look at certain aspects of human history, and say they never had a chance, they never heard. Well, they must have had some kind of chance; otherwise God would not tell us in the Book of Romans 1:18:20 "...so that they are without excuse." And they are without excuse! I think that will be part of their torment of that final doom - that constant regret that they are there, and they didn't have to be.

As I teach John's Gospel, Chapter 10, about the Shepherd and the sheep fold, I always point out where the door is into the sheepfold. It's not somewhere that is inaccessible, or unreachable, but right at ground level. Right smack in front of every human being as they sojourn through this life. And so God is absolutely just and fair, that when people have trampled under foot what He suffered and died for, then He doesn't have to show mercy, and He won't. This is going to be a place of judgment and it's going to be awful. When people say that you and I as believers will sit and watch this Great White Throne judgment take place they don't know what they are talking about. That would be horror of horrors. We wouldn't want to see the lost stand there and hear their doom prescribed. And I'm glad we won't. Now finishing verse 12:

**Revelation 20:12b**

"... 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 to their works."

Now the Book of Life is going to show them that their name is not there. There are two views on this. Some maintain that every person's name is in the Book of Life, and if they die without salvation then their name is blotted out. The other view is that when people are saved and experience salvation, their name is placed in the Book of Life. And there are Scripture verses for both approaches. But regardless, at the Great White Throne they are going to see their name is not there. They will have no argument. God brings up their record. I know God has no problem keeping a record of every human being that ever walked the face of the earth. I know He will have the record, and it will be completely accurate.

**Revelation 20:13**
"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the
dead which were in them (now watch that language. Hell is going to give up those that
are in it): and they were judged every man according to their works." And then those
who had been occupying hell...

Revelation 20:14

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire (do you see the difference
between those two places? Death and hell is the place of the unbeliever who has died
and is waiting for this Great White Throne judgment. He waiting for the resurrection
out of hell, only to go to something far worse, which is of course the lake of fire. And
the Bible calls this); This is the second death." They died physically and now they
die spiritually. The definition of death is: for the physical, it's the separation of the
spirit from the body. For the spirit realm, death is the separation from God. It's an
eternal separation. Now look at the difference between hell and the lake of fire.

First, we have to go back to some the scriptural descriptions of these things. Where is
hell? And what is it comprised of? Let's go back to Matthew Chapter 12. This is from
the Lord's own lips. The scribes and pharisees are dealing with Jesus, and Jesus says:

Matthew 12:39

"But he answered and said unto them, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeketh
after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:'"

There is a lot more in this verse than I have time to comment on. But I will say it
refutes those who say that Jonah was an imagination, or a myth. Jesus gives perfect
credit to him. Now verse 40:

Matthew 12:40

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of
man be three days and three nights (where?) in the heart of the earth."

We know that when the thief on the Cross turned to Jesus and said, "Remember me
when thou comest into thy Kingdom." Jesus' answered, "Today shalt thou be with
me in paradise." But here Jesus says that in those three days and three nights, He's
going to be in the center of the earth." He went down into what? The Apostle's
creed says that,"Jesus died, was buried and descended into hell." I've had so many
people say to me, "You mean Jesus actually went to hell?" Well, yes and no. And
here's the reason. We have three words in Scripture that all speak of the same place.
Down in the 'center of the earth' is what Jesus' own words were. And down there is
what we call in Hebrew Sheol, in the Greek it's called Hades. And in English it's called hell. All three pertain to this center-most part of the earth. Go to Luke Chapter 16. The only way you can put these things together is to compare Scripture with Scripture. They are all in here, but you've got to look for it.

Now here in Luke 16, we have the account of the rich man and Lazarus. And we won't take it verse by verse for sake of time. Most of you have heard sermons on this or at least you can remember when you did. How that Abraham and Lazarus were there in Paradise, but the rich man was in torment. Let's come down to verse 22 and 23:

**Luke 16:22,23**

"And it came to pass, that the beggar (Lazarus) died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

This is just one instance where this took place. It didn't happen routinely, but the Lord presents this one instance for our benefit.

**Luke 16:24**

"And he (the rich man) cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'"

We know that he's not there bodily, He will have that reserved body in the lake of fire, but here in hell he's there only in the realm of the soul and spirit. But soul and spirit are so intrinsically involved with the body. And I always like to give this illustration: my wife is a nurse and she has told me (and I have read and you have heard) where an amputee comes into the hospital and experiences pain in the leg that is no longer there. They call it "phantom pain." They have been so used to that leg, that even though it's gone they still feel the pain that would be in it. And I bring that into this setting. The soul and spirit are so intertwined with the body of our make up, that even though the rich man's body was in the grave upon the surface, yet the soul and spirit were suffering as if it were bodily suffering. So he was tormented and was in thirst. Abraham responds and says:

**Luke 16:25**
"But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.'"

Luke 16:26

"And beside all of this (even if I would want to come), between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

So what do we have? We've got hell, or hades, or however you want to define it, but Abraham defines it as a great gulf fixed. Now on one side was torment, no doubt about it. But on the other side was Paradise. We know that before the Cross, all the way from Adam, that men lived and died. Even the believers died with the two exceptions (and I'm always pointing out that God is God and He can make His exceptions). But there were only two that did not die and go down into Paradise, rather, they went up. They were Enoch and Elijah. Now those were God's exceptions. Other than those two, the rest of the believers of the Old Testament could not go to Heaven. They had to go down to Paradise, because the atoning blood of Christ is the only thing that removes the stain of sin. Animals' blood couldn't. So these Old Testament believers were saved for eternity, but they were not ready for God's presence, because their sins had not been atoned for by the blood of Christ. So they went down to Paradise.

On the other hand, the lost from Cain till even today are going down into hell as we understand it, but into the torment side. When the thief was told by Jesus, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise," Christ was speaking of what He said in Matthew about the center part of the earth. Remember Christ said that, I didn't. That He would be three days and three nights in the center part of the earth. Now the Apostle Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, puts his stamp of approval on all of this in the Book of Ephesians, and that is why I find it so comfortable and easy to teach. And here it comes out in such plain language. This isn't gobbledy-gook, or something that takes a theologian's degree to understand. Just take it for what it says;

Ephesians 4:7

"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

Ephesians 4:8
"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high (as he did in John Chapter 20:17. That's when I think Christ took all of these that were in Paradise with Him), he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Watch the term 'captivity and captive.' Now verse 9:

**Ephesians 4:9,10**

"(Now that he ascended (in other words He went up), what is it but that he also (what?) descended first into (where?) the lower parts of the earth? He went down into the Paradise side of hell or Hades, where Abraham and the Old Testament saints were.

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)"

Now putting it in just plain visual perspective, the following happens. From the Cross, He and the thief went down into the Paradise side of Sheol, Hades, or hell. But on the Resurrection morning, when He told Mary in John 20:17 '"...Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father:..." I think right here is where Christ emptied the Paradise side and took those Old Testament believers with Him. And where is Paradise today? It's up in Heaven! Paul teaches in II Corinthians 5:8 '"...rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." We don't go down into the heart of the eart! We go immediately up into the presence of the Lord, because that is where Paradise is now located. The Old Testament tells us that hell, the place of torment, is enlarged. In other words, after Paradise was removed that whole area has now become then, totally the place of torment. So when an unbeliever dies today, that unbeliever still goes down to this place of torment.

Now here we are at the end of the thousand years reign and rule of Christ and we are at the Great White Throne. It's up in space somewhere. It's not on the earth, because the earth has fled away. So now in the resurrection of the unjust, they are brought back bodily because that's what resurrection denotes. Now, back to Revelation 20. Here the lost stand before the Lord, Who in their case is the Judge, and not the Savior. As Judge, He shows them their record, and there will be degrees of punishment. Jesus made that so plain, when He said to the people of Capernaum in Matthew 11, the following:

**Matthew 11:23,24**

"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, 'That it shall be more
tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." So He makes it very plain that the people of Capernaum would suffer more in their eternal doom, than the horrible people of Sodom.

In verse 14 of Revelation Chapter 20 we find:

**Revelation 20:14,15**

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

I don't care if people don't like to preach this subject any more, the Book stills says it. And there are groups who try to make believe that a God of love couldn't do this. But I've shown you that God's love was so great at the Cross that there is no room for removing the eternal doom of the lost person. Now then the lake of fire, where is it? Well, who knows? We know it must be in space and not on the earth. And with the reading I do, it could even be a black hole in space, A black hole is a place where time is nothing. I also read at one time they thought that because of its tremendous specific gravity it is tremendously dense. And there is intense heat, even though it's intense darkness, with a feeling of constantly falling. Anyway, that's the thoughts of our people who study space. I'm just throwing that out as a possibility. I'm not saying it is, but we do know the lake of fire is eternal, without end and the lost will spend forever there. And the sad part is, they didn't have to go there. That's going to be awful. To think they missed glory because they didn't believe the Gospel, as simple as it is. It's sobering, as much as we would love to see the Lord come today, the only thing that tempers my enthusiasm is the fact that maybe today and tomorrow a few will still be saved and escape all of this. But it behooves us to be mindful that the eternal doom of the lost is something beyond our comprehension.
LESSON TWO * PART I

REVIEW - REVELATION 21 & 22 (FINAL 1007 YEARS):

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW AND NEW TESTAMENT

We will review more or less what we covered in the Book of Revelation up to these final two Chapters. I know reviewing is a way to help you grasp more readily the things you have learned. I would like to point out some of the aspects of these 1007 years. We have been coming out of the Church Age, and we know that the Church is the Body of Christ. That is the way the Apostle Paul usually refers to it. He says, "The Church which is His Body." And that is what counts. It doesn't matter whether we are a member of a particular denomination, but rather what counts is, "Are we a member of the Body of Christ! Have we experienced His salvation!"

Remember that the Book of Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24, and the Book of Revelation have to do primarily with prophecy, and everything concerning prophecy is primarily connected to and directed to the Nation of Israel. There is nothing in prophecy concerning the Church. Consequently, the Church Age has been more or less a parenthetical period of time that was slipped in. It interrupted the 490 years that was prophesied by God on the Nation of Israel in Daniel 9:24. The Church Age is Gentile in nature, and most, if not all, of the basic Church Age doctrines come from the pen of the Apostle Paul. Since Grace and Law can't mix, we know that the Body of Christ has to be removed before God picks up again with the prophetic program concerning Israel.

Many people write concerning the Rapture, and the first thing I know is that they have no comprehension of the fact that the Church is strictly a Pauline revelation from the risen Lord. In other words, you can find nothing concerning the Church in the Old Testament. You can find nothing concerning the Body of Christ in the four Gospels. And it isn't until the Apostle Paul comes on the scene, and has this great revelation from the ascended and glorified Lord, that the Body of Christ has its beginning. Now since Israel has rejected and crucified her Messiah, and has rejected the King and the Kingdom, and the opportunity to evangelize the nations (there are many Scripture references for this in the Old Testament), which was theirs if they had not rejected their King and Kingdom, God then sets the Nation of Israel aside, and He puts her out in a dispersion that has lasted the past 1900 + years.

He then turned to the Gentiles completely without the Nation of Israel. That is a concept very few people seem to understand. That the Body of Christ is predominately Gentile in nature, and is not associated with prophecy, nor associated
with the promises given to the Nation of Israel. But it is that unique outpouring of the Grace of God upon the Gentile masses, whereby they can experience salvation, and become a child of God by virtue of "Faith + Faith alone in the Gospel, as presented by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:1-4." Whereby we become members then of the Body of Christ.

