Let's begin where we left off in our last lesson in I Corinthians 15:20-23. In verse 20 Paul has been rehearsing the whole scheme of resurrection in this chapter in the first 18 or 19 verses, that if Christ was not raised from the dead, then we have no hope. **Because at the very core, the very crux of our Gospel is the fact that Christ was raised from the dead. He was resurrected.** I like to define the term "resurrected" because I think often our ministers use the word "resurrection" totally out of it's true meaning. In other words, anyone who has been raised from the dead miraculously, back in Scripture, such as the widow's son, under Elijah. And then there was Lazarus, who was raised from the dead. These were not resurrected, they were merely brought back to life and then they died again. Resurrection speaks of that which only Christ began, and that is that He arose from the dead into the eternal, never to die again. And so when we speak of resurrection scripturally, don't think of someone who has merely died and has been called back to life, because they're going to die again. But once Christ rose from the dead, **never to die again,** that was resurrection. When we experience resurrection it's going to be final. We will not again have to die and be brought back to life. So resurrection is something that only began when Christ arose from the dead. He was the first to be resurrected. Just keep that straight in your mind. Just the other day I heard someone speaking of Lazarus being resurrected. No he wasn't! He was brought back to life but he was not resurrected because he died again at some later date.

Now, we've been talking about the resurrection from the dead all the way through Chapter 15 on up to verse 19. In verse 20, Paul again, as I've used the expression off and on throughout the book of Corinthians, shifts gears. Now all of a sudden, instead of just talking about the resurrection of Christ at the time of His death, burial and resurrection, goes clear to the end of the age, you might say, and brings up resurrection as a part of the whole picture of God's plan of the Ages. Now again, when we teach the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, that's the way I like to depict it. This is God's plan for the Ages. Now, when I say it's God's plan, I want to take you back to Acts. And let's go to Chapter 2, but keep your hand on I Corinthians 15. When I speak of God's plan for the Ages, what I'm trying to imply is that God, before anything was ever created, the Triune God put everything in motion. He already had it blueprinted.
You know one of the most amazing things, and one of the things that we find hard to comprehend is, that God from the beginning, gave men and nations their own free will. And they have been operating under that free will as nations make decisions to invade other nations supposedly under a free will, but yet from the beginning of time until the end of God's plan for the Ages, everything falls in place exactly as God has predetermined it. Isn't that amazing? How He can leave men and nations with a free will, they do pretty much what they want to do, and the end results in bringing everybody and everything to the end of God's purpose. All right, how did it all begin? Well I like to use this verse in Acts Chapter 2, and verse 23 where Peter is preaching here on the day of Pentecost, and he's preaching not to you and I, but rather to the Nation of Israel. Peter is rehearsing the fact that they had crucified their Messiah, but that's not the point so much that I want to get out of this verse, but rather what I just said, and that is that God has had a plan for the Ages from eternity past.

Acts 2:23

"Him (speaking of Jesus of Nazareth Whom they had crucified), being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:"

What's he saying? Sometime back in eternity past, the Triune God in counsel (and they didn't have to sit there for a whole afternoon and bandy this thing back and forth), determined a plan for the Ages. And in God's foreknowledge He could see every detail of it coming on down through history. Now in that determinate plan that God laid out before anything was created the highlight of it all was the "Cross." Was God caught by surprise? No. It was all in that eternal plan of the ages that Christ must suffer. And all the way through Scripture we know this was in God's blueprint for the ages. Let's return to I Corinthians for a moment. I want folks to understand that, according to this predetermined plan of the ages, Christ would suffer and die but He would also rise from the dead.

I Corinthians 15:20

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

Now the only way you can understand this kind of language is to go back to the Old Testament and if you don't understand the Old Testament then for sure you can't understand the New Testament. So let's go back to the Book of Leviticus, Chapter 23. Here we find the seven feasts of Jehovah, as we refer to them. They were feast days for the Nation of Israel in their Temple worship as they progressed through the year. First is Passover, then Unleavened Bread. But at barley harvest time which was the
first crop that Israel harvested in Palestine, shortly after Passover, this feast was called Firstfruits. It is the third of these seven feasts. Then verse 9 and 10:

**Leviticus 23:9,10**

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

They were to go into that field of barley, maybe 15 acres square, and as the field was still green, and all headed out as we say, all of a sudden scattered throughout that field will be yellow heads of grain. And those yellow heads just sprinkle throughout the field. They have ripened before all the other masses of heads in that field. Now the Jews were to go into that green field and pluck those early ripened stems with the heads, enough to have a bundle, and then they were to take it to the priest and it was then a wave-offering. Now verse 10 is speaking of a harvest, and while you're in Leviticus let's look at another part of the harvest. After they had gone in and harvested the main part of the field then you see they had these instructions.

**Leviticus 19:9,10b**

"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly (completely) reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest ...thou shalt leave them (the corners) for the poor and stranger:"

Now you have three aspects then of the Jewish harvest. First they would go in and take that sampling of the early ripening heads of grain. Then they would go and take the main harvest, but they had to leave the corners, and their gleanings for the poor. Keep that process in mind as we come back to I Corinthians Chapter 15 again. So when Paul gives us the clue, and that's what I call this, he says:

**I Corinthians 15:20**

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

In other words I think the Apostle Paul is telling us, "**Now go back and use the Israeli system of harvest as an illustration of the resurrections (plural) that are coming.**" Now we have to always qualify this. Martin Luther once made a classic statement as he and his entourage were riding on horseback to meet the Church officials wherever they were to meet with him after he had nailed his 95 thesis on the
Church door. He made this classic statement which I love because I find myself there constantly. He said, "**Gentlemen, if only I could tell these men everything that I want to tell them in the first 30 minutes.**" Now what did he mean? If he could unload it all on them before they would have time to reject it. Well this is how I feel so often as there is so much in these next few verses, so you'll have to bear with me as it's going to take some time. Now verse 21:

**I Corinthians 15:21**

"**For since by man came death,** (that was Adam when he rejected God's discipline, and ate the fruit, and Adam died spiritually immediately. But he also died physically some 900 years later.) **by man came also the resurrection of the dead.**" Boy that throws a curve at you doesn't it? Well I can understand how Adam plunged the human race into sin and death because he ate of the forbidden tree. But how in the world did man bring back life to the human race? Well you've got to be careful and compare Scripture with Scripture. So look at verse 45 and 46. Now this will explain what Paul is saying in verse 21.

**I Corinthians 15:45-47**

"**And so it is written, `The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last (or second) Adam was made a quickening (or life-giving) spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.'**" Now here we have these two Federal heads if you want to call them that. Adam as the head of the natural progeny of the human race, plunged us into sin, and sin precipitated death. Let's look at that also in Romans Chapter 5 verse 12. It's not what I say, but rather what The Book says.

**Romans 5:12**

"**Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death (entered) by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.**" Now that's what Paul is referring to by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Return to I Corinthians and look at verses 46 and 47 again.

**I Corinthians 15:46**

"**Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."**
Now I've made the point on this program ever since we left Genesis, and that is - the format of all of God's dealing was first the natural, and then the spiritual. Now just stop for a moment and think about that. First we have Cain the natural, and Abel the spiritual. You can go a little further and you find Ishmael the natural, and Isaac the spiritual. Then you have Esau the natural, and Jacob the spiritual. King Saul the natural, and King David the spiritual. And you can go all the way up through Scripture, and then bring yourselves into the picture. Here we are the sons of Adam, we are born natural, we are of the flesh, but after we have experienced salvation, and have been born from above, then we're spiritual. During the Tribulation you'll have the man Anti-christ, the natural, and then at the end of the Tribulation, and second coming of Christ you have the spiritual. And this is the law of Scripture, and this is what Paul is referring to. First the natural (Adam) and then the spiritual (Christ). Now verse 47 again.

I Corinthians 15:47,48

"The first man is of the earth, earthy; (he was created from the dust of the earth, but) the second man is the Lord from heaven." Here's where we have to have a solid understanding that Christ wasn't just another created being. He was the Creator Himself. Here's where I get adamant against some of the false teachings that are coming in on us like a flood. Jesus Christ is God, was God, He's the Creator, He's the sustainer of the whole universe, and we must never lose sight of that. Otherwise our Gospel (I Corinthians 15:1-4) is a farce. But He is Who He says He is, and that is The Lord from Heaven. Verse 48.

"As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."

As I taught Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth." Everything in Scripture is going to be connected to those two entities. It's either that of the earth, and it's earthly, or it's going to be that of Heaven, and it's heavenly. Israel, then, as you come up through Genesis, becomes the earthly, and then when we come to Paul we find the Church becomes the heavenly. And never can the two meet because there's that great gulf fixed that you cannot mix the dealings of God with the earthly people of Israel, and the heavenly people which is the Body of Christ, the Church. They are so totally different. Israel is earthly. The Church is heavenly!

I Corinthians 15:49

"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, (that is being born into the human race by way of Adam, by our human parents we are earthly, but we're not going to stay earthly) we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."
That's our prospect. We are not for eternity going to be bound as earthly beings. We are going to one day be transformed into that which is heavenly. And we're going to have bodies like Christ. I had that question come up, "What kind of bodies will we have in the next life?" Well, I turned her back to Philippians 3:20, which says:

Philippians 3:20,21a

"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body,..."

Well, what are you going to use for an example? I tell everybody if you want to get just a glimpse of how we are going to function in eternity, then you go back into the Four Gospel accounts, and just study Christ's 40 days after resurrection. And there you have the perfect picture. When Mary saw Him in that semi-darkness of that early dawn she thought He was the gardener. So did our Lord look weird? No. He looked very common and ordinary, but she defined His features enough to know Who He was. The disciples saw Him cooking fish on the shore, and he told them to put their net on the other side of the boat. So he looked very normal in all of His appearances, and when the net came full then Peter said what? "It's The Lord." Well, now if Jesus looked weird and different I think the disciples would not have understood, but they knew Him. And then in the Luke account when they sat down for breakfast what did Jesus also do? He ate with them, and so He had all the outward appearances of another human being, but He was now immortal. He didn't have to go through the door, He could go through the wall or the ceiling. He could be transported from one place to a zillion miles away in a split second of time. I think even the speed of light is going to become nothing to us when we get into the immortal and eternal.

And so we have this glorious prospect that we're no longer going to be tied to this old earth and be simple monuments of clay. We're going to have new, resurrected, immortal, heavenly, eternal bodies. And we're not going to look weird or something out of some Hollywood concoction. We are going to look just as normal, from all human outward appearances, as The Lord Jesus did in those forty days from His resurrection until His ascension. Now even at His ascension did He go up in some puff of a spirit or a cloud? No! What did the angels say? "This same Jesus as you have seen go, will come back and He's going to stand on this same mountain." You know how I've always put it - how did He leave? Head first! He went up from the Mount of Olives head first. How is He going to return? Feet first! Zechariah tells us as plain as day that when He returns His feet will stand at that day on the Mount of Olives.