Israel, in the meantime, has now spent the last 1900 + years (according to the Old Testament, as well as according to Paul), in spiritual blindness. Which is still in effect even today. And even though they may seem religious in their practices of Old Testament Judaism, yet basically, they are blind to so much spiritual truth especially concerning their Messiah, the Christ. I know I have Jewish people watching and I say this very kindly with that in mind. They are blinded according to Romans 11:8 and they cannot see and comprehend these things, unless the Spirit opens their understanding. During this Church Age, the Body of Christ is strictly a Pauline revelation, and you won't find it anywhere else except in the letters of Paul. So Paul talks about a mystery in I Corinthians 51. Now a mystery in Scripture is a secret. Which up until this time had been kept secret in the mind of God, and we will be looking at all of that in future programs. We can show it so clearly from Scripture, that these things were kept secret in the mind of God, until He saw fit to reveal it to Apostle Paul, the Apostle to the Gentile world.

*I Corinthians 15:51*

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

In other words, when the Body of Christ is finally finished and the last one has been brought in, there is going to be an outcalling of those who are alive and remain, by virtue of a change from this body to the new glorified body. All of those who have died in Christ during this Church Age will be resurrected with their new bodies. And we call that the Rapture of the Church.

After that happens, we find God picking up where He left off with the Nation of Israel. Remember, out of the 490 years that had been determined on the Nation of Israel, 483 of those years ended at the Crucifixion of Christ. Daniel 9:26. That left seven more years to make the prophecy complete. We call it the seven years of Tribulation. And that is what the whole Book of Revelation is all about. It is the unfolding of this final seven years of God dealing with the human race in general. But the Nation of Israel in particular. Then, as we found in the Book of Revelation, tying it all in with Daniel, we find that the very opening event of this final seven years, is the appearance of the Anti-christ. He will sign a seven-year peace treaty with the Nation of Israel. The treaties that have been signed by Israel with Palestine and Jordan, have caused a lot of confusion. Some people think that this is the peace treaty
that Daniel speaks of in Daniel 9:27. But as far as I'm concerned, this treaty they have just signed is nothing but an agreement to agree or disagree. I don't think it will hold much water for long. But we know the Anti-christ is going to come on the scene, and he will be born of woman, flesh and blood. He will be much like Judas and will be used of Satan to fulfill Satan's aspirations. He will come on the scene as a tremendous political manipulator. He will be a charismatic type individual. He will be able to walk into any kind of summit meeting and command attention. They will listen to him, and, consequently, he will bring himself to a place of having the power of making that peace treaty with Israel as we referred to earlier.

The opening of the seven years will not only reveal the Anti-christ, but also his letting the Nation of Israel resume their Temple worship, with their animal sacrifices, and other Law-related rituals. We know that, even as we speak, the Nation of Israel has everything ready to resume Temple worship. However don't have the place where the Temple must be built. But they will have when the right time comes. It may take an act of war or nature for the Mosque of Omar to be destroyed. But we do know that Israel will have Temple worship for the first 3 1/2 years, all with the approval of this man Anti-christ. So today, this is Israel's anticipation, that they will have their Messiah and their Temple worship. But remember, Israel is looking for their Messiah to come the first time, because they don't recognize that Jesus Christ was the Messiah.

At the opening of the Tribulation, there will be the two witnesses (Revelation Chapter 10). We studied how these two will be on the streets of Jerusalem. They will begin a witness of Jehovah God to Israel. Out of their preaching will come the sealing of the 144,000 young Jews who will come on the scene, but not to preach the Gospel of Grace, Faith in the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ for salvation, we have had here in the Church Age. They will be preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, that Jesus, John the Baptist, and the twelve preached that the King is Coming. Repent and be baptized. That certainly will be good news for that period of history. They will preach this message all over the world.

I think that shortly after the Tribulation begins, the Russian confederation will invade Israel. God will destroy them on the hills of Israel, so that will be a quick removal of those nations as enemies of Israel. And as we studied about the seals being removed, we found that one-fourth of the human race will be destroyed. By the time we come to the mid-point of the Tribulation, we find that the two witnesses will be killed and their bodies will lie on a street in Jerusalem for 3 days. Then they will be resurrected and the whole world will see them ascend back to Heaven.

Then at the mid-point of the Tribulation, the Anti-christ will come into the Temple in Jerusalem, and make war on the Jews. He will defile the Temple and set himself up as God, and force the Jew to worship him. Consequently, they will come under the
horrible persecution of this man. Also at the mid-point, we find that Satan is cast down from Heaven for the final time. He knows his time is short (3 1/2 years) so now not only must the earth endure the wrath of Satan, but also in the Scriptures, this last 3 1/2 years is known as the Wrath of God. That is going to be a double-barreled unloading upon this planet. On one hand, from the Satanic forces, and on the other from a righteous God. You and I as human beings can't comprehend what that last 3 1/2 years will be like. The scenes we see in Rwanda, and what we saw in the Holocaust, as awful as they were, will only be a drop in the bucket as compared to these final 3 1/2 years. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 24.

*Matthew 24:21*

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

As those various judgments come to pass, don't forget that the whole reason for all of this is to pay off the mortgage that Satan is holding on the earth. Remember, Satan picked up the mortgage on the earth when Adam lost it the moment he sinned. We saw in Revelation Chapter 5, a scroll that has the seven seals on it (the mortgage that Christ will pay off). Paying off the mortgage is really the whole scope of the Tribulation. As a result, the curse will be lifted from the whole planet. Having now consummated these seven years, Christ will return at His Second Coming, and destroy the remaining armies at Jerusalem in the battle of Armageddon. As a result of the curse being lifted, and the defeat of Satan, the earth will be made for a renovation project, which God will accomplish in short order, making it ready for the Kingdom.

Christ will then set up His Kingdom on earth and it will be glorious. The earth will be brought back like it was in the Garden of Eden. Now comes the thousand-year reign and rule with Him upon this earth. I remind my classes that the Kingdom has been spoken of and prophesied all the way through the Old Testament. The coming of the King and the Kingdom. But it isn't until we get to Revelation that we have a time frame attached to it of a thousand years. The Old Testament speaks of it as being forever and eternal. Well, we have to reconcile some things then: why does Revelations speak of a thousand years? The reason the first part of it must be limited for a thousand years is this: as a result of the events of the Tribulation, most of the world's population is going to lose their lives. Most of those who have become believers as a result of the preaching of the 144,000 will have been martyred, and they will be resurrected with the Old Testament saints at a later time.

By the time we come to the end of the seven years, Isaiah 24:6 says, "There will be few men left." However, there will be survivors. Some of whom have heard the message and believed will be mostly Gentiles. They will become the seed stock for
the Gentile nations to repopulate during this thousand-year rule. And the rest who survive will be lost. We then find these two groups standing before God as the Kingdom is set up in Matthew 25:32-46. They are noted as sheep and goats. One group, the sheep, will inherit the Kingdom. The other group, the goats, will go into everlasting punishment. We will also have another flesh and blood group that will go into the Kingdom, and that is the remnant of Israel. We saw that they went down into the mountains Southeast of Jerusalem at the mid-point of the Tribulation, and we found that in Matthew 24:16. God will feed, clothe, and protect them there for the final 3 1/2 years. They go out in unbelief, but will believe when they see Christ at His Second Coming. They will then be the seed stock to go into this Kingdom to repopulate it for the Nation of Israel.

Coming into the Kingdom with Christ ruling and reigning as King, we have the Gentile believers, and the believers from the remnant of Israel. These two flesh and blood groups will be responsible to repopulate the whole world. There will be a tremendous population explosion. The curse is lifted, there will be no pain in childbirth, and these children that are born will live the entire thousand years. There will be no sin, and Satan will have been locked up these 1000 years. It will be like the Garden of Eden, but on a world-wide basis. The children coming from these believers, though they are born with the old sin nature, do not have a tempter to exploit it, since Satan is locked up during that time. However, keep in mind that they have been living under the rule of the King, Who is benevolent. Also, these children have not had to make a choice for, or against God, as you and I and the rest of the believers had to make. So we find at the end of the thousand years that Satan must be released just for a little season. This will be a time of testing for the children. They will have to exercise their free will even as we did. And to give a choice, there has to be more than one option.

So Satan is brought back for the sole purpose of giving these new generations of children that choice to choose between Christ or Satan. Satan is given the opportunity to present his options to these children. And just like he did to Eve in the Garden of Eden, it will be that same type of temptation. Because the Kingdom has been so glorious, who could want anything different? Remember, Eve had it that good, but what was Satan's ploy with Eve? "You can be like God." And I think the same thing will happen here. I think he will say,"You've got it perfect, but you're still not God. Wouldn't you like to be like God?" And the vast majority will follow him hook, line, and sinker. After they have made their choice, and when they try to come against God, He will destroy them with fire. That then will be the end of time as we know it. After all that has happened, it's time for the Great White Throne judgment, where all the lost will be resurrected out of hell to be judged by Christ, and then sent to their final doom in the lake of fire. Jesus tells us there will be degrees of punishment for
those going into the lake of fire, depending on their works here on earth. Now in our
next lesson we will be going into Revelation Chapter 21 and verse 1:

Revelation 21:1

"AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth
were passed away; and there was no more sea." That means the Kingdom will be
lifted off the planet long enough for a whole new planet to come on the scene. I think
I'll have the reason for that in our next lesson.
LESSON TWO * PART II

REVIEW - REVELATION 21 & 22 (FINAL 1007 YEARS):

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW AND NEW TESTAMENT

Turn to Revelation Chapter 21. I'm reminded of a gentleman who recently came into our class in McAlester, Oklahoma for the first time. He had been watching our program for quite a while. When he showed me his Bible, it thrilled my heart the way he had the margins filled up with notes and references from our teaching. This is the reason I teach, to get people into The Book to see what it really says. I do this as a layman. I'm a full-time rancher, punching cattle during the day and teaching at night. The Lord's blessed us in this, so we'll keep on as long as He gives us strength to do so.

After a review of our last program, we saw the end of the thousand years and the end of time as we know it. The eternal state is coming. Eternity, as the Old Testament states, will be a continuation of the Kingdom forever and ever. Eternity will not be on this Heaven and earth. This takes place after the thousand-year reign and the Great White Throne Judgment, and we are ready for eternity.

Revelation 21:1a

"AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth:..."

I try to get people to ask themselves questions as they study their Bibles. This verse should stir a question. What happened to the old ones? Scripture has the answer. Go to II Peter 3:10. I feel these verses in II Peter give us the reason for Revelation Chapter 21:

II Peter 3:10

"But the day of the Lord (remember this term, "...the day of the Lord" actually begins with the onset of the Tribulation and runs all the way through the thousand-year reign of Christ in the Kingdom) will come as a thief in the night (it will catch the world by surprise. Notice there is a semicolon at the end of night. Many times a punctuation mark in the Scripture will skip hundreds or thousands of years. That's the case here); in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

I like Peter who, though an uneducated fisherman with no degree in science, uses the very terms that scientists use today. We speak of this earth made up of elements. The
various elements and fervent heat in verse 10, spoken of in verse 11 as dissolving, is another science term. These are the exact words that Peter uses with regard to this planet, "the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." I see no room here for leaving even the core of the earth.

**II Peter 3:11**

"Seeing then that all these things (what things? Everything that makes up the planet. I don't know if this will include the solar system or not. Our solar system is just a pin-point compared to all of outer space. My pastor made an analogy in a sermon which I liked. He said if man could launch a rocket, pointing it to outerspace, and even if he could get it going 186,000 miles per second (the speed of light), at any given point in time will it stick into the ceiling of outer space? I'd never thought of that. Naturally the answer is "no." If it did, there would have to be something on the other side. This is completely beyond our imagination - the vastness of space; that something going at the speed of light can keep on going forever. But, as far as space goes, God is always beyond it. The infinity of God and space is mind boggling. But we know that "these things" applies to all that makes up our planet) shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,"

Peter is saying, "**Since you dealing with this kind of God, who is man to even attempt to reject Him.**" But we also know that throughout human history the largest percentage of men have kept God out of their life. I try not to get on a stump and start preaching, but I get so alarmed that our younger generation seems to have no concept of God, of eternity, or things that are spiritual. They're living for the here and now. They're living for the gratification of the flesh, with no concept of the Scriptures. It just scares me. On the other hand we have to understand that all of this is getting ready for these end-time events, when the Anti-christ will appear. These kids in our so-called "**Christian America**" have no concept of what's coming. Being ignorant of the Scripture, when they hear this charismatic individual promising peace and prosperity, they will fall for him hook, line, and sinker. Back to Revelation 21. As this planet has been plagued with the curse and sin for so long, we find that it is totally dissolved. Then the following:

**Revelation 21:1**

"**AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away (gone!); and there was no more sea.**"

Because the earth here has passed away, that's the reason Hell has to be emptied out. Most people don't think of these things. Hell as we know it is, at this moment, in the very center of this earth. But since this earth is going to blow up and be completely
destroyed (as we saw in II Peter Chapter 3), even the inhabitants of Hell must be removed. In order for this to happen, Christ will resurrect the lost bodily out of Hell to stand before the Great White Throne. Then this old planet can be destroyed. Now for the exciting part:

**Revelation 21:2**

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem (the one for all eternity), coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Remember in John Chapter 14?

**John 14:2**

*In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

I don't know if Jesus had the new Jerusalem in mind here, but we know that God has this glorious abode that we'll enjoy for all eternity. He'll still have a thousand years to work on it if He needs that much time. It will be beyond our comprehension. Now verse 3:

**Revelation 21:3**

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, `Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.'"

When this happens, God is going to be in the very present (not in a distant place where we have to take Him by faith). And eternity being what eternity is, it is in another dimension that you and I can't comprehend. Even though there will be billions in eternity, each one of us will know God as personally as we do our own parent. That is one of the unique qualities of the eternal. Now verse 4:

**Revelation 21:4-6**

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (this is what makes Heaven the Heaven as we think of it); and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. I like to tie tears, death, sorrow, and pain to this earth. That is part of the curse and the earth today! And he that sat upon the throne said, `Behold, I make all things new.' And he said unto me, `Write: for these words are true and faithful.' And he said unto me, `It is done, I am the Alpha and Omega (only one Person in the Godhead says that. It's
Christ. So the Lord Jesus refers to Himself as), the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.'" That's the eternal part again.

Revelation 21:7,8

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." In verse 8 we have a reminder from God of those who will not be in this eternal state with us.

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." The final separation from God.

Revelation 21:9-11

"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues (of the Tribulation), and talked with me saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." These are terms of position, not communal living. This bride is the new Jerusalem descending out of Heaven.

"And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;"

I won't read all the descriptions (which are completely beyond our comprehension). With the gem stones and jewels that will make up this city (it isn't just going to be gold), it's going to be everything that we think of as wealth and beauty.

Revelation 21:12-15

"And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles (Peter and the eleven) of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof." Now in verse 16, he brings it into language we kind of understand.

Revelation 21:16
"And the city lieth foursquare (it won't be so many miles wide and long, as our cities are today, but rather long, wide, and high - actually a cube. Some feel it might be a pyramid, but I doubt that; I think it will be a cube), and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."

So we have a cube that is 1500 miles in each direction, plus 1500 miles high. That is from New York City to Denver to Mexico City. From Mexico City into the South Atlantic Ocean and back to New York City. That would be a 1500 mile square. And this city goes up 1500 miles. What's another reason we'll need a new earth? Well, that city could never rest on the earth we have now. The curvature of the earth would fall away from it, and most of the city would be setting out there like birds' wings. I think this new earth will be so big, that even a city this size won't go beyond the curvature. Get your calculators out and tell me how large this new earth will have to be for this city to sit on it. And there will be billions in glory. I think most Bible believers agree that infants and little children under the age of accountability are going to be in glory.

Looking back through human history, what percentage of infants got beyond infancy? Take the third world tonight and think of the millions of infants that die before they are even a year old. They will all be in glory as adults. That makes me think this new earth will be so huge and beautiful that no one is going to be crowded. Remember, this 1500-mile city is just our apartments so to speak. And as you come down through the text, we find there is going to be food production. I think there will be all the aspects of the thousand-year Kingdom reign. I feel there will be an animal Kingdom, and birds. There won't be a sea, so there might not be fish. I think it will be an extension of the Kingdom economy, except on a greater and grander scale. God is preparing this that we might have pleasures evermore. Not pleasures as the world thinks of pleasure, but as God thinks of pleasure. I don't know what that will be but I know one thing (knowing God as I do), He can't make a mistake. It's going to be glorious. To think that man will turn his back on all of this for seemingly 10 or 15 years of so-called "good time."

Put it this way. Show me a person who "lives in the fast lane" (we see this constantly with entertainers, etc.). How long can their body take it? Only a few years. They burn themselves out for just a few years of "pleasure." And they have turned their back on an eternity of real pleasure! Isn't it foolish? But mankind can't get these concepts straight. They think in terms of living their own life and having a good time for three-score years and ten, not worrying about what comes after that. I look at it the other way around. I'm not that concerned about this three score and ten; I'm more concerned about the billions of years ahead of us. Now, let's move on.

Revelation 21:19,20
"And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth sardius; the seventh chrysolite; the eight, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst." Such beautiful gem stones! These foundations are going to be garnished with them. And then verse 21. This would make any bride's mouth water.

Revelation 21:21

"And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, every several gate was of one pearl (the Bible says it. Women have gone to great lengths to possess the biggest pearl in the world, but here we will have gates made of a single pearl): and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." This is where songwriters have picked up that we will tread the streets of gold. But this is our prospect. Since God is present with us there is not need for a place to worship.

Revelation 21:22,23

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun (that doesn't mean there won't be a sun. Because when you get into Chapter 22 the sun is mentioned again. But there won't be a need for the sun), neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

Revelation 21:24

"And the (what's the next word? Please underline it) nations (Remember, the Kingdom economy will slip right into eternity, except on a new Heaven and earth. We have nations in the Kingdom and we'll have nations in eternity. The Kingdom will be forever and ever) of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. It appears there will be nations with subgovernments under the headship of God (which comes back to the promise to you and I as believers). We will reign and rule with Him.

Revelation 21:25-27

"And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
LESSON TWO * PART III

REVIEW - REVELATION 21 & 22 (FINAL 1007 YEARS):

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW AND NEW TESTAMENT

We trust you will get your Bible and follow the Scriptures with us, as we don't like to impart anything as man's idea, mine or anyone else's. We hope we show everything from the Scripture. Most of these things are just as plain as they can be. There has been only one time in over twenty years of teaching that someone told me, "Well, that's your interpretation." But that dear brother after staying away from class for about three weeks, came back, and has been one of my best students. I still kid him about it. So I do very little interpreting. I just show you what the Scripture says. I don't lift it out and say, "Well this doesn't mean what it says, it means this and this." Too many times, interpretation does that. Our problem is that most of us read these things and really don't look at what it plainly says. Another point I like to make is this: It's just as important to "realize what the Book does not say." And that is just as important as seeing what it does say.

Now let's finish the Book of Revelation. We've come to Chapter 22. This will wind up our study in Revelation. As we came through the Old Testament, we finished the Book of Daniel, and we were ready to move on into the New Testament in Matthew. But we had so many that wanted us to go ahead and study the end-times that we skipped Matthew and the Gospel, Acts, and Paul's letters and went to Revelation. But after this lesson I hope we will be ready to begin in the Book of Matthew. So let's finish Chapter 22.

Revelation 22:1,2

"AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," Evidently, there will be much the same geographical structure even on the new earth as we have on this one. In other words, I think Jerusalem will be the center of that new earth, and Jerusalem will be the abode of this tremendous new city. Out of this same area will come this river of water of life.

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Now let's look at verse 2 more closely.

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life (the last time the tree of life was mentioned was back in Genesis. I told you then
that the tree of life was going to pass off the scene because mankind can't have access to it, lest he would live forever in the sinful state. But we would pick it up again in Revelation. Well, here it is in this glorious city. Not only do we have the river of water of life, but also the tree of life), **which bare twelve manner of fruits** (for eating. We will enjoy eating in our new body. Luke recorded that Christ ate fish and honeycomb in His new resurrected body, and Paul tells us that our new body will be like Christ's resurrected body. And this fruit will enhance our eternalness), **and yielded her fruit** (what's the next two words?) **every month** (that throws a curve at me, because the word `month' indicates time. Maybe some great theologian has the answer to this. Anyway, here in eternity we have a time factor of a month. Whether it's a thirty-day month I don't know, but this tree of life is going to bring forth a different fruit every month): **and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**” It's unfortunate that the King James used the word `healing,' because for healing one would need to be sick. And we know that there will be no sickness there. But the true meaning of the Greek work as I can gather is `therapeutic.' In other words, "**It's like an apple a day that keeps the doctor away**"

So eating the leaves will be a therapeutic thing for the citizens of this eternal home. Adam couldn't eat of this tree or he would have lived forever. That is the whole concept of this tree of life, even here. Now we are going to eat of it because it will enhance our eternalness, which is what God wants, and what we would want. We also have the word `nations' at the end of that verse. I've always maintained that this Book is a nationalistic Book. We pride ourselves in America for being the melting pot of the nations. But that's not what God intended. God intended the nations to be kept in their particular slots. And I think this is carried all the way through the Kingdom, as now we see nations as we come into eternity.

Go to II Samuel Chapter 7. Here we have the clearest indication of this Kingdom promised to the Nation of Israel. Since nations are listed in Revelation Chapter 22, it tells me the Nation of Israel will continue to enjoy her place of permanence, as she did during the millennium. In the millennium, or the thousand-year rule Israel will be the greatest nation, as in Deuteronomy Chapter 28. They will not be the tail, but the head. In II Samuel Chapter 7, Nathan speaks to David, but it's the Lord speaking through the prophet!

**II Samuel 7:12**

"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers (David would die), I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels (or innermost being), and I will establish his (Solomon's) kingdom." Who is going to establish it? God is!
II Samuel 7:13-16

"He (Solomon) shall build an house for my name (and you know he did), and I will establish the throne of his kingdom (how long?) for ever." Not for a thousand years, but for ever.

"I will be his father, and he shall be my son (that speaks not only of Solomon, but the nation as a whole). If he (or the nation) commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men." And He has certainly done that. But in verse 15 we have the flip side.