Zechariah 14:4a
And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east,..."

And the Mount of Olives is there yet today and it's waiting for Him and one day soon He's coming to it.
LESSON ONE * PART II

ORDER OF THE RESURRECTION

I CORINTHIANS 15:20-23

Now let's go right into where we left off in the last lesson and that will be I Corinthians Chapter 15 and verse 22. We're going to take our time doing this because there is so much in this Chapter 15 that I don't want to skim over it. Now verse 22:

I Corinthians 15:22

"For as in Adam all die, (We covered that in the last lesson, that when Adam sinned as the Federal head of the human race then every human being that has been born since has that fallen sin nature of Adam.) even so in Christ (remember the Creator of everything) shall (what's the next word?) all be made alive."

Now that throws a curve at people if they don't read it carefully. They might say, "Now wait a minute. Are the lost going to be resurrected?" Yes! That's surprises people. Let's go back to John's Gospel. The lost are going to be resurrected. They're not in their eternal state as yet. They're going to have to come out bodily to appear before the Great White Throne of Revelation 20. And then they'll go to their eternal doom bodily, where they'll have a body fit for the Lake of Fire, whereas we will have a body fit for Glory. Now Jesus explains it Himself so clearly in John's Gospel Chapter 5, and drop in at verse 28.

John 5:28,29a

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

Now from that verse alone we have people who teach a general resurrection; everybody all at the same time. The saved and the lost. The saved go to their glory and the lost go to their doom. All that are in the graves are going to hear God's call to come forth. But let's be careful that we don't read just that far and stop. Let's read on.

John 5:29b

"...they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (or condemnation)."
Now you have two distinct groups of people who are going to be resurrected. Now if you just sit on John's Gospel alone it would seem that it was all going to happen at the same time. But now come back to I Corinthians 15 again and, see that's why Paul is the one that reveals so many things that the rest of Scripture doesn't even touch on, and that's why I can't understand why so many people today totally ignore Paul's epistles. Because it's in Paul alone that we find the true nature of the old Adam. Now I know the Old Testament says that the heart is desperately wicked and who can know it. And we certainly know that Jesus taught that the heart was wicked. But it isn't until you get to Paul's writing that you get this understanding that this Adamic sin nature is inherited ever since Adam. It has just come down generation after generation. Now the same way with this resurrection deal. There is more talk about resurrection in I Corinthians 15 than in almost all the rest of the Bible put together. Now we know the Old Testament people believed in resurrection. Job for sure said:

*Job 19:25,26*

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:" What was he talking about? Resurrection! David, after he'd lost his child with Bathsheba, after mourning for a whole week, what did he suddenly realize? He couldn't bring that child back but what did he say?

*II Samuel 12:22,23*

"And he said, `While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.'"

What was he speaking of? Resurrection life. But now here Paul is going to just unload on us all the details of resurrection. Now look at verse 23. Even though all are going to be resurrected up in verse 22 and according to John 5, in verse 23 the first word is what? "But". What am I always telling you? That's one of the biggest words in Scripture. Because this one little three-letter-word now opens up a whole vista that otherwise we would have never understood. That, yes, there's going to be a resurrection of the saved, and of the lost, but not all at once.

*I Corinthians 15:23a*

"But every man (lost or saved) in his own order:..." (or company.)
Those of you who have been in the service, we always understood the military chain of command. The smallest was the company of 100-120 men, and from that you went to the battalion, from the battalion to the regiment and on up to the division and 20 divisions make an army. Now Paul is saying the same thing. Of all the people who have lived and died and are one day going to be resurrected, there's going to be an order in the resurrection so that every group will be in their specific company at resurrection. They're not all going to just come out like one big group.

_I Corinthians 15:23a_

"... Christ the firstfruits ..."

We've already looked at where that came from. It gave us an inkling now that we can look at the resurrection much like Israel practiced her grain harvest. Because after all what does God consider bringing human people unto Himself? What does He call it? **A harvest! In His earthly ministry he says the "fields are white unto harvest but the laborers are few."** That was just an analogy and so it is the human race has been harvested through the efforts of God. But whether it's the Old Testament or New, it doesn't make any difference. So the implication now is that the whole harvest of mankind can be likened to the three sequences of Israel's harvest. First the firstfruits, the sampling of the early ripening grain, then the major harvest and then the third part would be the corners and the gleanings. Now let's just analyze a minute from a logical standpoint. Let's look at the first group. Come back with me to Matthew 27, at the time of the crucifixion and we come down to verse 51 of Matthew 27. Christ, in verse 50, has just given up the ghost, or died. Now verse 51.

_Matthew 27:51,52_

"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; (all in response to what had just happened up there on Calvary at His death and all of nature responded convulsively, and then we come to the next verse) And the graves (in the area of Jerusalem) were opened (not all of them) and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,"

Now remember the saints of any age are the believers. In other words, your believing Israelites were saints. Those who were believers during Christ's earthly ministry were saints. Those who believed during the Acts period are saints. Those who believe in the Church Age are saints. Those who will be saved during the Tribulation are going to be called saints. **And so "saints" is just a general term regarding those who are believers.** So here we have a group of Jewish believers, because there certainly weren't enough Gentiles in that Old Testament economy to count. And so evidently these were Jewish believers who had been buried in the area of Jerusalem:
Matthew 27:53

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

Now that's an important verse because if they would have come out of the graves before Christ was resurrected, that would throw a kink in the whole plan of God that Christ was the firstfruits of resurrection. He is the first Who has ever been resurrected from the dead. Never had it happened before. But after He had been resurrected, then these others could come forth and to comprise what I now call that sheaf that was indicated in Leviticus. And it completes then, the plural of the word "firstfruits". Had Christ only come alone, then it would have had to have been He was the firstfruit of the resurrection. But it's not. The feast day of firstfruits was to take, not just one stem of grain, but many who are all just sampling of the crop that was to come, and then they were brought together in a sheaf and they were taken to the priest as their offering of firstfruits. So now, I have to feel that these Jewish saints who were resurrected right after Christ was, comprised that which we call the firstfruits. Now let's come back to I Corinthians 15 once again.

I Corinthians 15:23a

"But every man in his own order:"

In other words, Church Age saints aren't going to be resurrected with the Old Testament saints. We certainly aren't going to be part of the first group because that's already happened. So let's look at the harvest process. First the firstfruits were taken out of the sampling. Then they went in and took the main harvest. Everything but the corners and the gleanings were harvested. And then that which was left was harvested last of all. Now just stop and think for a moment. We're in Oklahoma and that's wheat country, at least in the Western part of the state. When that wheat farmer has gone out and has harvested the main part of his fields, he can fill those bins with grain. Thousands and thousands of bushels. Now if per chance he did leave the corners, like they did then, how much would that be by comparison? Just a small fraction.

Now let's bring it into the spiritual realm. Christ and the first fruits that already been accomplished, but where has been the largest number of people brought in God's harvest? Old Testament or Church age? Well the Church age of course. Because now go back in the Old Testament economy. The little Nation of Israel probably never had more than 10 million people at the most, and only a few of the them were true believers. You go back before the flood and there were precious few believers, and by the time you get to Noah's flood there were only 8 souls. So even before the flood there were very few that God could count on as His. Throughout the history of Israel there were very few Jews, percentage wise, who were believers.
Even in Christ's earthly ministry, I like to point out that at least in the area of Jerusalem and Judea, "How many believers were in the upper room there in Acts Chapter 1?" 120 souls. After 3 years of The Lord's own earthly ministry there were only 120 Jewish believers evidently. Now there may have been a few up in Galilee, but in the area of Jerusalem there must have been only that 120, compared to the millions that have come in during the past 1900 years + of the preaching of the Gospel of Grace (And that's by believing in your heart for your salvation that Jesus died for your sins, was buried, and rose again.) So the order of the resurrection will be:
1. Christ and the firstfruits; 2. Then the harvest of the Church age, and we're going to look at that next; 3. And then we still have the corners and the gleanings left, which I feel will be the Tribulation saints who will be saved during the Tribulation and the Old Testament believers.

Now come back with me to the Book of Daniel Chapter 12, and here I'm going to throw the Tribulation saints in with the Old Testament saints, as well as those who were believers during Christ's earthly ministry. Because remember they were all connected to Judaism, and to Israel's program, and they were not part of what I call the Body of Christ. Let's look how Daniel covers it, and let's just start with verse 1. Remember this is the Old Testament and Daniel is talking about resurrection just like Paul does.

**Daniel 12:1**

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: (Now Daniel was a Jew) and there shall be a time of trouble, (That's foretelling of the Tribulation that is yet to come) such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time (That is at the time of the Tribulation) thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Yes there's going to be a remnant of the Nation of Israel saved during the Tribulation, especially as we come to the end of that 7 years. Now verse 2:

**Daniel 12:2**

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Again Daniel, by inspiration, writes almost as if it's going to be a general resurrection that the lost Jew is going to be resurrected at the same time that the saved Jew is. But you have to compare this with the Revelation and we know that this is not going to be the case. Only the believing Jews are going to be resurrected first, and then a thousand years later (after the Kingdom rule) all the lost Jews and Gentiles are going to be
resurrected for the Great White Throne judgment, just like we saw the comparison in John Chapter 5. Now verse 3:

**Daniel 12:3**

"And they that be wise (they have believed what was instructed them to believe even in the Old Testament economy. It was still based on their faith.) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." God's going to always reward righteousness in the believer. Verse 4.

**Daniel 12:4**

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, (God is telling Daniel to just close the book and forget about it) even to the time of the end: (Now from Daniel's perspective, which was about 500 years before Christ, and that would make it about 2500 years ago, that the Book of Daniel is to be closed up and not considered all that much.) many shall run to and from, and knowledge shall be increased." That is at the time of the end. Verse 5:

**Daniel 12:5-7**

"Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, 'How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?'" (In other words these prophecies written by Daniel) And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be (Now here comes the Tribulation timeline) for a time, times, and an half: (three and one half years) and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."

Now you say, "Well I thought the Tribulation was 7 years." Well it is, but the time of the mid-point is when the man Anti-christ will come into the Temple and defile it, and turn on the Jews. So it's that last three and one half years that Daniel is foretelling. It's that horrible, horrible period of time when the earth is going to come under not only the wrath of God, but also of Satan himself. So Daniel is only including the last three and one-half years. Now verse 8:

**Daniel 12:8**

"And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, 'O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?'"
Now isn't it amazing that these Old Testament prophets got a glimpse of the things that were coming. Now they didn't get the full picture, but Daniel got enough of the glimpse that I think just scared him down to his shoe laces. He probably thought, "What in the world is going to come upon the earth, and especially my people Israel?" So he says, "what shall be the end of these things?" Now verse 9:

**Daniel 12:9**

"And he said, 'Go thy way, Daniel : for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'"

What's God saying? That no one was to know these prophetic utterances of Daniel until we get close to the end-time. Did you know there was nothing taught about end-time events until the 1800's? At that time men of God all of a sudden began to put the prophetic Scriptures together and they began to write concerning the nations of the world that would be coming to the top, such as Russia. Who would have dreamed that Russia would become a world power? But they did by virtue of the Scriptures. Bible scholars began to talk about a returning Israel to the land of Palestine. The land of Israel once again becoming a viable nation after being in dispersion for nearly 2 thousand years. Who would have dreamed of such a thing with the Jews scattered all over the world? But these men of God did. Because the Scriptures were beginning to be opened up by the Holy Spirit. And by the time you get to the 1900's there is a whole raft of God's men who were beginning to put the end-time prophecies in a pretty good perspective. You'd be amazed at how close they were to what we've seen happen now in the last 20 years. So The Lord told Daniel that his Book would be closed up until the approach of the end-time. Verse 10:

**Daniel 12:10**

"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; (tested) but the wicked shall do wickedly: (Just exactly as we've seen, and remember sin will become more evident with each passing day) and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

Now isn't it amazing? The unsaved world out there doesn't have any concept of how accurately that this Book is being fulfilled. And of course this is my reason for believing it from cover to cover. Every prophecy that I see fulfilled proves that this is a supernatural Book. Can you think of a single book of religion, cults or anything that can tell the future 2500 years in advance? There's not a one! This Book is the only one that can do that. Now I know there are some of these things that are hard to believe, I know that, and I take them by faith, but I still say, "Lord, that's hard to believe." But you know I came up with something the other night when I was teaching about the
Rapture, and the sudden taking away of all the believers, and that's hard for people to comprehend. How in the world is God going to do it? And I used this analogy, and said, "Now look. Go out on a real clear starry night, and just look at that mass of stars, and all we see is a little part of our own galaxy, the milky way. It's just a small part with all of it's billions and billions of stars in just the milky way galaxy alone. Now they tell us that there are billions of galaxies."

My little 9-year-old grandson just amazes me sometimes. His dad had just been showing him all the stars in the heavens, and when they got into the house his dad said, "Now son, why don't you just put on paper how may stars are out there. See if you can write out a number big enough to get close to how many stars are out there." Well the little rascal is only 9 years old, but you know what he did? He put down a 1 and then put 0's all the way down the length of typewriter paper and then on the bottom of the paper he says, "and to the same power." And that's way beyond me. I couldn't believe it, but I think he's close, there are billions and billions of galaxies in which there are billions of stars. But here's my point. Has a single one of them ever been out of control? Not one. Who controls them? The same Lord Jesus that's going to one day take us off the earth. Now if He can control trillions and trillions of stars, then He's not going to have any trouble at all calling a few million people off the planet. You just think about that. Now verse 11:

Daniel 12:11-13

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. (That's 30 days more than the Tribulation is going to run) Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred, and five and thirty days. (which is an extra 75 days after Christ's second coming. And then verse 13 says it so plainly. Everybody in their own order. Remember it was 1. Christ and the firstfruits, 2. The Church the main harvest, and 3. The Old Testament and Tribulation saints, the gleanings and corners) But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot (or company) at the end of the days."
LESSON ONE * PART III

ORDER OF THE RESURRECTION

I CORINTHIANS 15:20-23

Now let's begin where we left off in our last lesson and that will be in verse 23 of I Corinthians Chapter 15.

I Corinthians 15:23

"But every man in his own order:..." (or company)

That means that Christ and the firstfruits were the first little group of resurrected people, and then following is the main harvest, which I feel is the Body of Christ, those who have been saved during this age of Grace. And then after the Tribulation has run its course, and we go into the earthly kingdom for an extra 75 days, then the Old Testament saints which includes Daniel and all the rest, plus the Tribulation saints will be resurrected in their company. But before we go any further let's look at my timeline for few minutes. This timeline has opened a lot of eyes over the years to see how historically God's plan of the ages just keeps unfolding. So to start let's go back to Psalms Chapter 2 for a moment. And this chapter is the outline of the Old Testament prophetic program, and remember all true prophecy is directed only to the Nation of Israel. And usually, maybe not always, that prophecy will be within a time frame. In other words, the first real prophecy given in the Old Testament was when God told Abraham that the children of Israel would end up in a land that wasn't theirs, and they would be in slavery.

Genesis 15:13

"And he (God) said unto Abram, `Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;’" God was speaking of Egypt and how afterwards they would come back to the land of Canaan.

Genesis 15:16a

"But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again:..."

Now that was distinctive prophecy of what would happen years down the road, but He put it in a time frame of 430 years. And then you get to Daniel Chapter 9, and Daniel writes that 490 years are determined upon your people, Israel.
Daniel 9:24

"Seventy weeks (490 years) are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." And then you have the prophecy leading up to the crucifixion.

Daniel 9:26

"And after three score and two weeks (483 years) shall Messiah be cut off,.." (that was at the Cross)

Now we're able to see 7 years are left of that 490 years determined for the Nation of Israel, and that's where we get the idea that there will still be 7 years of Tribulation to fulfill the full 490 years. Now there is nothing in the Old Testament prophecy or otherwise that connects Israel to the Church, which is His Body. There is not a word in the Old Testament of some 1900 + years where God is calling out predominately Gentiles. And if people could get that through their head, they would have the battle half won on understanding the Bible. Now in Psalms Chapter 2 we see a brief outline of this Old Testament prophetic program given to the Jew.

Psalms 2:1-6

"Why do the heathen (the Gentile, the non Jews) rage, and the people (the Jews) imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers (of Israel) take counsel together, (remember Peter only blames the Jew in Acts Chapter 2, yet we can't just blame Israel for the crucifixion, because the Romans carried it out. Israel demanded it, so they were in it together.) against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, 'Let us break their bands (that is, God's desire to rule) asunder, and cast away their cords from us.'" (In other words they rejected His offer of being the King, and that was the whole scope of His earthly ministry. He had come in fulfillment of all these prophecies that Israel would have the Divine Son of God as their King, Messiah, and Redeemer, but they rejected Him, and crucified Him.) He that sitteth in the heavens (The Triune God Who is still watching over all of this) shall laugh: (At the foolishness and stupidity of mankind) the LORD shall have them (these nations) in derision." Then (After having rejected the Messiah) shall he (God) speak unto them (that is the nations of the world as well as Israel) in his wrath, (Here's the prophecy concerning the final 7 years of Tribulation) and vex them in his sore displeasure. (And then what's the next event?) Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."
And where's that? Jerusalem. And it's from Zion that Christ is going to rule in His thousand year reign. Now there is your timeline in a nutshell for Old Testament prophecy. We have Adam back here at 4000 B.C. and as we go forward in time we find the human race has run along for about 1600 years and then we come to the next big event in God's time-table and that was Noah's flood. And from the reverse side, of course, that will be about 2400 years before Christ. The three sons of Noah come out of the ark and under a whole new creation of sort that came about as a result of the flood, they stayed there in the Middle East for the next 200 years. Then in total rebellion of what God had said to scatter and to re-populate the planet, they gather at the Tower of Babel under a man called Nimrod. Now there at Babel they were under total rebellion against God's authority, and remember the tower was never intended to take brick and stone all the way to Heaven, but rather it was a place of religion whereby they could literally usurp the throne of God religiously.

And we know that has always been Satan's goal, and so this was the whole idea at the Tower of Babel. They were going to replace the things that God had instructed with the things that Satan now is going to promote himself. And there at the Tower of Babel is where every pagan, mythological, cultic, false religion even on the planet today, has its roots. You've heard me teach it over and over again, that every false religion has its roots at the Tower of Babel. I was just reading in the Reader's Digest Book of the Month about this cult in Japan where they put the poison gas in the subways some time ago. Where did the old boy who became guru of that cult go for his "so called" enlightenment? To the Himalayas. And so who did he find in the Himalayas? Some Buddhist guru who supposedly gave him the enlightenment, supposedly, and he goes back to Japan and begins this cult. Well, already you can see that you go right through Buddhism and through these other Eastern religions and where are their roots? The Tower of Babel. And so every cult that's on the planet tonight, and I don't care who they are or what they are, every pagan religion, every mythological religion that has ever existed, have all run their roots right back to the Tower of Babel.

One of the big highlights in the Old Testament economy was the Tower of Babel and how God scattered them. You all know the account of Babel - it means confusion. Then another 200 years went by and once again God does something totally different. He pulls out of this mainstream of humanity, this man Abraham, and He brings about the Nation of Israel. By an act of a sovereign God, this didn't happen accidentally. But God sovereignly pulls out of the mainstream of humanity, the man Abram, as he was first called, and He promises him the Nation of Israel. Now this will answer the question that I get so often in one form or another. Some will write and say, "Where did the Nation of Israel begin?" Others will write and say,"When did the Gentiles begin?" The Gentile line, as we understand Gentiles, is this mainstream of
humanity, coming from Adam, coming from the three sons of Noah, coming through the nations scattered at the Tower of Babel, and they just keep on going. This is the Gentile stream of humanity. And out of the mainstream of humanity, God pulled the little Nation of Israel by virtue of separating the man, Abraham. Now Abraham was not a Jew. He was born of Syrian parents. His brothers were Syrians. And when Abraham's servant went up to Haran to get a wife for Isaac from his uncle, what was Rebecca? She was a Syrian. And later on Jacob goes up and he gets his wife from his uncle Laban and what was Laban? He was still a Syrian. But, by virtue of God's decree and God's work of sovereignty, He declares that this man Abram is the father of the Jewish race.

And so if you've ever wondered where does the Jew begin, he began when God separated Abram out of his family in Ur of the Chaldeans, and by way of his wife, which he took from Ur, a half-sister, he has the first son, Isaac. I always tell people, "if you want to be real technical, the first real Jew then, would be Isaac." But nevertheless, God refers to Abraham as the father of the Jewish people, even though he came from one of the other nationalities. And so now we have the Nation of Israel who has made her appearance and from Genesis 12 (and this is what's so amazing), all the first 11 chapters of Genesis cover the first 2,000 years of human history. And then in Chapter 12 of Genesis we have the giving of the Abrahamic Covenant, and there is nothing more important in all the Old Testament than this Covenant that God made with Abram, as he's called early on, at 2,000 B.C., to bring about the Nation of Israel. Now, Israel, according to the promises of God, was to be a nation that God would prepare and use. Now come back with me if you will to Genesis and we'll just take a brief look at what I've already rehearsed in Genesis 12.