"But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house (the house of David. That royal family that would begin with David to the Messiah, the Christ Himself) and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever."

That is why more and more I feel the whole millennium economy will go right on into the eternal state. Come back to Revelation Chapter 22. We're going to have the nations as we saw in verse 2:

Revelation 22:3,4a

"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it (as we saw in the previous Chapter. God is going to be in the very center of this whole operation); and his servants (the believers from the ages) shall serve him:"

"And they shall see his face;..."

I know it's hard for us to put a face on God, and I don't think we should even try. God is eternal, He's Spirit. Christ The God-Man is in Heaven at the Father's right hand, but even so, I do not believe that we should try to picture Him in the flesh. God is so beyond anything that we can put together. But here when we finally get into His presence we will truly see Him face to face, and He will know us personally and we will have quality time with Him.

Revelation 22:5,6

"And there shall be no night there (evidently, we won't need to sleep); and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, `These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.'"
Remember we are much closer to it now than John was about 1900 years ago. Now in verse 7, the Lord Jesus speaks to John and says:

**Revelation 22:7**

"Behold, I come quickly (I know the first human impression is "But it's already been a long time." But to God it's only been a snap of the finger): blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." And to think that multitudes shun it!

I think it is so sad when people say, "**Well, I never read the Book of Revelation.**" I had a person tell me the other day that his pastor had said, "I wouldn't touch that Book with a ten foot pole." Well, why not? It is part and parcel of the Word of God. Granted it takes a lot of study, but it's so thrilling that all of the prophetic things we can see are coming just as sure as day follows night.

**Revelation 22:8-10**

"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, `See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.' And he saith unto me, `Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book (don't shut it up): for the time is at hand.'"

**Revelation 22:11-13**

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still (those who are doomed are not going to be changed): and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." This reverts back to the earthly experience of every believer. Activities of our daily life as believers will go with us into the eternal state. God won't forget. In verse 13, Jesus says:

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

I know that for most of you here there is no problem with this. You know that Christ was in eternity past to eternity future. But many people don't understand this. I've even had some in my class with the idea that Christ somehow came on the scene at Bethlehem. Nothing could be further from the truth. He is eternal! He never stopped being God! I've had questions like this; "**How and when did Christ come on the scene?**" He's always been and will be forever. We see Him coming on the scene in
Genesis Chapter 1 in creation. The New Testament makes it plain that the Son called everything into being. He is manifested all the way through the Old Testament. Then in the New Testament we have the invisible Person of the Godhead become flesh. He became visible. When did Christ show His Deity? When He was born? After He was 12 years old? After He was thirty? When? My own idea is that He never stopped being God. He was just as much God in the womb as He was all the way to His ascension. He never stopped being God. It was under control of course. I'm sure when the baby Jesus was playing with the kids on the block, He didn't exert His Deity. He didn't lord it over other kids. Even as a child he was still able to be completely in control of the whole situation. He acted like an ordinary child, except He did not sin, because He had no sin nature. Even in His earthly ministry that carried on. I've always emphasized He never let His Deity over-take His humanity under circumstances that would have benefited Him. He always kept them separate. When He was Deity, He was Deity. When He was man, He was man.

Revelation 22:14,15

"Blessed are they that do his commandments (this doesn't necessarily mean the ten. Although they are valid as far as they go. Once we are out from under the Law and come under Grace, every instruction of God becomes a commandment. So, when the Apostle Paul writes, "Pray without ceasing. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you," these things that God has put into words have become commandments), that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Those pearly gates. Verse 15 has thrown a curve at a lot of people. They say, "Why is this verse in here?"

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." This statement is in the previous Chapter. I think what is implied here is that none of these are going be in this eternal state.

Revelation 22:16

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches (do you realize that word has been absent in Revelation since Chapter 3. Why? The Church hasn't been around while the Tribulation was going on. The Church had no part in it. But here in eternity, the Church again becomes prominent, and is part of the overall eternal economy). I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." There are seven distinct "I Am's" in the Old Testament, with regard to God and the Nation of Israel.
When Abraham was about to offer Isaac on the altar, what was caught in the thicket? A ram. So Abraham took the ram and used it as the sacrifice and he named the place Jehovah-jireh, "The LORD will provide." Another one is Jehovah-tsidkenu, "The LORD our Righteousness." The very first verse of Psalms 23 is what? Jehovah-roi, "I Am your Shepherd." Another one is Jehovah-shalom, "the LORD our Peace." Then we have Jehovah-ropheka, "The LORD healeth." Then we find, Jehovah-Nissi, "The LORD my Banner." And the last one is Jehovah-shammah, "The LORD is present."

In the Gospel of John, there are again seven I AM's. "I AM the good shepherd..." "I AM the resurrection and the life..." "I Am the bread of life..." "I Am the light of this world..." "I Am the true vine..." "I Am the way, the truth, and the life..." "I Am the door of the sheep..."

Here in Revelation we come up with what I like to call the eighth "I AM." You remember as we came up through Scripture that God's number seven is that which completes. So number eight follows that which is completed. In other words, "New Beginning." Now isn't it interesting that this eighth "I AM" of the New Testament is, "I am the bright and morning star." When do you see the morning star? Just at the end of darkness and the beginning of a new day. And that is exactly what you have here. At the close of human history, and at the beginning of the eternal day we have the "I Am" as the bright and morning Star. You see how everything fits so beautifully all through Scripture. Now verse 17 and following:

Revelation 22:17-21

"And the Spirit and the bride say, `Come, And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will (salvation is not limited to a few), let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."
LESSON TWO * PART IV

REVIEW - REVELATION 21 & 22 (FINAL 1007 YEARS):

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW AND NEW TESTAMENT

We finished the Book of Revelation in our last lesson so now back to the Book of Matthew to continue our Through the Bible journey. We never take every Book and every verse. Instead, I try to take the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation as it unfolds. I try to keep it simple and hit the highlights without just picking out singular verses. I don't believe in that. The cults do that, they can pick out a verse and build their whole doctrine on it. But I hope I'm never guilty of lifting a verse out of context to make it say something that it doesn't say. Let's start in Matthew Chapter 1 and verse 1. We won't stay there very long, because contrary to about 90% of Bible readers and church members, the New Testament doesn't suddenly start something totally different as most people think. They think there is a great big wall between the New and Old Testament, and some feel you can cut the Old Testament out because it has nothing to do with us. Nothing is further from the truth. And Matthew 1:1 immediately tells us that you can't do that.

Matthew 1:1

"THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

It doesn't go back to the beginning with Adam. Now the other genealogy in Luke Chapter 3, does go all the way back to Adam. Matthew depicts Christ as the King. And that is why the terminology "The Kingdom of Heaven" so often occurs in Matthew. It is unique to the Book of Matthew. Although the Kingdom goes all the way through the four Gospels, it is uniquely referred to as the Kingdom of Heaven here in this Book of Matthew.

Since Christ is presented in the Book of Matthew as the King, the opening verse of this Book will take us back to where that whole Kingship idea began. It all began with Abraham, and the Abrahamic Covenant. Verse one drives us back to Genesis Chapter 12. It will all tie in beautifully. Before we go very far in Matthew you will see how it will all dovetail together. We've covered all of this in Genesis 12 before. However, as we have many new viewers each week, We need to build some basics again before we take that run through the four Gospels, the Book of Acts, and Paul's writings.

Genesis Chapter 12, verses 1, 2, and 3 reveals the Abrahamic Covenant. You might want to mark your Bible. A covenant, by definition, is an agreement that originates and ends in God. Even though it's made with man, and in this case with the man
Abraham, and later with the Nation of Israel. Even though it's made with man, since it originates and ends with God, regardless of what man does, a covenant never becomes invalid. It is never broken nor rescinded. These covenants stand forever and ever, as we have seen in our study of Revelation. They go on into eternity.

Before we look at this Covenant let me review for a moment to bring us to the place of this Covenant. Beginning with the creation of Adam, we had one race of people. Everyone will come from Adam and Eve, and their offspring. We often get the question, "Where did Cain get his wife?" Well, there certainly were not other people, because only Adam and Eve were created. So it follows that brothers married sisters for the first generation or two. That was no problem because the human race was so pure genetically. In fact as far along as Abraham, which is 2000 years after Adam, we find Abraham, with God's blessings, married his half sister. God did not limit marrying close relatives until sometime after Abraham.

Out of that one race of people of Adam, we have a great multitude of people who totally turned their backs on God. Then we had Noah's flood which destroyed all except the eight people that were in the Ark. Noah and his wife, and their three sons, and their wives. Then out of those 3 sons and their wives we had the onset again of the whole human race out of the sons of Ham, Shem, and Japheth. Then out of the line of Shem comes this man Abraham.

In the approximate 400-year interval between Noah and Abraham, about midway we have the Tower of Babel. The race by now hadn't multiplied into millions upon millions, but there were already, in this approximate 200 years, a large number. The whole human race was still one race with one language and one blood, basically. They all met down in the Plains of Shinar in Mesopotamia in the Euphrates River Valley. And there they built the tower. It was at the Tower of Babel, under the leadership of Nimrod, that Satan, the god of this world, instituted all pagan and mythological religions. Always remember that. I've stressed that all these years of teaching. By the time you get to Abraham, a couple of hundred of years after the Tower of Babel, at 2000 B.C., the whole then-known world was already steeped in pagan idolatry and mythological worship. Out of this race of people so saturated in this kind of worship, God finds one man that He knows still has a spark of faith, or the ability to believe. And I have to feel he was the only one. So God reaches down and puts His finger on that one man. And to this one man God says in Genesis 12, verse 1. the following:

**Genesis 12:1**

"NOW the LORD had said (back in Chapter 11) unto Abram, 'Get thee out of thy country (in other word get out of Ur of the Chaldees, a little way from the Persian
Gulf), and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:"

He didn't tell Abraham where he was going, but in so many words said, "I'll lead you, and you follow" Now Abram, or Abraham, as we will know him later, is a man of faith. So he takes God at His Word. He doesn't ask questions. He doesn't ask for a map. And at this point Abraham doesn't ask for a deed, although he will later. Abraham just simply follows. Now he's not totally obedient. This is the beauty of Scripture, and I've said this before. If God would raise men up, and make them super-human sinless, obedient people, then you and I would feel that we were miserable failures. But these people failed. They people weren't always right on the mark. God had instructed Abraham to leave his father and family and get out of Ur. Abraham was obedient, but only up to a point, because who did he take with him? His father, and his nephew Lot. God couldn't let that happen for very long, so as they got up to the upper regions of the Euphrates near Haran which was north of present day Damascus, God stopped that little entourage. He keeps them there until Terah, Abraham's father dies. God at this point does condescend and let Abraham keep Lot with him. So now God brings Abram down into the Promised Land. Now this didn't all happen in a year or two. Years go by, probably as much as twenty five years. Now verse 2. Look at the pronoun, it's God speaking all the way through. Abraham hasn't said a word yet nor will he.

**Genesis 12:2**

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:"

We know that archaeologists have found many things pertaining to Abraham and his great name. The name Abraham is known even in the secular world. And every Jew is just thrilled that he is a son of Abraham. Now verse 3, remember this is all part of this Covenant that God makes with this man Abraham.

**Genesis 12:3**

"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee (Abraham) shall all families of the earth be blessed."

There was an article by a rabbi in the last Jerusalem Post that I received, and like everyone else in Israel lately, they (rabbis) are looking for their Messiah. This rabbi makes reference to the Messiah almost every week. In this particular article, he says in so many words that, "Israel is looking for the one who will bring the Nation of Israel to the peak of peace and prosperity so that she can funnel it out to all the
other nations of the world." I told my wife, Iris, this is exactly what I had been teaching for over twenty years - the prospect given to Abraham, that out of Israel would come a King who wouldn't just rule the Nation of Israel, but would spread that rule to the whole earth through Israel.

This becomes the whole concept of the Abrahamic Covenant beginning with Genesis Chapter 12. God put His finger on one man and told him that He would make of him a nation of people. God is going to take that nation of people and put them into a geographical area of land. At some point later, God Himself would come and set up the government, because you can't have people in a geographical area without government, or you will have anarchy. You don't have a functional society unless you have a government. God in so many words says that nation has become visible (and we know that they became a nation in Egypt in slavery. We know they came out of Egypt under Moses as a nation of people).

Forty years later, after their wilderness experience, Joshua takes the nation into the Promised Land. Then they were ruled by judges for over 400 years, and they didn't like that idea, so they asked God for a king. The first king, Saul, was a total flop. He fell flat on his face and God couldn't use him. Then David was the next king, and becomes the beginning of that "Royal Family," that is not just going to lead through generations of this existence, but all the way into eternity. Because out of the Lion of Abraham and David would come this government. But this government will not be a democracy, but a monarchy. It's going to be ruled by "THE KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS." But remember He will be a benevolent King. His Kingdom will be righteous, fair, and glorious. But this is the prospect as it was laid out in the Abrahamic Covenant.

Now all the rest of the Old Testament from Genesis 12 right on into the New Testament is resting on this Abrahamic Covenant. All you have to do is watch the language as we go through the four Gospels and well into the Book of Acts. Watch for it! There will be other covenants. God makes the Covenant with Moses that we call the Law. He makes the Palestinian Covenant with Moses and the Nation of Israel, that even though they are uprooted out of the land, they will be brought back. It's going to be their homeland. Along with that Covenant, God promises David there will be a Royal Family, leading up to the King and the Kingdom. We haven't got time to look at all of the promises God makes to Israel, but we can look at a few. Let's look at the first one in Isaiah Chapter 9. These verse are what makes Handles Messiah what it is.

Isaiah 9:6a

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:"
I tie the part of this verse, where the son is given to John 3:16. What does John 3:16 say? "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son..." And who was the Son given to? The Nation of Israel. What does it say in John 1:11? "He came unto His own (Israel) but His own received Him not..." From there, through the Apostle Paul, He went to the Gentiles. Please never lose sight of the fact that Christ at His first coming came to the Nation of Israel and Israel only. Let's just look at two references about this:

**Matthew 15:24**

"But he (Christ) answered and said, `I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'" And then Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles writes in Romans Chapter 15 the following:

**Romans 15:8**

"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (Israel) for the truth of God (why?), to confirm the promises made unto the fathers (this Abrahamic Covenant):" Back to Isaiah 9.

**Isaiah 9:6,7**

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be (future) upon his (This Son that would be given) shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." This is Old Testament! These are the names of the promised Messiah.

"Of the increase of his government and peace (isn't that what the world is looking for tonight? `Peace' in Scriptures means more than the absence of war. It means that whole sphere of good things that God is ready to pour out. But He can't until Christ is King) there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom (I wish people would always be aware of two words; one is `kingdom' and the other is `covenant.' Be aware of those two words in Scripture. They constantly pop up), to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth (how long?) even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of host will perform this." In other words, man and the United Nation can't do it. But God Himself will bring it in. Let's look at Luke Chapter 1.

We may have to do a little more of this review later, because I'm sure a lot of folk don't realize where we are coming from, unless they can get a good basic understanding from the Old Testament. That's why there is so much confusion among Christians today! One takes this, one takes that, and one takes something else,
completely ignoring the foundation that was laid back here in the Old Testament, for all of this comes about in the New Testament.

Here in Luke 1 we have Zacharias the father of John the Baptist, the husband of Elizabeth, and he has been stricken dumb while Elizabeth has been carrying the baby. But here he has gotten his speech back. So now all these citizens of Judea, the Jews, are in amazement knowing that it's quite a miracle first of all that as old as Zacharias and Elizabeth are that they are going to have a child. And also that now he has his speech back! So let's come down to verse 67, and you will notice that Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit. That meant everything that he speaks in these next verses is going to be Holy Spirit inspired.

Luke 1:67-69

"And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people (the Nation of Israel), And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;"

Luke 1:71-73

"That we should be saved from our enemies (and remember their enemies then were the same as they are tonight), and from the hand of all that hate us;"

"To perform the mercy promised to our fathers (all the way back to Abraham), and to remember his holy (what?) covenant:" This is New Testament remember. Now what Covenant is verse 72 referring to? Look at verse 73 for the answer:

"The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,"
LESSON THREE * PART I

INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT CONTINUED:

MATTHEW 1 - JOHN THE BAPTIST

It's good to start another lesson. We hear from lots of people who tell us they have become more and more involved in studying The Book. We don't want you to necessarily go by what we say, but rather what The Book says. And we want you to be able to study on your own.

Now as we ended our last lesson we were having a little review of how the Abrahamic Covenant ties in so beautifully with the New Testament. So as we come through the four Gospels we want to pick up the main theme of how all of these things unfold, and prepare everything for the end-time. Now we always must realize that the Bible is simply God's record of history written in advance. This Book is a progressive revelation. In other words, God didn't see fit to give the whole picture of everything back here in the Book of Genesis. Now all the seeds of it are back here. But as we come up through the Scriptures and into the New Testament, we are going to see that there is a constant revealing of something that had never been revealed before.

I'm going to try to show you a couple of examples of that before we actually go into the Book of Matthew. The reason I'm doing this is because when I first started teaching these kind of classes (beginning with Genesis, 23 years ago), I wasn't satisfied with the way I had been taught the four Gospels, Christ's earthly ministry, and the Book of Acts. So believe it or not, the first two or three times I taught from Genesis to Revelation I would just sort of skip the four Gospels and the Book of Acts, because I just wasn't comfortable with the way I had been taught, and with the Sunday School material I used. And then all of a sudden the Lord began to open my eyes to this very fact - that all of a sudden God didn't just dump everything on the human race, but rather that it is progressive. And there are certain aspects of Scripture that were kept hidden in the mind of God, until He saw fit in His own time to now reveal it. And this is the way we must look at Scripture.

Now to prove my point I'm going to take a few verses throughout Scripture that show this is exactly how God did operate. So we're going to start way back in Genesis again. Back in Chapter 21 verse 33. Of course, we're still dealing with the man, Abraham back here.

*Genesis 21:33*
"And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba (remember that's down in southern Israel), and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God.

Look at these various names of Deity. It's always the same God, but His Name would be used in a particular situation or particular point to be made. In other words, back in Abraham's dealing with God, when he was going to offer Isaac, you remember, God provided a ram in the thicket. Do you remember what the name of Jehovah was there? Jehovah-jireh. "The LORD will provide."

But here we have another name of Deity and in the Hebrew it's El Olam, "The everlasting God." But it's interesting that in the Hebrew, this word Olam, when used in common usage, always refers to things hidden. And it refers to God's Sovereign ability to hide things. So put it in this light. He is the everlasting God. Eternity to Eternity, but He is also the God who can keep things secret until He sees fit to reveal them. Now that's what the term in the Hebrew means here. That He is the eternal God, but He is also the God who keeps secrets. And He doesn't have to reveal them until He is ready to in His own time. Several weeks ago we brought this out in our class in Wilburton, Oklahoma, and the next week one of my students came back to class so excited. He had found this verse in the Book of Deuteronomy that I had missed. And it just says it all so beautifully.

Deuteronomy 29:29

"The secret things (do you see that word?) belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us..."

Now remember, Moses is speaking directly to the children of Israel. So the `us' here is dealing with Israel. But you see, it doesn't limit it to Israel. It is God dealing with anytime in history, that when He reveals something in history, to a certain people, then they become responsible to believe it.

And if I don't accomplish anything else in this lesson, I hope I can get the point across, and that you understand, that God did not reveal things until He in His own timing revealed it. Now let's come on up through the Scripture. And I'm just going to bring you all the way up to John's Gospel. There are many others, but I'm just trying to hit those that are the most obvious. And this is where we happened to be studying, when this individual went back and started looking for other verses regarding things kept secret that were revealed later. And here we were in John's Gospel Chapter 13, and we dropped down to verse 6. Now the setting here is Jesus washing the disciples feet. You know the account.

John 13:6
"Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, `Lord, dost thou wash my feet?''"

Now you can understand that. You can understand clearly that Peter just felt that the Lord had no business condescending to such a lowly place of service as to washing their dirty feet. Now you want to remember, back in those days, they wore sandals and the streets were filthy and feet got filthy likewise. And no doubt, Peter was very well aware of this. Now verse 7:

**John 13:7**

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, `What I do thou knowest not (what's the next word?) now (but don't stop there. What comes next?); but thou shalt know hereafter.'"

Now do you see what he was saying? Peter was not in a position to understand all this yet. And so Jesus plainly tells him, "**Peter, you don't know what I'm doing. But you will when God reveals it at a later date.**"

Now if you will go with me to Romans 16, now of course, the apostle Paul has come on the scene for the Gentiles. And Paul is going to use a word that is unique to his writings and we will look at that in a little more in detail later.

**Romans 16:25**

"*Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,*" Now let's digest that verse.

"**Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel** (the gospel he preached had only been revealed to him by our risen Lord), **and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,**" Now let's digest that verse.

"**Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel** (the gospel he preached had only been revealed to him by our risen Lord), **and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,**" (what does revelation mean? A revealing of something that has never been revealed before) **of the mystery** (that comes from the Greek word, `musterion,' which is translated, `secret.' And so he says), **which was kept secret** (how long?) **since the world began.**"

Now do you see what he's saying? This same thought, that God sees fit to keep certain things totally unrevealed until it's time to reveal them. Come with me to Ephesians. Just keep that same thought. That's what I'm trying to show you as we come up through the Scripture. Beginning all the way back with the Hebrew term of Deity, El Olam, "**Everlasting God,**" also has the Sovereign capability of keeping things secret until it is His time to reveal it. Ephesians Chapter 3 beginning at verse 1. Remember now, this is Paul writing to us Gentiles believers.
Ephesians 3:1,2

"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God (now watch how it came) which is given me to you-ward." Now there was the process.

Ephesians 3:3

"How that by revelation (there's that word again. By the revealing of something that had never been revealed before) he made known unto me the mystery (or the secret again) [as I wrote afore in few words,]"

Ephesians 3:4

"Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery (or the secret) of Christ"

Now what's he talking about? Something that no one else before ever had an inkling of.

Sometimes I shake people up when I tell them you'll find nothing of the Church in the four Gospels. Why isn't the Body of Christ, the Church, in there? Because God had not seen fit to reveal this secret which is really the body of truth that is involving the Church. So this is what Paul is making clear. It was revealed to him. Now do you see how clearly this is put? You don't have to be a theologian. You don't have to be an expert in language to understand this. But you see, most of us have read our Bibles so fast and have read it so glibly, we just don't see what it says. But look what the next verse says:

Ephesians 3:5

"Which in other ages (or generations) was (see, it was) not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed (now do you see the difference? That which had not been revealed before, now it is) unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;"

Then drop down to verses 8 and 9. The Apostle Paul says:

Ephesians 3:8,9

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles (see) the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery (or the secret), which from the beginning
of the world (or the age. This mystery of Grace) hath been (past tense) hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:" See how plain that is when you take time to analyze it. And not only was the Gospel of Grace given to the Apostle Paul, but just about every doctrine concerning the Body of Christ (The Church) was given to him only.