**Genesis 12:1**

"*Now the Lord (Jehovah) had said (back in Chapter 11) unto Abram, *Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:*""

Now I've got to stop there and go over to Joshua a minute. Let's go to Chapter 24, and I want you to see where Abram really came from.

**Joshua 24:1,2**

"*And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said unto all the people, *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even*"
Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor; and they (all of them. Abraham, Terah, Nachor) served (what?) other gods (small `g')."

And so what were they? Idolaters! Abram was raised in idolatry. Now when God spoke to him (and Stephen in Acts Chapter 7, gives us the impression that God visibly, appeared unto Abraham, that Abraham saw God in physical form, and God, or The Lord as we refer to Him now, told Abraham what you see back in Genesis 12), He told him to get away from his country, his kinfolk, and from his father's house. Why? Separate yourself from these false religions. You cannot serve Me when you're under the roof with idolaters. Let's look at verse 2 and here comes the Abrahamic Covenant.

**Genesis 12:2a**

"And I will make of thee a great nation,....."

You want to remember back in the antiquities, when Israel comes out of Egypt, I've always taught that it was a number of people anywhere between 3 and 7 million. There wasn't another tribe or nation anywhere in the Middle East that would come close to that. They just did not get that large in number. And so in the numbers of antiquities, Israel was the largest nation in that area of the world. And this was God's promise:

**Genesis 12:2b,3**

"....and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Now turn the page a little bit if you will and let's look at verse 14 of Chapter 13. Now we see the next part of the Abrahamic Covenant. Not only would they be a nation of people but now God's going to have to put them in a geographical area of land. They can't just continue on in slavery in Egypt. If they're going to be a nation of people that God is going to work through, they have to be in their own borders.

**Genesis 13:14**

"And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, `Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:'''
You want to remember, if you've never been to Israel before, but right up through the spine of that little narrow neck of land between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River, are mountains. And so here Abraham is on high ground and God says, "Abram, you look as far south, north, east and west as you can see", and now verse 15:

**Genesis 13:15**

"For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever."

Now let's come all the way up to Genesis 46. Now time has gone by but it's still within that time-frame of the prophecy that was 430 years. And within that time-frame Israel has become a nation, they're in slavery in Egypt, Joseph has come to the top of the government, and Jacob is over there in the Negev desert and is about to starve to death. So now, let's look at verse 1 of Chapter 46.

**Genesis 46:1,2**

"And Israel (Jacob) took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba (just south of Jerusalem about 70 or 80 miles), and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel (Jacob) in the visions of the night, and said, 'Jacob, Jacob'. And he said, 'Here am I.'"

Now just look at this command. Almost a total opposite of what he's been told up until now. He was told not to leave the land of promise and God would bless him. But now look what God says.

**Genesis 46:3**

"And he said, 'I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:'"

Did He? Yes! And so Jacob ends up in Egypt with all his sons and they come out 215 years later, with about 5 millions souls. Now let's look at Exodus Chapter 19. Time has gone by, another 215 years and now Moses has led the children of Israel out of Egypt. The 430 years are now completed and we see the nation gathered around Mt. Sinai and God is getting ready to do something totally different than He's ever done before. And I'll bet most people don't even think about it. **Do you know that from Genesis 1 until Exodus 20, there were never any written do's and do not's from God so far as what men could and could not do?** Do you know there has not been one single item of God-instituted worship until we get here? I know, they probably brought sacrifices, but so far as having an organized system of worship, there has been none. And so here we have something that's never happened before, that God tells the
Nation of Israel that He's going to give them the Law, the priesthood, the whole system of sacrificial worship. And for what purpose? To make them aware of God's holiness, of His sovereignty, that He is preparing them for a future roll in the midst of all the pagan idolatry that was now all the way around them. Now you want to remember the whole world was steeped in idolatry except for the offspring of Abraham. Now let's look at Exodus 19 and beginning at verse 5:

**Exodus 19:5**

"Now therefore, if (there's the condition) you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, (the one that He's about to give - the Covenant of Law) then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:"

Now what does that do with the Nation of Israel? It lifts them out of that mainstream of humanity and puts them into that place of covenant relationship as God's favored, chosen people. Now we know that by the time we get to the book of Acts, when Paul so much as mentions the word Gentiles to that Jewish audience, what happened? He had an uproar - a riot! Well, it all began with good intentions. That God intended this little nation of people to be a particular people of value that he could use to reach all those pagans. That was the whole concept. Now look at it again in Exodus 19 where he tells them they are a "treasure unto me above all people". And why could God do that? Because He's Sovereign!!! I can't drive that home enough. God is sovereign. He created this ball of wax and He can do with it whatever He wants. And mankind can shake their fists in His face all they want and they'll never diminish God's sovereignty. And so in sovereignty, He says to the Nation of Israel, "I have made you of intrinsic value to Me because the world is Mine." Now here comes the promise that if they would be obedient:

**Exodus 19:6**

"And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of (what?) priests, (and anybody that knows anything about religion the roll of the priest is what? A go-between. So every Jew was to be a prepared person to be a go-between some day down the road between the pagan world around them and Israel's God.) and an holy (or set apart) nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

Now most people can't understand that this is the purpose of Israel. They were to be a kingdom of go-betweens.
LESSON ONE * PART IV

ORDER OF THE RESURRECTION

I CORINTHIANS 15:20-23

Now as you know we're in I Corinthians Chapter 15, and we're talking about the various aspect of resurrection. Now the resurrection of the Just as we've been showing is seemingly in three parts or categories. (1) Those that were resurrected at Christ's time, after He came out of the tomb, those were the firstfruits, which was the first part of the Jewish harvest when they would go in and take the sampling out of their grain field. Then we have the general harvest. (2) That's the main harvest and that's what we call the rapture of the Church, and then there will be that final aspect of (3) the corners and gleanings which I feel will be the Old Testament saints, and the Tribulation believers. And these Old Testament & Tribulation believers, as we saw in Daniel, will come back in resurrection bodies 75 days after the Second coming, or after the 1000 years Kingdom has been set up. They will then be part and parcel of the Kingdom and that will complete the resurrection of the Just of all the ages. In our timeline in the last lesson we got as far as Exodus Chapter 19, and before we go back to the Old Testament let's look at verse 23 again.

I Corinthians 15:23

"But every man (will come out in resurrection) in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Now let's continue our thoughts from the last lesson. God gave Abraham the Abrahamic Covenant, called him out of idolatry and promised him a separated nation which would be Holy, and would come under the Covenant promises. That's why we call Israel the favored nation, or God's chosen people, because in His sovereignty that's the way He ordained it. So He calls Abram and saves him by faith plus nothing. Abraham wasn't saved by offering sacrifices. He was saved by being obedient to what God said. And then later the sacrifices come in, but he was that man of faith who was saved by faith, even as we are, plus nothing. And then in the closing moments of the last program we were in Exodus Chapter 19, where God had promised that Israel was to be a kingdom of priests or go-betweens. Now, we'll see that come into play as you come into the book of Isaiah. Let's look at Chapter 49. I'm not going to take a lot of time and look up all of these references because there are so many. I'm just going to take the ones that are more clearly understood. Here in Isaiah 49 is where this whole concept of Israel becoming a nation of priests is what God had on His mind. And remember, these things are all valid offers, even though God knows the nation is going to fall far short of all of this. Isaiah 49 and let's go to verse 6.
Remember what we read in Exodus - that "if" they are obedient with the Law or Covenant that God is now giving them at Mt. Sinai, then they would be a nation of priests, a holy nation, and they would be used of God sometime down the road to funnel salvation into the Gentile world.

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 (the Nation of Israel) for a light to the (what?) Gentiles,...'"

Now by the time we get to Christ's earthly ministry and on to the book of Acts, even the Jews had lost sight of all this. And even in Jonah's day, when God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, what did he do? He took a ship and went west! He should have taken a camel and gone east. But he didn't. Well, why not? Those Gentiles had nothing to do with his God. But it was his God Who told him to go. And so he takes a ship west. And you know the story of Jonah. And so finally God had to deal with him and bring him back to shore and send him to Nineveh. Yes, God can save Gentiles when He wants to. But the mind-set of the Jew was that God had no time for those pagan dogs. And even in Christ's earthly ministry, that was implied with the Canaanite woman.

Mark 7:27,28

"But Jesus said unto her, 'Let the children (Israel, the Jews) first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.' And she answered and said unto him, 'Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.'"

What was she implying? The Jews were in the place of privilege. They had the Word of God. But couldn't she have a couple of crumbs? Now the Jews took that to the extreme, so that when Paul comes back after his missionary journeys among the Gentiles and he tells them in Acts, the minute he spoke the word Gentile, what happened? A riot! Who would even dare to say such a word? Now, as you see in Isaiah, God's whole intent and purpose was that Israel as a kingdom of priests, would at one time go and evangelize those Gentiles. Now come back in Isaiah to Chapter 2 and you'll see this in a little bit different language, but it's the same thought. Now I think this will make sense. If I'd have read this first you wouldn't have gotten it, but now I think you will.

Isaiah 2:1,2

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass (it's going to happen) in the last days, that the mountain of the
Now isn't that beautiful? Once Israel's Messiah would come and set up His throne, His kingdom, there in the city of Jerusalem, all the nations of the world would just navigate and would be brought just about like a magnet drawing steel, to Jerusalem. Now let me show you another verse. Let's go all the way up to Zechariah, Chapter 8, the next to the last book in the Old Testament.

**Zechariah 8:20-23**

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts; 'It shall yet come to pass, (sound familiar? That's exactly the way Isaiah put it) that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities. And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, (Jehovah) and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations (plural) shall come to seek the Lord of hosts (where?) in Jerusalem, (where He has set up His throne and His kingdom) and to pray before the Lord.' Thus saith the Lord of hosts; 'In those days (when Israel would be evangelizing those pagan Gentiles) that ten men shall take hold out of all the languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.'"

Now isn't that plain? This was Israel's prospect. But we know now, looking back in history, Israel dropped it. Israel blew it, as we say. But that doesn't take away the fact that God is still intending to use the Nation of Israel to yet bring salvation to the Gentiles. (144,000 in the Tribulation)

Now out of all these verses that we've been reading back here in the Old Testament, there is still not one hint of the Church Age. All we're talking about is God dealing with Israel and at one point in time God wanted to funnel them back into this pagan, polluted stream of humanity and thereby purify it. Remember Christ went up and down the land of Israel, all that territory between the Mediterranean and the Jordan Valley for three years. I always sort of test people. Can you find one place in Scripture where He ever went outside the land of Israel? Not one! He never went to Babylon, or Syria, or Greece, or Egypt. He spent His whole three years only with the Nation of Israel. Now let me show you where I'm proving this from Scripture. Let's go over to Matthew Chapter 10. We kind of shook a few people up. We were having our Bible studies after dinner each night in the hotels in Israel and we had other tourists come
And when they heard me emphasizing this a couple of them got all shook up and they said, "Whoever heard such a thing? Jesus came to the whole world. Where do you get that He just came to the Nation of Israel?" Let's see how plain this is. Matthew 10 and He had just chosen the Twelve up there around Galilee and let's look what He said in verse 5. A lot of people don't know this is in their Bible, but it is.

**Matthew 10:5,6**

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, 'Go not (don't miss that word) into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'"

**Matthew 15:24**

"But he (Jesus) answered and said, 'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'"

**Romans 15:8**

"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (Jews) for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:"

Why did he say that? Because all the way up since Abraham's Covenant, God is dealing only with the His Covenant people, Israel, in the promise of making them a nation of people; in the promise of putting them in their geographical promised land and then one day coming to be their King and their Messiah. You may think you can't swallow that, so let's turn over to what Paul writes to the Ephesians in Chapter 2. And if this isn't plain then I can't do it any plainer. How plainly the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write it. Paul has been going to the Gentiles and he's seeing them saved by grace. But he's reminding them it wasn't always that way.

**Ephesians 2:11,12**

"Wherefore (remember who he's writing to. He is writing to predominately Gentile believers in the city of Ephesus) remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, (we're not talking about spiritual things. We're talking about in the flesh. Ordinary human beings) who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; (In plain language, who called the Gentiles uncircumcised? The Jews did. And that's all he's saying - that while the Jews were referring to you as uncircumcised and "dogs" )That at that time (what time is he referring to? This whole period of time during the Old Testament when Israel is under the Covenant promises and God is dealing only with His Covenant people, with
exceptions. I've already referred to Jonah going to Nineveh and there was Rahab, the harlot, and Naaman the Syrian and so forth. But by and large he's going only to His Covenant people) ye were without Christ, (without a Messiah) being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:"

What's an alien? Someone who has no right or access to that government. It should be that no one but a citizen and taxpayer should get anything from the government coffers. And this is what he is talking about. Gentiles had no rights from Israel. They were Gentiles or aliens. Israel had the Covenants, but could the Gentiles say, "Hey, that's for me"? No, that wasn't for a Gentile. It was only for the Jew. And so he says, you were strangers from those covenants of promise and this was the lot of the Gentiles. They had no hope and without God in the world. That's what the book says. I didn't put this in there. Yours says it too. This was the lot of the Gentiles. Why? Because God was dealing with Covenant promises and it was only for the Nation of Israel until she should be such a prepared spiritual, obedient people and then what would God do? He would send them into the Gentile world and they could then bring the Gentiles to a knowledge of their God. But what did Israel do? By now they had 2,000 years of having it pounded into them that they were special and then they couldn't get it out of their head that anybody else was worth a nickel.

Turn back to Acts Chapter 22 where Paul has now been ministering to Gentiles for some 20 years or more. And he's been having a tremendous response establishing churches throughout Asia Minor, and Greece and Rome. And now he comes back to Jerusalem and he just about gets killed by the mob. He's coming up here before the religious leaders in Jerusalem and he recounts his whole conversion experience on the road to Damascus. He recounts his experiences out among the Gentiles and how they were coming to a knowledge of Israel's God through the Gospel, through Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Now come down to verse 17 of Chapter 22. He's rehearsing what happened years back.

Acts 22:17-22

'And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; And saw him (we don't know if it was in vision or whatever, he saw Jesus) saying unto me, 'Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they (the Jews) will not receive thy testimony concerning me.' And I said, 'Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept (or held) the raiment of them that slew him.' And he said unto me, 'Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.' (Now look at the reaction of these Jews) And they gave him audience (they
listened to him quite intently) unto this word, (what word? Gentile! And then looked what happened - a riot!) and then lifted up their voices, and said, `Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.'"

Why would they say that? Because he so much as thought, "Gentile." Well, what had happened? Israel had completely been blinded to her true role that Jehovah had intended and that was to be His vehicle to go out and reach these Gentiles. But they had completely rejected it in unbelief. And they won't even permit this apostle to go to the Gentiles. They fought him every inch of the way. I'm not doing this to put the Jew down as a nation of people. But it was a result of all those years of being told and taught, "You are God's Covenant people. You are special". But it had gotten such control of their thinking that they never did see the truth of why God called them out in the first place. Now in the last statement in the Abrahamic Covenant we find:

*Genesis 12:3b*

"...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

How was that going to come about? By their Messiah being crucified, and becoming the object of faith then not just for Israel, but for the whole world. And so today, yes, we proclaim the Gospel of God's saving Grace (I Corinthians 15:1-4): how that Christ died according to the predeterminate counsel of God as we saw in the first lesson. And He came and fulfilled the purposes of God in bringing about the plan of redemption, not just for Israel, but for the whole human race. Now I've pointed out so often to my classes that just as soon as God announced to Abraham that through this man He was going to bring out a separated people, and He was going to deal with them, and that through these people would come a Redeemer of the whole human race, who immediately puts everything in high gear to thwart the program of God? Satan does, and all you have to do is look back at history and how Satan has constantly fought God's dealings with the Nation of Israel. Every thing that comes about in the Nation of Israel in their unbelief, in their attacks from the Gentile world, just anything, who prompts it? Satan does.

Even today where we are right now, why is the whole world voting against the little Nation of Israel, and trying to push them tighter and tighter into a smaller area of Jerusalem? Well it is the satanic ploy still trying to get rid of the Nation of Israel, because if Satan can succeed in getting rid of the Jew then God can't perform his prophecies. Because all the prophecies rest on that little nation, now can you see the ploy of Satan? Oh he's working overtime not just because he hates Israel, but rather because he hates God, and he's doing everything in his power to thwart the eternal purposes of God. Just watch your news and even when the Israeli government has scandal come in that almost upsets their political system, who's behind it all? Satan is,
because he's behind everything that is happening to that little nation. But always remember God is not going to permit anything to remove them from the scene, they're going to survive. Now we know it's getting tougher and tougher for them, we know the whole world is coming more and more to the whole idea, "Well why do they have to have the land of Palestine? Let the Palestinians have it they were there first." What does the world do with all these promise God made to that little nation? They ignore them or they don't even know they are here. But God told Jeremiah:

**Jeremiah 31:35-37**

"Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel..."

So the sun and moon will have fall out of their orbit before Israel will disappear from view.
LESSON TWO * PART I

THE MAIN HARVEST

I CORINTHIANS 15:24-54

Now to continue with our lessons about the resurrection, and we'll be turning back to I Corinthians Chapter 15. And as we study the Scriptures always remember it just as important to see what the Scriptures don't say as well as what they do say. Paul is now in this great resurrection chapter, and is making the point that not everyone, as seemingly implied back in John's Gospel, is going to be resurrected at the same moment.

I Corinthians 15:20-22

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,"

In fact John Chapter 5 tells us that all are going to one day be resurrected and that includes the lost. The unsaved will have to face the Judge Who is Christ Himself at the Great White Throne Judgment. Now in verse 23 we have the separations of the resurrections, and that of course was where we were in the last series of lessons.

I Corinthians 15:23a

"But every man (every human being that has ever lived is going to be resurrected) in his own order:...."

Or own company, like we find in the military which is an organizational set-up and easy to keep track of everybody. But remember God is a God of order, He has everything so organized. God never does things in a mumble-jumble way. So even the resurrections are going to be brought about in an orderly way. And as we saw in the past few lessons, first Christ and His resurrection, and Who was the very first. Then those who came out of the graves in Matthew 27 after His resurrection, which we taught, comprise the firstfruits as it was in Israel's harvest days. And now you see in verse 23 we have the next order in the resurrection and they are:

I Corinthians 15:23b

"...Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."
Now we know that every believer of every age naturally belongs to Christ. He is the Creator and everything is His, but when it comes to the positional term, especially as we see it in the Book of Ephesians, to be in Christ, in Him, then that is speaking uniquely of the Body of Christ. Now we never see the Jew in the economy of Law spoken of as being in Christ, because that is strictly a Pauline term. So I have to feel that verse 23 then is speaking of those who are in Christ will be the next main group to be resurrected. after the firstfruits which took place at Christ's resurrection. Now in all of my years of teaching I think the one thing that has come through for people is that you have to separate God's dealing with the Old Testament economy and His dealing with the Church. Remember you can not mix them; you must keep them sorted, and here again in order to understand this 23d verse you have to realize that Israel and the Church are two separate economies.

An economy is something that makes something go. In other words, when we speak of the economy of the nation we're speaking about the whole system of business, politics, you name it, and that comprises an economy, a system. Now in the economies of God you cannot take that which He was doing with Israel and bring it in to the Church which is His Body. Nor can you jump ahead and put the Tribulation saints back into the Body of Christ, so we're going to try and sort all this out in these next few lessons. Now we're going to go all the way back, if you will, to the Book of Acts. In the last lesson we pretty much covered the first fruits and how it was associated with the feast days of Israel, and also in the last lesson we covered the whole scope of God dealing with the Nation of Israel preparing them for the coming of their Messiah, their King, and their Redeemer, Jesus of Nazareth. And I think my closing remarks were, "That even though things look hopeless for the little Nation of Israel today, and it just seems like the whole world is trying to push them into the Mediterranean sea, yet take heart because the Scripture has promised that the little Nation of Israel will never disappear because it has to be there for Biblical prophecy to be fulfilled. Remember, God has to have the Nation of Israel in the land, in Jerusalem, in order to fulfill all things, and if that did not happen this whole Book becomes a fallacy."

But now we're going to come on this side of the Cross, and as Christ presented Himself to the Nation of Israel as their King and Redeemer and for the most part the Nation of Israel rejected it. Now some believed, but it was a relativity small percentage, and so for the most part the Nation of Israel said, "We'll not have this man to rule over us." And they finally demanded He be crucified. And one of the chief proponents of all that would have been Saul of Tarsus, who we will see in a few moments. Now as you come into the Book of Acts we find God so benevolent, and gracious that in spite of all that the Nation of Israel has done with regard to their
Messiah, God still comes back in the early chapters of Acts through Peter and the other eleven disciples, and is still going to give Israel the opportunity to repent of the horrible sin of having crucified their King. And He's still giving them the opportunity of having the King and the Kingdom if they would only believe it. Now we pick that up primarily in the great chapter on Pentecost in Chapter 2. This is just an overview now as we see everything building for God turning from the Nation of Israel to the Gentile world for the purpose then of calling out a people for His name, "The Body of Christ" Here in Acts Chapter 2 Peter is standing up on the day of Pentecost there at the great Temple complex, with thousands upon thousands of Jews having come into Jerusalem from all over the then-known world. And verse 22 says so plainly:

Acts 2:22a

"Ye men of Israel,..."