Now what the Apostle is saying is the same thing that Moses said in Deuteronomy: that God in His Everlastingness and His Eternalness has seen fit to only reveal things by bits and pieces as we come up through the Bible and human history. A good example is the verses we just looked at concerning our salvation - the Grace that was given to Paul, we shouldn't take these secrets and revelations that were given only to him, and try to force them back into writings before they were revealed to him. Christ didn't, so why should we

Turn back just one page here in Ephesians to Chapter 2. And here again are shocking words. I'm amazed when people will see these things for the first time. And I'm not doing any thing except just showing what it says. Now again, in these verses, keep this whole concept in your mind that things were kept secret by God until He chose to reveal them. Remember, you can't find the Body of Christ, the Church in the Old Testament or the four Gospels. And neither can you find any mention of the Rapture of the Church. This is what throws a curve at people, because that had been kept secret by God, until revealed to the Apostle Paul in I Thessalonians and I Corinthians. So only Paul writes of the Rapture.

In our next lesson we will try to point out the vast difference between the prophetic program as you have in the Old Testament, and this Body of Truth that Paul refers to as the "mysteries" that are suddenly now revealed. Now all that Paul is saying here in the next two verses is what the dilemma of the Gentiles was at the time Israel was still under the promises of God, back in the Old Testament economy and even into the New Testament. God was dealing with Jew only, with few exceptions.

Ephesians 2:11

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision (normally called uncircumcision dogs) by that which is called the Circumcision (Jews) in the flesh made by hands:"

Ephesians 2:12

"That at that time (what time? Back when God was still dealing with Israel on the Covenant basis) ye (Gentiles) were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise (and we will be
talking of the Covenants again in a little bit. But remember Gentiles were strangers to those promises), having no hope, and without God in the world:"

Some people get upset by that. They say God wasn't fair. We can't ever say that God wasn't fair. He has always been fair. He's always just. He's always righteous. So He had every right in the world to do things as He did them. Because He knew what these Gentiles would have done with the plan of salvation, even if He would have revealed it to them. They wouldn't have bought it. And so while He is dealing with the Nation of Israel, He leaves these Gentiles in the state that Paul says they were in. Outside the Covenant promises, they were not citizens of the commonwealth of Israel, and consequently they were without Christ. But now let's not stop there! Look at the next verse. As a result of these revelations, Paul can now write:

Ephesians 2:13

"But now (things have changed) in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ (the Crucifixion)."

Now look at Luke 18. Once God reveals something, what does He expect the human race to do? Believe it. And when they don't, God has every right in the world to reject them someday. Because He's Sovereign. But He doesn't expect anyone to believe something that He has not yet revealed. Here is a good example. We are at the end of Christ's earthly ministry. They are up in Northern Israel and are on their way down to Jerusalem, where He will be crucified. We are probably within a week of the end of His earthly ministry.

Luke 18:31-33

"Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, `Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.'"

Is that plain language? You can't get it any plainer. Did He know what was coming? Sure He did, He was God! So He tells the twelve in plain language what was going to happen. But don't stop there, read the next verse.

Luke 18:34

"And they (the twelve) understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken."
Jesus told them more than once that this was going to happen, but again God never opened their eyes to it. And also remember that when Jesus was being crucified, did the Twelve know that on Sunday morning He would rise from the dead? Well, of course not. Had they understood that, they would have been waiting outside at the tomb for Him to come forth. Let's look at one more over in the Book of John before we close. Now remember this is on the Resurrection morning and Mary has come to anoint the body of Jesus, and discovers that the body is gone. She's all shook up and so she runs and tells Peter and John that someone has taken the body of Jesus.

**John 20:4-9**

"So they ran both together: and the other disciple (John) did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in (John was more timid). Then cometh Simon Peter following him (John), and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet the knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." And why didn't they know? It was hidden from them!
LESSON THREE * PART II

INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT CONTINUED:

MATTHEW 1 - JOHN THE BAPTIST

Now let's get back into our introduction, and that is all we have been doing the past two lessons. But I'm trying to get everyone ready for our study of the Book of Matthew and the rest of the four Gospels. We will be taking an overview of the four Gospels and that will then prepare us for the Book of Acts. Because there is no use to study Acts unless you understand the four Gospels and what they pertain to. And there is no use to study the four Gospels unless you understand the Old Testament, or you will take a lot of Scripture out of context. As I said in our last lesson, this is all a progressive revealing. It's just like building blocks.

So we will be turning to the Book of Exodus Chapter 19. This is also an introduction of the account of Christ's first coming. And His dealing with the Nation of Israel. Now here the Children of Israel have just recently come out of Egypt under Moses. They are now a Nation of People. And as they are gathered around Mount Sinai they are about to receive the Law (The Ten Commandants), and then all the other ramifications of the Law will follow. But as of this writing, the Law hasn't been given. And now God is telling Moses what to tell the children of Israel.

Exodus 19:5

"Now therefore (God says), if (He always leaves it up to the will) ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:"

Now that is God setting the Nation of Israel above all the other nations of the earth. That is why we call them the "Chosen People" "The Covenant People" and many other terms. But it is God Sovereignly designating this little nation for a unique role in His overall program for the whole human race. Just because He is going to deal with the Jew only (with few exceptions for a time), doesn't mean that he has blanked out the Gentiles, as we will see in just a moment. But the whole scope of this is that He can prepare His chosen people, the Nation of Israel, for the express purpose of bringing all the other nations of the world to a knowledge of Israel's God.

I have an article I cut out of the Jerusalem Post. It was written by one of Israel's best-known rabbis, and has to do with this subject. He said in his article the following: Abraham had been promised that a nation emerging from his own loins would against all odds survive and declare the name of the one God to the world. And that is exactly
what I always teach. This is the whole scope for bringing the Nation of Israel on the scene. Giving them the Abrahamic Covenant that God would make them a nation of people. He would put them in a geographic area of land, and then one day He Himself would come in the person of the Messiah to be their King. Now this is what the Abrahamic Covenant and the Old Testament state. As you read the Old Testament, always be aware that most of the time everything is written in the future tense. For example, "I will make of you a great nation." When God spoke of King Cyrus the King of Persia, God named Him 150 years before he was born. When you see the text in future tense then that is prophecy.

Last lesson we showed how God can keep things secret and then reveal them in His own time. A lot of times in the Old Testament, He reveals things prophetically before they happen. So you have both of them to cope with. So, in Exodus 19, then, this is more or less prophetic. He's telling the Nation of Israel again in verse 7:

_Edus 19:5,6_

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. (verse 6 is one of the benchmarks of Scripture) And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priest, and an holy nation (set apart), These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

What does that verse say? That the day would come out there in the future when every Jew would be a priest of God. Lock that in your brain! Because when we start teaching the Book of Matthew I will be referring back to this. I know you are thinking that is just for the Levites. As far a tabernacle worship was concerned, that's right. But we are not talking about that. We are talking about reaching out to Gentiles. What is a priest? He's a go-between. So every Jew was to get to the place that he could have been a go-between; between this pagan Gentile and this Jewish priest's Jehovah God. That was the promise, but it was conditional; they had to be obedient to God's voice, and keep God's Covenant. Now let's head toward Matthew, but first let's stop at Isaiah Chapter 42.

_Isaiah 42:1_

"BEHOLD my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom (the Messiah) my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: (He is a member of Deity) he shall (future tense) bring forth judgment (or rule) to the Gentiles."
God hasn't forgotten about Gentiles. But He will reach those Gentiles after He has prepared this Covenant people. Now let's go all the way to the Book of Zechariah Chapter 8.

**Zechariah 8:20-22**

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; 'It shall (future) yet come to pass, that there shall come people (Gentiles), and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city (Gentiles) shall go to another, saying 'Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts:' (and this one Gentile will say to another) I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations (plural. These are the Gentile Nations) shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD."

**Zechariah 8:23**

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; 'In those days (these prophetic days that are out there) it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations (Gentiles), even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew (remember what Exodus 19:6 says, they shall be a Kingdom of priests), saying, 'We will go with you: (why?) for we have heard that God is with you.'"

Isn't that plain? This is the role that God is preparing the Nation of Israel for. So that when the appropriate time comes, every Jew would have been a priest of God, to bring Gentiles to a knowledge of God. Now that is the Old Testament format. And that is all God is revealing so far. This is the way that God is going to reach the Gentiles, and that is through Israel. Let's back up to the Book of Psalms Chapter 2. I'm trying to throw all of this introduction together in such a way, that when we get in the four Gospels you will have a clear understanding of what it's all about. Now let's look at Psalms 2.

**Psalms 2.1-3**

"Why do the heathen (or Gentile) rage, and the people (the Jew) imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth (Gentiles) set themselves, and the rulers (of Israel) take counsel together (Romans and Jews), against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, 'Let us break their bands (of the Godhead) asunder, and cast away their cords from us.'" We won't have You rule over us. Just as sure as Rome and the Jews conspired together, rejected and crucified The Christ. We see that God called Him back to Heaven in Psalms 110:1, "The LORD said unto my Lord, 'Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,'"
Psalm 2:4

"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision."

That is where we are tonight. The nations think they are in control, but we know they're not. The world is falling apart completely, and I see no hope of the world returning to a stable condition. I'm not a pessimist, but rather an optimist; but on the other hand I see things that are going on in our beloved nation that we are no longer able to turn around. We are past that point of no return. So that tells me we are that much closer to the end and the calling out of the Body of Christ at the Rapture. I have have a Jewish gentleman that lives in Hollywood, California, that watches the program, and we share with each other quite often. He's not a Christian Jew. He's an Orthodox Judaistic Jew. Anyway, he called so excited the other morning, and reported that He had just returned from a seminar of rabbis. He said the rabbis are all excited because they are convinced that we are right at the coming of the Messiah. He said they realized that they had some tough times ahead during the Tribulation. I always remind him that everything they are looking for in their Messiah coming the first time, is really the Anti-christ. And it is. The Jew is blind to that and they will accept Anti-christ. Remember Jesus said in John 5:43, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

Now getting back to verse 4 where we found that the Lord has the nations in derision. Now verse 5:

Psalm 2:5

"Then (when they have reached that point of perplexity) shall he speak unto them in his wrath (that's not love, mercy, and Grace), and vex them in his sore displeasure." This is the Tribulation. Notice what follows the Tribulation in verse 6.

Psalm 2:6

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

This is that glorious thousand-year Kingdom rule. Do you see the order of these 6 verses? That order of the Old Testament program. After Israel had the King and the Kingdom they could carry out all of these promises of taking the knowledge of salvation to the Gentiles. Now of course that flies in the face of what we understand, that there would be no unbelievers going into the Kingdom. But this was the program offered to Israel. That was all changed when Israel rejected the King and the Kingdom, and Jesus was crucified. He went back to Heaven and has waited 1900 + years until The Body of Christ will be completed. This Body of Christ
was kept hidden in Scripture until the Apostle Paul came on the scene. God hadn't revealed that yet. Here is that ability that God has to hide things until it is time to reveal them. During this time the Nation of Israel has been set aside waiting for this Church Age to be completed. But none of this was in the Old Testament. There is nothing in here that indicated there would be 1900 + years that God would not be dealing with Israel.