Now you remember what I said in my opening remarks? It's just as important to see what the Bible does not say as what it does say. Now most of us have been programmed to think that the Bible here should say, "Ye men of Israel and all you Gentiles" But it doesn't say that, it doesn't include a single Gentile. Here Peter is only addressing the Nation of Israel, and he's still on the same ground that he was before the crucifixion, and that was the Abrahamic, and the various other Old Testament Covenants.

Acts 2:22,23

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:"

Now that's plain language isn't it? What is Peter accusing the Nation of Israel of? Having killed their Messiah, they murdered Him. Even though they didn't do it with their own hands, they demanded it, and this caused Rome to carry it out, and so Peter is bringing this message to them that they had openly rejected their Messiah. Now you come on down to verse 36, and here again it's just as important to see what it does not say as what it says, and again Peter doesn't say anything about a Gentile, but rather:

Acts 2:36

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
Well just because they killed Him that didn't stop God's program, because God raised Him from the dead. He's still alive and Peter is making that known. So the message to Israel now was to "REPENT." Of what? Of having rejected their Messiah. My that was something to repent of, and they were to repent of it, and naturally they were to prove their repentance with, as Peter says here in verse 38, baptism.

Acts 2:38

"Then Peter said unto them, (the Nation of Israel in response to them having crucified their Messiah) `Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,...'"

And as you come on over to Chapter 3 we find Peter again preaching to this massive crowd of Jews who have gathered because of the miracle that has happened to the lame man as a result of Peter and John. And in verse 12 of Chapter 3 we find:

Acts 3:12,13a

"And when Peter saw it, (The amazement of all these Jews) he answered unto the people, `Ye men of Israel, (Again no mention of us Gentiles) why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? (But Who did?) The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers,...'"

Now did that mean anything to Gentiles? No! The Romans could have cared less Who came from Abraham, but to the Jew it meant everything. And again as we continue the verse, Peter reminds the Nation of Israel that they killed Him.

Acts 3:13b

"...hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go." And we see also in verse 15:

Acts 3:15

"And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses."

Now when we were studying the Book of Acts more or less verse by verse, I made the point that if you study and pick it apart you'll notice that never does Peter associate salvation with Christ's death, burial and resurrection like the Apostle Paul does. All
Peter is claiming in verse 15 is that Jesus was the Christ, and they had crucified Him, but God raised Him from the dead, and He could still fulfill all those Old Testament promises because He was alive. The secret of all of God's purposes in His going to the Cross had not been revealed yet, that's going to come a little later when the Apostle Paul comes on the scene. And always remember that God is Sovereign, and He has the prerogative of keeping things secret until He wants them revealed. And Deuteronomy 29:29 says so.

**Deuteronomy 29:29**

"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever,..."

So God keeps things secret until He reveals them, but when He does reveal them He expects mankind to believe it. And so this is the whole scope of Scripture that God will keep things secret until a particular point in time. And here in Acts Chapter 3 God hasn't revealed yet that in that death, burial, and resurrection was wrapped up the salvation of the whole human race, but only that He's still dealing with Israel on the grounds of those Covenants promises. Well, as a rule, when we come through the Book of Acts I like to bring my classes all the way over to Chapter 7, and remember this is just an overview to bring us up to Saul of Tarsus and the out-calling of the Church which is the next part of resurrection. So in Chapter 7 we find Stephen has gone through the whole sphere of Jewish history from the call of Abram, through the Law, through the coming of Christ proclaiming Himself as their Messiah. And now the Jews (Israel) are ready to jump on Stephen and put him to death when he lifted up the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And then you remember in verse 57.

**Acts 7:57,58**

"Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: (And don't forget who the they are, the Jews, and this was their way of capital punishment) and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."

Now this is the first time that we have someone other than the Twelve and the elders of Israel introduced into the Acts account. Never heard of him before have we? Now all of a sudden he's going to fill the pages of the biggest part of our New Testament. So as they were stoning Stephen in verse 59:

**Acts 7:59,60**
"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep." Now Chapter 8, and verse 1.

**Acts 8:1a**

"And Saul was consenting (promoting) unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church (Those believing Jews) which was at Jerusalem; ..."

Come on over to Chapter 9, and everything up to this point in time has been God dealing with His Covenant people. Everything up through the Old Testament with just a few exceptions was directed exclusively to the Nation of Israel. But beginning with Chapter 9 there is a parting of the ways in God's program for the human race. For the first time now He's going to deviate from that whole concept of Jew only, Jew only, Jew only. And now He's going to make this tremendous statement to Saul of Tarsus, that he is a chosen vessel to proclaim the name of Christ to the Gentiles. We won't take time here for his salvation experience on the road to Damascus because I think most of you are acquainted with that. Come all the way down in Chapter 9 and we deal with Ananias, a believing Jew there in Damascus, and The Lord is speaking though Ananias concerning Saul who will shortly be coming into his acquaintanceship. So let's begin with verse 13:

**Acts 9:13,14**

"Then Ananias answered, 'Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here (In Damascus) he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.'"

Remember Saul was the chief persecutor and he was going to stamp out anybody who has embraced Jesus of Nazareth as Israel's Messiah. Now you want to remember the major mentality of most Jews even today is the same as Saul of Tarsus. They still think that Jesus was an impostor and He was a blasphemer, and they think to do away with the name of Jesus from amongst Israel is doing their God a favor. I was reading in one of the Jewish magazines where an evangelist and an old Jewish rabbi were arguing the point of Jesus's Messiah-ship. And when this evangelist had claimed that Jesus had already been here, and had been crucified, and gone back to glory and we're waiting for him to come the second time, the old rabbi said, "No way, He's never been here." Well they argued that back and forth, and finally the old rabbi said, "Tell you what, we'll just wait till He gets here and then I'm going to ask Him, 'Have you been here before.'" Well that pretty much says it, and that's the Jewish thinking that He has not yet come. Even when we were in Israel a few weeks ago our guide was a
dyed-in-the-wool Orthodox Jew, and he made no bones about it. Now he could talk about Jesus, he knew the Four Gospel accounts of Christ's earthly ministry better than most of us, but when you would ask him, "Well then are you a believer, are you a Christian?" He would answer, "Oh no, I'm an Orthodox Jew." But they have to know all these things if they're going to guide people like us, but nevertheless it comes through real clear and plain that Christ has not yet come. They are still looking for Him. Oh, they think His coming is getting close. You talk to a Jew who knows his Old Testament and he'll be quick to tell you that, "The Messiah is coming soon."

And of course most of you have been reading in all of your papers about the Red Heifer in Israel. Well it's just another indication that these Orthodox Jews are excited about the prospect of their Messiah's soon coming. And when He comes He will set things so that they can have their Temple and something will happen to the Muslims on the Temple mount peaceably or other wise, but they're sure when Messiah comes they're going to have their Temple worship. And they will! However, it's not going to be the true Messiah. It's going to be the counterfeit Messiah, the Anti-christ. If you have Jewish friends and you have a chance to visit with them, as I have, and I have a lot of Jewish listeners out there in television, I'll ask them what they are looking for in a Messiah? And they always reply, "Well, He's not God like you claim. He's just a man, but he's going to be like a superman." Well that's just exactly like I teach the Anti-christ will be. He's going to have tremendous charisma, and ability to lead militarily, and economically, and every which way. But he's the counterfeit, he's the Anti-christ.

So this whole mentality was wrapped up in this one man, Saul of Tarsus, that Jesus was an impostor, He was a blasphemer. Now back to Ananias in verse 15. And if you haven't caught it before, mark this verse down, where Ananias now in Damascus is being spoken to by the Lord Jesus from Heaven and He says:

 Acts 9:15

"But the Lord said unto him (Ananias) 'Go thy way: for he (Saul of Tarsus) is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles,...""

Now you've never seen this language in the Bible before this. I know people get shook up when I tell them that Jesus never ministered to Gentiles with only a couple of exceptions. Most can't swallow that, and they try to find all kind of excuses that He must have gone to Gentiles. I always say, "Well, show me in the Scripture? Show me where He had any concert with Gentiles?" Well, He didn't, except the Roman centurion, and the woman of Canaan. And other than that He confined His ministry in that little neck of land between the Jordan and the Mediterranean. Only to the Jew did He go, and He made it so plain to the Twelve.
Matthew 10:5

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, `Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:'"

Now that's clear-cut language. Now for a moment go to Acts Chapter 11, this is the one verse I guess that did more to open my eyes on this thinking than any other verse in Scripture. It brought me to the place that I could see that God had been dealing only with the Jew, with exceptions (I'll always have to put that in there). But He was dealing with the Nation of Israel from the Old Testament promises, and now look what verse 19 says, and it's so plain.

Acts 11:19

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen (That which we read about back there in Chapter 7. Those Jews that came under that persecution) travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word (Old Testament) to none but unto the Jews only."

If you can squeeze a Gentile into that verse then you're a bigger miracle worker than I could ever hope to be. It just doesn't happen because they didn't have Gentiles in their listening audience. They are appealing only to the Jew on the basis of all those Old Testament promises. Now coming back to Chapter 9 for just a moment we find God sovereignly putting a fork in the road, and now He's going to send this man, Saul of Tarsus, far hence to the Gentiles. And in verse 16 we know it was fulfilled to the last jot and tittle. God said to Ananias:

Acts 9:16

"For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

And if you don't think that came true just take a look at II Corinthians Chapter 11 where Paul rehearses all the horrible things that happened to him in his getting the Gospel out to the Gentile world. And then going on in Chapter 9, we find Paul had gotten some food and his sight was restored and then in verse 20:

Acts 9:20

"And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, ..."

See he didn't go up town in the market place at the beginning. He was still confining his preaching to the Jew. No one has told him anything different yet. Now Ananias
knew it but I don't think Saul understood it yet. But now he goes immediately from his sight restoration, after having recovered from that trauma on the road to Damascus, and he goes to the Synagogue of the Jew. Does he preach Christ crucified? Buried? Risen from the dead? NO!!! He hadn't heard any of that either, any more than Peter had. But what does he preach? That Jesus was the Christ and was the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel. That's all he knew. So now what does God have to do? God can't let him go on with that. He's got greater things for the man. You know God does things in mysterious ways, doesn't He? He could have just appeared to him in a vision and said, "Paul, it's going to get pretty tacky here in Damascus. You'd better be leaving. Go on out the front gate and head down south." But God doesn't do that with this man. He waits until the death threats get so heavy and he's hearing it from more than one direction. And so what do his friends do? They have to let him down the wall in a basket in the middle of the night. And not on the side where the main road ran either. It was on the back side of Damascus. I always have to remind my classes, "How would you have like to have been in Saul's shoes, without benefit of all the street lights and lights everywhere. It was pitch dark and they let him down on the back side of the wall and he has to find his way, knowing that there are people out there trying to kill him. And that was the way God did it. From Damascus He took him, as He tells us later in the book of Galatians, Chapter 1, that He took him down to Mt. Sinai in Arabia. That was the very same place where God gave the Law to Moses and God was now going to give to this man these whole doctrines of grace. And in this doctrine of Grace Paul usually referred to it as the revelation of the mysteries.
LESSON TWO * PART II

THE MAIN HARVEST

I CORINTHIANS 15:24-54

Now we'll pick up again where we left off, and what we're trying to show is how this next order of the resurrection comes about and of course that would be the main harvest: the Body of Christ. Before we begin though I would like to share that last evening we got a phone call from a gentleman who had a friend who was an alcoholic and in a treatment center. He had been to visit her, and told her that this was probably her last chance and it was time that she got interested in the things of the spiritual. So he left this lady a couple of my tapes, and the reason he called was to tell me that from those tapes she had gotten saved, she was right with The Lord, and he was just so thrilled he couldn't get over it. So this is our whole purpose, whether you're watching by way of television or by a tape or through the printed page. The reason we teach is to help folk understand what the Bible is really all about. Remember, this is God's Word and He has left it with us to prepare us for eternity. That's the only reason we're here. This life of 70, 80, or 90 years is not even a split second compared with eternity.

We're in I Corinthians Chapter 15, and we've been talking about the doctrine of the resurrection, which is basic to our Christian faith, and at verse 20 we saw Paul sort of shift gears and now he breaks down how the resurrections are going to take place. They are not going to be all at one event, but rather first we had the firstfruits when Christ rose from the dead and those Jewish believers who came out of the graves after He did in Matthew Chapter 27.

Matthew 27:52,53a

"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose. And came out of the graves after his resurrection,..." Then Paul said in I Corinthians Chapter 15:23:

I Corinthians 15:23

"But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; (and) afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Which of course would have to be the believers of the Church Age. That's us believers. So in our last lesson that was the purpose of taking you all the way back to the Book of Acts and bringing us through those early chapters when Peter was still dealing with the Nation of Israel and how then God raised up Saul of Tarsus. He made
it plain as day that now this man was going to be sent to the Gentiles. And of course we saw all that in Acts Chapter 9, and we left him as they had lowered him in a basket over the wall because of the threats on his life. Now I want you to turn to Galatians Chapter 1, and in this little chapter Paul again brings us up to date as to what took place after he fled from Damascus. Now remember God is going to use this one man to take the message of salvation primarily to, but not exclusively, the Gentile world, although Jews are certainly going to be available for this same salvation. Let's start with verse 11.

**Galatians 1:11**

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man."

Now you know I'm a stickler for words, and the Holy Spirit never puts in excess words or never cuts it short, but rather He puts in everything that we need. Now look at that verse. If Paul is going to be preaching the same Gospel that Jesus and the Twelve preached then why in the world does He identify that the Gospel he preached as not being after man? Why those extra little words in there? Why didn't he just say, "I certify you, brethren, that when I preach the Gospel?.." But he doesn't put it that way. He says rather, "the Gospel which was preached of me." Now that identifies him, and if you'll come across into Chapter 2 he does it even more clearly. Now years later in Chapter 2 when he meets with Peter, James, and John, and the other leaders at the Church there in Jerusalem he's going to have to give an account of what he's been preaching to these Gentiles. Now look at verse 2 of Chapter 2.

**Galatians 2:2**

"And I went up (to Jerusalem) by revelation, and communicated (he made it crystal clear) unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles,..."

And again why didn't he just say, "the Gospel?" Well, that would have left a gap, so he clarifies it by saying, "I communicated unto them that Gospel which I preached among the Gentiles." Do you see how that clarifies everything? All right, now let's come back to Chapter 1 and see how all this came about because Paul is reviewing this. Remember when he writes Galatians this is about twenty years after his conversion in Acts Chapter 9. I think a lot of people lose sight of the chronology of some of these events in the New Testament. Saul of Tarsus was probably saved on the road to Damascus around 37 A.D. and then after his three years of desert training in Arabia it's 40 A.D. before he goes out into the Gentile world. Then he has that counsel at Jerusalem, which is in Acts 15 and Galatians 2 in A.D. 52 and so that's about 12 years after he began his ministry. Then the first letter that he writes, according to my
time-table, is the Thessalonian letters and they're written some 12 or 14 years after he 
began his ministry. So you see, time keeps rolling on. This isn't all just mashed 
together. It's all spread out over a period of 20 or 30 years. In Galatians Chapter 1 he 
is writing about 58 or 59 A.D. Remember, if he began his ministry in 40 A.D. then 
this is 18 years later when he starts writing these Epistles.

**Galatians 1:11,12**

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after 
man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, (by men) but by the 
revelation of Jesus Christ."

Now that tells you something. If Paul received everything that he is preaching and 
writing from The Lord Jesus Christ, where is Christ at the time of all this revelation? 
Well, He's in Heaven! He's in glory! After His resurrection! I'm always pointing this 
out. We hear so much of our preaching and our Sunday School material from the four 
Gospels. And there is nothing wrong with it to a degree. But that all took place before 
the work of the Cross. But this man is going to have the Lord Jesus telling him these 
things after the work of the Cross is accomplished, after He is ascended back to glory 
and now He's going to tell this man, Paul, what to tell the whole world. Not just the 
Jew. Not just the Gentile, but all the world. Now let's read on.

**Galatians 1:13**

"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, (remember 
that's what he was when he was a persecutor. He was a religious Jew) how that 
beyond measure I persecuted the church (or assembly) of God and wasted it:" He 
absolutely persecuted them. He tore them up. He killed and imprisoned them. 
Anything he could do to stop anything concerning Jesus of Nazareth.

**Galatians 1:14a**

"And profited..."

He was a religious big-wig, and he probably gained a tremendous amount of wealth. 
And from that period of time I think Saul of Tarsus was married and had children. I 
think as a result of being sold out now to Christ, he had to put all that behind him. He 
lost it all. And I think that was all included when he said that everything he ever 
owned he counted but dung. Why? Because now he had a far higher commission in 
life than gaining wealth or taking care of a family.

**Galatians 1:14**
"And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceeding zealous of the tradition of my fathers." That would be Judaism and religion. Now verse 15 and what's the first word? "But." Here he came out of all this religion and all of the benefits of it, but the flip side of it is that God had something else for the man.

**Galatians 1:15**

"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace," He didn't deserve God's grace. If anybody didn't deserve it, Saul of Tarsus didn't. But God called him by his grace for what purpose?

**Galatians 1:16**

"To reveal his Son in me, (for what purpose?) that I might preach him among the heathen, (Gentiles) immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:"

Here is his whole purpose, that God has brought this man on the scene for the distinct purpose of taking the Gospel of Grace to the Gentiles. (Faith in His death, burial, and resurrection for salvation, and nothing else.) Now, granted, it's going also to spill over to some Jews, but not many. You know, it's almost a total reverse of the Old Testament. There, God was dealing only with the Jew but a few Gentiles picked up some of the gleanings. And the same thing here. Saul of Tarsus, now Paul, is going to go primarily to the Gentiles. But there are a few Jews that come into the Body of Christ. Now in the last part of verse 16, just put yourself in Saul's shoes, running outside the walls of Damascus, not really knowing where he was going, pitch dark, no explicit instructions yet of where to go. All God had said was that he was going to suffer for His Name. Now if you had been in Saul's shoes, just outside the wall of Damascus and you put your old mind in gear, where would you have headed?

I know where I would have gone. Where would you have gone? Back to Jerusalem and look up Peter, James and John! He knew that those were the fellows who had been with Jesus for three years. He knew that they headed up the group that he had been trying to destroy. And now when he suddenly realized that the One that he thought he was trying to obliterate, was the very God that he thought he was serving, common sense tells me that the man should have headed right straight back to Jerusalem and poured out his heart to those Twelve men and shared with them everything that had happened, and confessed the fact that he had been dead wrong about Jesus, and now he was ready to serve Him. But he doesn't do that. Why? There's a purpose in all of this. A divine purpose. A sovereign purpose. And look what he says in the last part of verse 16:
**Galatians 1:16b**

"...immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:" Now who do you suppose he was referring to? The Twelve! He didn't go back to Jerusalem. He didn't confer with them. Now let's read on.

**Galatians 1:17**

"Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; (now that sets it clear doesn't it?) but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."

We know from another chapter in Galatians, what was in Arabia? Mount Sinai! And so that's where The Lord took him. Now we have to feel that from the account in the book of Acts, he must have been down there three years. And then from that, three years of experience at Mount Sinai in the desert, and now he's ready to take the message of grace to the Gentile world. Let's read on.

**Galatians 1:18**

"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, (not until. And by this time he has all these revelations. The mysteries are beginning to unfold and now he can go see Peter. Not to learn everything thing Peter knew but to share with Peter some of these new revelations. I've said it so often, Peter never did get them all. He never could comprehend all these revelations that the apostle Paul had received.) and abode with him fifteen days."

Now let's come back to Romans Chapter 16 and verse 25. And now at the end of this tremendous book of doctrine, the Book of Romans, (and it's doctrinal from verse 1 to at least Chapter 16) here in Chapter 16 and verse 25 comes a subtle statement, and it should blow our minds, but too many people don't even know it's in here. Look what he says:

**Romans 16:25**

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you (believers) according to (the Gospel? No. What?) my gospel (see how he identifies it) and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation (or revealing) of the mystery, (the secret that's been kept in the mind of God) which was kept secret since the world began,"

Now isn't that plain? Why can't people see that? That here this mystery which is the whole circle of Paul's doctrines were kept secret until God revealed them to this man. Most of which came out in that three years at Sinai and the deeper revelations that
come out in Ephesians. In his prison epistles, The Lord may have poured out of these deeper doctrines while he was sitting in prison in Caesarea waiting to go to Rome. Because, you see, after he'd spent that year and a half in Caesarea, he gets to Rome under house arrest and that's when he writes what we call his prison epistles: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. So those 18 months in prison probably were not wasted at all, because that's when The Lord revealed these tremendous, deeper things to him. Now let's go to Ephesians Chapter 3 and we'll start at verse 1. And remember this is just sort of an overview of Paul getting to the place where the Lord can use him to start calling out that next great body of resurrection: the Body of Christ, the Church.