Let's go on into the Book of Matthew. Remember, the first eleven Chapters of Genesis covers 2000 years. Then in Genesis 12 we have the Abrahamic Covenant with the call of Abraham. Then out of the main stream of humanity, God calls this one little nation, the Nation of Israel. And to them He makes these promises that they would be a Kingdom of Priests. In order to prepare them for that Kingdom of Priests, He puts them under Law. He gave them the temple worship, the priesthood, the Old Testament and He is going to let the Gentiles go as we saw in Ephesians Chapter 2. They're outside the Covenant promises. They are not citizens of the Nation of Israel. They are without hope, without God, and so they continue on their way until such time as Israel can be funneled back into the Gentile nations, with the idea of bringing them to a knowledge of their God. So this is the whole scope of the Old Testament.

Everything in the Old Testament is telling future events. The coming of the Crucifixion, the death, burial, and Resurrection of Christ, is all back there. But it's in such subdued language and latent terms that nobody understood it. They didn't comprehend, as also the twelve disciples didn't, even when Jesus told them in Luke 18, that He'd be crucified and would rise from the dead. They didn't comprehend it. But here is God dealing with this Nation of Israel, preparing them for the time when they can be used to bring Gentiles to a knowledge of their God. Now, after Israel has rejected all of that and you get into the Book of Acts, it's still the same premise. A lot of people don't see this, but all you have to do is look at the language. Peter is strictly appealing to the Jew. And his whole idea is just an extension (and let's put the three years of ministry here), for three years. As we now study the four Gospels, Jesus is going to be presenting himself as the fulfillment of all these prophecies, as He comes to the Nation of Israel.

Peter picks up the torch and continues on in the Book of Acts with that same program. And that's what we're going to be showing in the next several weeks, how that all of this is primarily, but not exclusively, Jew only. Israel continues to reject Jesus and then, here comes a body of truth that has never before been mentioned. It's all in fulfillment, but it is a body of truth that Paul refers to as the "mystery."

Now when that is complete, then as we've seen over the last several months, we're going to go into that final seven years, which once again is prophecy. The Second
Coming. And this is going to end with the out-calling of the Church. This is the whole format coming out of the Old Testament and the Jew is going to continue to reject it. Then God reveals the mystery. Now, let me show you a little bit of what I'm talking about. Go with me, if you will, to Matthew 4 and verse 17.

**Matthew 4:17**

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, `Repent (why?): for the kingdom of heaven is (what?) at hand.'" Now what did that mean? Well, the King was there, ready to set up His Kingdom.
Now for this lesson we will go right into the Book of Matthew. Hopefully, the last two or three lessons have been enough introduction so that you can see all of the Old Testament prophecies are now coming to a fulfillment in the four Gospels. They will carry on well up into the Book of Acts. And it's all based upon everything that God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses. Then out of David would come the King. All of that is looking forward, and here it comes now in the New Testament, but really it is just an extension of the Old Testament program. There are a lot of people who think there is a big wall between the New and Old Testament. They think when you get into the New Testament that it's Christianity. And the Old Testament is all Law. But we aren't going to see Christianity right away in our study. If you are a Bible student, Matthew 1:1 should immediately open your eyes.

Matthew 1:1

"THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

That is as far as it goes. It doesn't go all the way back to Adam because everything that will take place with regard to the coming of the King and the Kingdom began with Abraham and not Adam. As we go through that genealogy, let's note that there are only four women listed. And yet they are probably the four women that everyone of us would not want in our family tree. But God sees fit to put them in here. I'll point them out to you and you can figure out the reason I said what I said. In verse 3 you have the first one.

Mathew 1:3a

"And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar;..." Remember in Genesis, Thamar played the prostitute.

Mathew 1:5a
"And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab;..." And again Rachab was also a prostitute, a non Jew. And remember, God had always mandated that these Jews were to have nothing to do with Gentiles. And yet here we have one in the genealogy.

Matthew 1:5

"...and Booz begat Obed of Ruth;..."

And where did Ruth come from? Moab. And what were the Moabites? Taboo! They began with the terrible relationship of Lot and his daughter. (A verse just came to mind, and I think this best explains, even though we are back here in the Jewish economy, basically under the Law, yet it's the same God. And God hasn't changed, nor will He ever change. The only thing that changes is the responsibilities He puts on the human race).

Matthew 1:6

"And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias (Bathsheba):" And you know the story of her and King David.

Romans 5:20

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence (sin) might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:"

Do you see that? As low as some of these people may have fallen, what was able to go beyond that? God's Grace! Even though back here we are not under the program of Grace, yet God's Grace has always been evident. Remember when Adam and Eve sinned, did they go looking for God? No. God went looking for them. And what was the basis of God looking for these creatures that had so violently disobeyed Him? Only His Grace. And so He reached down and brought them both back up into a relationship with Himself. So it is with the Nation of Israel, they would turn their back on Jehovah God, and how many times they went to very depths of rejection. And yet God's Grace always causes Him to go back to them. It's the same way with these four women in the genealogy. It just shows again that even though these women were in direct opposition to everything that God had instructed, yet in His mercy and grace. He's able to bring them into a place of renown, by being in this genealogy. Now let's move on out of the genealogy and we come to verse 18:

Matthew 1:18,19
"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together (consummated); she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily." In other words to keep the whole thing secret.

Matthew 1:20a

"But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, `Joseph, thou son of David,...'"

Now keep all of this in mind. Why is this inserted here? To show that Jesus is in that royal family. In II Samuel Chapter 7, what did God promise David? That beginning with him, a royal family would proceed. And that down through the ages that royal family would be ancestors of the King. And that, of course, is Who Jesus is presented as, THE KING. And again, don't run ahead of what has been revealed so far. All we are going to understand in the opening part of the New Testament is that the King has now made His appearance. Later on it will be revealed that He is also going to be the Redeemer. But for now just except the fact that here He comes to be the King of Israel.

Matthew 1:20b

"...fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."

Now here is where we get the basic doctrine of the "Virgin Birth." We know there are a lot of people that can't believe such a thing. But if they can't, then they are doomed! Because that is part of our salvation. That Christ was virgin-born. And the reason being, as I taught back in Genesis beginning with Eve, the blood of the mother never goes into the baby. The mother's blood has nothing to do with the baby. The blood comes only from the father. Now this is basic, even though it is a physiological fact. It is the basis of the virgin birth of Christ, that He could be sinless and that His blood was Divine, and that He was incorruptible. Now had Mary's blood interchanged with the baby when He was in the womb, that wouldn't have been true. The same thing is true with the animal kingdom. The blood comes from the father. It's just a scientific fact. And that is why the Scriptures can maintain that Jesus did not have a human father, and consequently, He didn't have human blood. He had Divine blood! And that is why the virgin birth is so basic to our salvation. If it had been any other way, He couldn't have shed sinless Divine blood.

Because it had been spoken of in the Old Testament we see in verse 23 the following:
Matthew 1:23-25

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child (without benefit of a human father) and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."

Now remember, Jesus is the name of His humanity; of His humility. It's Jesus upon Whom was laid the sins of the world.

I think I told you that the disciples, and His followers in Scripture, never called Him "Jesus" during His earthly ministry. They would call Him the "Lord Jesus," or referred to Him as "Master," but never just "Jesus." And very seldom does the Apostle Paul refer to Him as Jesus. Maybe once. Normally. He refers to Him as the Lord Jesus Christ, Christ, or as Lord Jesus. And the reason is that after He had suffered the humiliation of His humanity and He took upon that humanity the sins of the world, then in Resurrection power He becomes again the glorified Lord of glory, and as such we know Him. We know the resurrected Christ. The One Who died for our sins. That is important. No one is ever saved by just believing that Jesus was a good man. That's not salvation. We will be pointing that out as we come up through the four Gospels.

Now as we come into Chapter 2, we find the account of the wise men making their appearance, and how the family had to flee from the area of Bethlehem because of King Herod's decree. They went down into Egypt, because of that decree, and because prophecy had said that, "He would come up out of Egypt." Then they went to Nazareth, because again, prophecy had said that "He would be a Nazarene."

I think now I will come right on into Chapter 3. and here we are introduced to John the Baptist. And remember that John the Baptist was a prophesied Old Testament prophet. He was to be the herald or the announcer for the King. And he is prophesied back there in the Old Testament plain as day. Between the Book of Malachi and the appearance of the Angel announcing the birth of John the Baptist, and to Joseph and Mary, is 400 years. Now that's a long time. We call it the 400 years of silence. Up until that time, you might say from Abraham to Malachi, God had been revealing himself through the prophets and through various other means to the Nation of Israel. But after the Book of Malachi was written, completing the Old Testament, 400 years elapse until God makes His next move with the Nation of Israel. Now that's just an historical fact, but I think it's interesting. Let's look at Malachi first to see the prophecy of John the Baptist.
Malachi 3:1

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he (the messenger) shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek (now remember the Lord here is Jehovah, God the Son), shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the (what?) covenant (I'm glad we came back here. The Covenant, see), whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."

That's John the Baptist being promised that he would come on the scene, and be the messenger to announce the King. The King is also the fulfillment of that Abrahamic Covenant. Abraham had been promised a nation of people that would end up in a geographical area of land. And then at some future time, God would come and be their King as well as their Redeemer. That's all in that Covenant. And then, of course, after that Covenant made with Abraham you came to the Covenant of Law, then the Covenant God made with David concerning the royal family. And the Covenant He made with Moses concerning the Land of Palestine. Now those are all separate covenants, but they were all under the Abrahamic Covenant. And now here it is. They've been a nation of people for 1,500 years, since they came out of Egypt. Here the Nation of Israel is in Matthew and their King is here.

Matthew 3:1,2

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea (and here's John's message), And saying, 'Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

What made the Kingdom at hand? The King! Now when the King went back to Heaven at the ascension in Acts Chapter 1, where is the Kingdom? It's in Heaven! When the King comes back to Earth, where will the Kingdom be? On Earth. So wherever the King is, you have the Kingdom. Now the King is here. And the Kingdom of Heaven is just over the horizon. This is His whole scope of approaching the Nation of Israel. But it's in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. That's what's promised.

Matthew 3:3

"For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias (see it's also in Isaiah. I took you back to Malachi but Isaiah also speaks of John the Baptist) saying, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" You know all about John, so now I would like for you to come quickly down to verse 6:

Matthew 3:6
"And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."

Think for a moment. Can you think of any other subject in Christianity that will cause more controversy, more anger, more disruption of fellowship and more everything else that you can think of, than baptism? Oh, I've experienced it over and over. I see people who seemingly have real sweet fellowship until all of a sudden they realize they didn't agree on baptism and then, oops, there goes their friendship. Now there's something wrong when something can cause such division amongst believers. And I guess I'd have to say it's because we have so many different views of this baptism. Some feel that it's mandatory for salvation. Some, that it has nothing to do with salvation. Some in sprinkling, some in immersion. So you have all of these conflicting ideas, and I think it's a pity.

Now we are going to see what the Scripture says. But here, John no doubt about it, maintains that if these Jews of Israel are going to show saving faith in the fact that their King and Kingdom is here, then they would have to show it with the baptism of repentance. And that is why it is always called the "Baptism of Repentance." The two could not be separated. These Jews were repenting then of their failure of the system of law, and everything else. They were now preparing their hearts and minds for the King and His Kingdom. I have a question for you. Why baptism? That throws a curve at almost everyone. Now remember that we are dealing with the Jew, and if you go back to the Old Testament economy, in order for the priest to be prepared for service the first thing they had to do was wash, wash, and wash some more. They had lots of practice at washing. Throughout the whole system of the Law of Moses there was that constant washing to show to the very mind of Israel that sin was a filthy thing. This is what we are dealing with here. Sin!

That is why leprosy is used as a picture of sin. Now most of us don't know how horrible a man with leprosy can look, especially in the final stages. It is beyond comprehension. And that's what sin does. Naaman, the Syrian General, had leprosy and the servant just begged him to go to the prophet of Israel and be healed. So he ends up with Elisha, and the old prophet doesn't even come but rather sends his own servant out, and tells this big Syrian General to do what? Go dip in the Jordan River seven times. Well he finally did, and what happened? He was healed of his leprosy. Now the water didn't do it. God did it because Naaman, as reluctant as he was, was still exercising faith. But that dipping in the Jordan River indicated a cleansing. In the same way, the priesthood with their wash, wash, wash, were merely emphasizing their need for a spiritual cleansing. The water in no way could do that. Remember, we looked at Scripture a couple of lessons back where Israel was told that every Jew was to be a priest of God. What little rite had to happen before they would be ready for a priesthood? They had to be washed. And they experienced that
symbolic washing with their baptism. Now that is all you can put on it. Nothing more!

I guess one of the biggest questions has been, "Why was Jesus baptised? He didn't have any sin to repent of." But again, He came to be a prophet, priest, and King, and in order to fulfill all of the requirements of the priesthood again, symbolically what did He have to experience? The washing. So as He went down into that baptism in the Jordan, he symbolically fulfilled the washing of the priesthood, and at the same time He identifies Himself with His Covenant people the Nation of Israel. Do you see how everything just fits so beautifully together? There is a reason for it, but we have to understand it.
LESSON THREE * PART IV

INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT CONTINUED:

MATTHEW 1 - JOHN THE BAPTIST

Let's get back to Matthew Chapter 3, where we were talking about the baptism of repentance as proclaimed by John the Baptist, and how it was a natural to the Jew. They didn't have any problem accepting this baptism. Years ago, when I was just a young deacon, and there was a lot I didn't know, I asked one of our old deacons, "Was there any hint of baptism before the New Testament?" I can see him to this day. He said, "Oh no, Les, there's nothing in the Old Testament concerning baptism." But it was all back there, that's what the whole idea of washing was about. Let me show you a verse in Hebrews Chapter 9. Here the writer is rehearsing the Day of Atonement. And he speaks of the high priest in verse 7:

Hebrews 9:7-9

"But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all (behind the veil) was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which (all of this that was taking place back in the Old Testament economy) was a figure (or a symbol, or illustration) for the time then present (at the time of sacrificial worship), in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;"

In other words, this whole sacrificial system in itself didn't take away sin. The blood of animals couldn't take away sin, but the point I want to make is in verse 10. All that was practiced; the sacrificial lamb, the sprinkling of the blood, and the approaching a Holy God on Holy ground, all of this was symbolic back there.

Hebrews 9:10

"Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers (what's the next word?) washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."

The Greek word translated "washing" is "Baptismos." So if the translators would have translated the word "Baptismos" like they did every other place in the New Testament, this is how it would have read: All of these things "stood only in meats and drinks, and divers baptism." The Jew was perfectly aware of what John was doing. It was indicating a cleansing, even though the water couldn't take away sin. Don't ever get
that idea. It was a symbolic gesture indicating a need for a spiritual cleansing. Now go to Ephesians. What a difference is there! The Apostle Paul is writing to the Gentile Church.

**Ephesians 5:26**

"That he (Christ) might sanctify and cleanse it (He's talking about the Body of Christ, the Church, back in verse 25) with the washing of water by (baptism? No by) the word."

The Bible is our cleansing vehicle. **It's the Word that cleanses.** And water baptism (although very appropriate for the Jew, because he was accustomed to all of that), cannot be claimed to have any kind of cleansing effect today. Because it's the **Word** that cleanses daily. People can twist the Scriptures very easily, because they really don't see what the Scriptures say. Now back to Matthew Chapter 3. So **John the Baptist is preaching repentance and baptism because the King and the Kingdom are on the scene. The King is ready to fulfill the Covenant promises of being Israel's King.** Now verse 11:

**Matthew 3:11**

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance (they are tied together): but he that cometh after me (speaking of Christ) is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he (Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:"

There are two alternatives. You will either be baptized with the Spirit or the lake of fire. Those are the only choices. **We are either saved or lost.** The Holy Spirit Baptism is found in I Corinthians Chapter 12. In Matthew Chapter 3, what were the verb tenses, past, present, or future? Future. In the present, John is baptizing in water, but he said in the future Christ would baptize you with the Holy Spirit. Here in I Corinthians Chapter 12 we pick that up.

**I Corinthians 12:12,13**

"For as the body (this human body) is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body (if you hurt your toe, you hurt all over): so also is Christ."

"For by one Spirit (Holy Spirit is capitalized) are we all (not just the chosen few, but every believer) baptized into one body,..." Now what body? The Body of Christ, the Church. Every believer is connected to the Head who is in Heaven.
Every now and then I like to throw things out to make people think. Do you know that Paul never uses the illustration that we as Church Age Believers are sheep and Christ is the Shepherd? Never! Because it is so much greater to be an intrinsic member of the Body of Christ, connected to the Head, which is Christ. And that in turn is what gives us our position in Christ as a believer. We're not like a sheep out there under a shepherd. We are part and parcel of the Head and the Body. That makes all the difference in the world. And we dare not diminish any of these things. Paul takes us into this higher plane of Christian experience, especially in the Books of Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. You won't find this anywhere else in Scripture; it's not there. But here is one of them, that when we become a member of the Body of Christ, we become a co-heir with Christ - we are in union with Him. The Head is in Heaven, and we are left as ambassadors here on the earth until one day we will all be with Him. Let's get back to Matthew. We have those choices we spoke of a few moments ago. We can either become a believer and experience the baptism of the Spirit or we can reject salvation and be placed into the lake of fire for the lost.

Matthew 3:12

"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner (or the granary); but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

That is the eternal doom of the wicked. Then we come to the baptism of Jesus, and I think we covered that sufficiently in our last lesson. The other thing I would like to point out is that at the baptism of Jesus you have one of two instances in all Scripture where all three Members of the Trinity appear in one place. Here they are:

Matthew 3:16,17

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, `This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" You have all three in one place at the same time here. We'll study Jesus' temptation next lesson. Now Chapter 4:

Matthew 4:16

"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." We're not talking about physical light, but rather a spiritual light. Let's go to Isaiah Chapter 49 and 60. Remember what Matthew just said, that people were sitting in darkness, but they see a great light.
Isaiah 49:6

"And he said, 'It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.'"

This light will start with Israel. Recall John 1:11, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." He came to the Nation of Israel and although they will reject Him, His salvation will extend to the ends of the earth. We have another one in Isaiah Chapter 60:

Isaiah 60:1-3a

"ARISE, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth (this is spiritual darkness), and gross darkness the people (even Israel): but (in spite of that spiritual darkness) the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light,..."

And Who is the Light? We used to sing the chorus when we were kids, "The Light of the world is Jesus." Indeed He was! Now let's go back to the Book of Matthew.

Matthew 4:17

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

The same message that John the Baptist preached. John is going to slip off the scene and wind up in prison, and Jesus is going to preach that same message. Because He was the King and was ready to set up His Kingdom in fulfillment of the Old Testament Covenants. What was this message called? See verse 23:

Matthew 4:23a

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues (for Jews), and preaching the gospel of the kingdom,..." Now let's look at another verse:

Matthew 9:35

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages (of Israel), teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom (now in association with the Gospel of the Kingdom, what do you have? Finish the verse), and healing every
sickness and every disease among the people." In another place it says that "He healed them all." What kind of a response did this Gospel of the Kingdom bring out of the believers of that Gospel? Let's look at Matthew 16:

**Matthew 16:13-16**

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, 'Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?' And they said, 'Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.' He said unto them, 'But whom say ye that I am?' And Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.'"

Who died for me and rose from the dead? No! It doesn't say that, does it? But that's what everybody likes to think. Now our Gospel, the Gospel of the Grace Age, is that Christ died for me, was buried and rose from the dead. We find that in I Corinthians 15:1-4. But that wasn't the Gospel of the Kingdom. Do you see the difference?

So the Gospel of the Kingdom precipitated this kind of a confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." What did that mean? He is the Messiah coming to fulfill the third part of the Covenant. The King Redeemer, the Prophet and Priest. Let's look at John's Gospel, Chapter 11 verse 23. Here we have the account of Lazarus. Mary and Martha have been distraught. They know that Jesus knew about Lazarus' condition. They can't understand why He doesn't come and heal him. Jesus delays purposely because He wants to raise him from the dead. By the time Jesus gets back, Lazarus is dead. And Jesus says in verse 23:

**John 11:23-27**

"...Thy brother shall rise again (He's comforting the girls) Martha saith unto him, 'I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' Jesus said unto her, 'I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me (talking of Himself) shall never die. Believest thou this?' (Now look at Martha's answer) She saith unto him, 'Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.'"

"And die for me and be raised from the dead?" No, it doesn't say that. What was her confession of faith? "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Now let's go to Acts Chapter 8. Here we have the Ethiopian eunuch who I'm quite sure was a proselyte because, in verse 27, he was returning from Jerusalem where he had been worshiping. Let's read verse 35:
Acts 8:35-36

"The Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture (which was Isaiah 53); and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See here is water; what doth hinder me to baptized?" What has been part and parcel of the Gospel of the Kingdom? Repentance and water baptism. Compare all of these confessions: Peter's, Martha's, and this proselyte's. Look at verse 37:

Acts 8:37

"And Philip said, `If though believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.' And he answered and said, `I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'"

Who died for me and rose from the dead? No! That wasn't his confession. All he believed was that Jesus was Who He claimed to be, the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel. Now, Acts Chapter 9 where we have the conversion of Saul on the way to Damascus:

Act 9:10,11

"And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision,... Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,"

Acts 9:13

"Then Ananias answered, `Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:'"

Acts 9:15

"But the Lord said unto him, `Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the (who?) Gentiles, and kings (this is something new, remember God had been dealing with the Jew only with few exceptions) and the children of Israel:'"

God is also going to give the children of Israel a chance at the Gospel that He will reveal to Saul (Paul) later. So Ananias finds Saul at the house of Judas, lays his hands on him, and he could see again. In verse 18 Scripture tells us that he was baptised. Remember Saul is converted under the Gospel of the Kingdom. To prove my point, Saul immediately starts to preach what? verse 20:
Acts 9:20

"And straightway he (Saul) preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." Now as you finish Chapter 9, you will see that God will not permit Saul to preach that message, because He has something completely different in store for him and the Age of Grace or the Church Age.