**Ephesians 3:1,2**

"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for (whom?) you Gentiles. If you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God (now watch how it came. He doesn't say "which came to you by Jesus Christ". It doesn't say, "which came to you by Peter, James and John." It doesn't say, "by way of Abraham". What does it say?) which is given me (and then where did it go?) to you-ward:"

Do you see how plain that is? I I had a gentleman sitting at my kitchen table one night and I had him read that verse and he said, "I know what you're driving at." So I said, "Read it again." I think he read it three or four times before he finally just almost batted his eyes and he said, "I never saw that before." I said, "Well, you're typical. That's the way people read their Bibles." **They read it but they don't read it.** But when he saw that the Holy Spirit inspired the apostle Paul to say that this Grace of God was given to him to give to us, there was the process. But how many people understand that? That's why I'm always telling people when they call or write and tell me that they are relatively new believers, and they want to know what part of the Bible should they be reading. Paul!!! Because this is where it's at for the Church Age. Now you don't throw the rest of the Bible away, you know that. But it's Paul that reveals all these various doctrines. So now verse 3 of Ephesians 3.

**Ephesians 3:3**

"How that by revelation (the same word he used in Galatians) he (The Lord Jesus Himself) made known unto me the (what?) mystery; ..."

Now we covered all the mysteries in earlier lessons. And they are that whole composite of truth that makes for the Church Age. And they all come from the pen of the apostle Paul. I was talking to someone they other day, and they said, " Why do you make this much of Paul?" And I said, "Let me ask you something. I don't care what denomination handle you have. Do you have a pastor and deacons and Church
elders?" He said, "Well, yes." I said, "Where did you get the instructions for them?" Well, he didn't know. I said, "Well, I'll tell you. You got it from Timothy. And who wrote Timothy? Paul! Does your Church practice The Lord's table?" He said, "Oh, yeah." I said, "Where did you get it?" He thought maybe when Jesus said it. I said, "No, Jesus didn't put anything on it. All He said was, "This is My body and this is My blood, but He didn't give any instructions for the communion service. So where did we get it? From I Corinthians 11." And down the line you can go with every facet of what 99% of Christendom practices doctrinally. They get it from Paul. And yet they'll never give him the time of day. It's amazing isn't it? Let's go on.

_Ephesians 3:4,5_

"...Whereby, when ye read, [Paul's epistles] ye may understand my knowledge (of what?) in the mystery of Christ). [this will blow your mind if you read it carefully] Which in other ages[generations. It doesn't say which was made known. It was] not made known (see what a difference one word can make) to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;"

What does that bring up again? This whole concept of the secrets that God keeps until He's ready to reveal them. But when He reveals them He expects mankind to believe them. Now let's go down to verse 8.

_Ephesians 3:8_

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;"

How many believers understand the unsearchable riches of Christ? I could stand here for the next hour on just the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is beyond human comprehension. But we're not going to do that, we're going to move on. Let's look at verse 9.

_Ephesians 3:9_

"And to make all men see (understand) what is the fellowship of the mystery, (this body of truth that's been revealed to this apostle) which from the beginning of the world (the age - Adam) hath been (what?) hid (where?) in (the mind of) God, who created all things by Jesus Christ;"

In other words, we're talking about the same God in Ephesians that we're talking about in Genesis 1. And He has seen fit to keep all of these things secret until it has been
revealed to this apostle. Now let's go to the next verse. Why has God revealed this secret of the mystery?

**Ephesians 3:10**

"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church (ecclesia or called-out believers) the manifold wisdom of God."

Now, who is the Church? The seminaries? The preachers? Who? Everybody!!! The common ordinary person in the pew who comprises the Church. Are they supposed to know the manifold wisdom of God? Absolutely! I think it was Tyndale, when he was trying to get Bibles across Europe to England, he wanted to get the Word of God into the hands of every plowboy in England. What did that mean? There wasn't anybody too uneducated to have the Word of God in his hands. And that's what God intends. He wants every single believer to study the Scriptures and to understand them. Nothing thrills me more than when someone says, "I disagree with you. You even make me a little mad. But I have determined that I'm going to start studying my Bible." Hey! I'm the winner. I had a lady come out of one of my classes one night, and I mean she was hot under the collar. She said, "Les, I will never agree with you." I said, "Well that's fine." But she said, "I'll have to admit something. Back there the madder I got, the more I determined I was going to start studying my Bible." I said, "You made this trip over here all worth while." When you get a response like that, it's worth it. Because if people would just get into The Book and study it. Not just read it - study it. Then all of a sudden these things start falling into place.

**Ephesians 3:11**

"According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:"

Now when you see that word "eternal" what does it take you back to? All the way back to eternity past, before there was ever anything created. Even before there was a Heaven, or first angel, or first star, or a celestial body. That's eternity. And in that eternity past, God had His purpose for you and I, for the human race. Now verse 12.

**Ephesians 3:12**

"In whom (when you're a believer, you're a part and parcel of Christ Himself) we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."
LESSON TWO * PART III

THE MAIN HARVEST

I CORINTHIANS 15:24-54

As we start this lesson we are still talking about the resurrection in the greatest resurrection chapter of Scripture, and that's Chapter 15. We've been spending a lot of time now on the 23rd verse. Not the verse per se, but what's building up to it. In other words, where does this particular company of people come from. They certainly are not Israel. They are not out of the Old Testament economy. They certainly are not in reference to that which is still ahead - the Tribulation. So, who are these that are going to be coming when Christ comes? We've been pulling out the fact that Paul has now been raised up to go to the Gentile world with a whole different concept of salvation. *It's going to be based on that finished work of the Cross. How that Christ died for our sins, His blood was shed, He was buried and He rose from the dead for our justification.* You won't find that in Scripture until we get to the revelations given to the Apostle Paul. We are studying I Corinthians 15, but right now we're building this whole concept of the Body of Christ. It's this Body of Christ that is called out from the Gentile world that will one day be resurrected in total. And for those that are alive and remain, we will be changed.

Now, let's look at Romans Chapter 12 and verse 4 and see what it says. What I'm going to do now is to look up all these verses that have a reference to this Body of Christ. Always remember that back in Christ's earthly ministry and Peter's and so forth, they were proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom. And that was the Good News that Christ was as the King in their midst and He was ready to fulfill all the Old Testament promises concerning Israel and His Messiah-ship, and so it was the good news of the Kingdom. It was for Jew only. There was nothing in there for the Gentile.

Now when Israel rejected the Gospel of the Kingdom and the King, and they crucified Him, God turned to this other Jew, Saul of Tarsus, the Apostle Paul as we now know him, and he begins to proclaim the Gospel of Grace. The Gospel of Grace means that nothing of law or legalism can be associated with it. It is primarily, but not exclusively, to the Gentiles. But to the Jew, it was the Gospel of the Kingdom. And when it was rejected, God turned with the Gospel of Grace. Now through the preaching of the Gospel of Grace, instead of calling out a Covenant people such as Israel was, we are calling out what Paul refers to as the Body of Christ. Never does Jesus or the Twelve ever use the term *"the Body of Christ."* Never! I've challenged people for years - *"If you find it, you show it to me."* No one ever has. They did not know about it and they did not use the term. Jesus knew about it, but He never revealed it. Then, on the other hand, you will never see Paul refer to the Gospel of the
Kingdom! Why? Because he's not concerned with the Gospel of the Kingdom. That was Jewish. He is concerned with the Body of Christ, the Gospel of Grace and it goes to Gentiles. There's that big fork in the road, if I may put it that way. Now we're going to look at all these verses that make a reference to the Body of Christ. That is a Pauline term exclusively. Never is it used anywhere else in Scripture.

**Romans 12:4**

"For as we have many members in one body, (using the human body as an illustration) and all members have not the same office:"

Well, all he's saying is that fingers don't do the same thing as a toe does. The eyes don't do the same thing as the ears. Every member of our body has an intrinsic purpose. Now let's look what the next verse says.

**Romans 12:5**

"So we (as believers of the Gospel of Grace) being many, are one body (where?) in Christ, and every one members one of another."

Now we've had missionaries in our home the last couple of days and we were sharing this. That here they have believers down in the jungles of Bolivia and yet they're in the same Body as we have right here in Oklahoma and the rest of America. We are all members of that same Organism, that spiritual make-up of the believers from wherever they are, from whatever station in life, we are all members of this one Body. That's crucial to understand. Now let's go on to the next scripture, I Corinthians 12.

**I Corinthians 12:12,13**

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: (he's referring to our human make-up. The hands, toes, ears, eyes, etc., but we're under one central nervous system. The head controls the body) so also is Christ. For by one Spirit (the Holy Spirit) are we all (and I always emphasize that word. It isn't just the spiritual who get baptized into the Body. Every believer of whatever station in life, when he becomes a believer, a child of God, then the Holy Spirit baptizes that person into the Body of Christ) baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink (or partake) into one Spirit."

Now this is something that I don't think Peter ever got the whole story. And most people today do not comprehend the position that you and I as believers of the Gospel have in Christ. We are already seated in the heavenlies, Paul teaches, and we are
waiting for the day when we will be taken up into the heavenlies and to be in union with Christ Himself. Now let's look at verse 27 of Chapter 12.

*I Corinthians 12:27*

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

Do we lose our identity? No! This is the beauty of it. You and I can go to The Lord in prayer and does Peter come and say, "Hey Lord, number 55678 is calling". God knows every one of us by name. Not by a number or a group, but by individual name. And so he says we are members in particular of the Body of Christ. Now let's turn over to Ephesians. And here again, Christ is being presented as the Head of the Body.

*Ephesians 1:20*

"Which he wrought in Christ, (the mighty power of verse 19) when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places," That's our position. When He's in Heaven, we're in Heaven. Now verse 21.

*Ephesians 1:21-23*

"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, (that's where Christ is. He is above everything that is named) not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And (God) hath put all things under his feet (whose feet? Christ's) and gave him to be the head over all things to the (what people?) the church, (the ecclesia, which is now the Body of Christ) Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

We looked at this several weeks ago and remember what the word fullness meant? Complement, which means that Christ will finally have the Body in His presence then He Himself considers Himself complete. Remember, we went back to Genesis and when poor old Adam was alone and was naming all the animals and they all had their mates, what did God say? "I will make a helpmeet for him." And what was the other word for helpmeet? Complement. And so as Eve was the completion of Adam, so also will the Body of Christ be the completion of Christ Himself. Now, let's look at Ephesians Chapter 3 and verse 6. Let's start at verse 5 so we can pick up the thought.

*Ephesians 3:5,6*

"Which in other ages (generations) was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles
should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ (how?) by the gospel”.

Not by works, or baptism, or some other phenomena. Just by the Gospel. That's the only way. The Gospel, how that Christ died, was buried and rose again as we find in I Corinthians 15:1-4 and Romans 10:9-10. Now let's come across to Chapter 4, still in Ephesians. Now this is an interesting series of verses.

**Ephesians 4:4a**

"There is one body, ..." There it is again. You don't see that in Peter's preaching. You don't see that in Christ's earthly ministry. But all through Paul's writing you find this term, "the Body". Let's read on.

**Ephesians 4:4b,5**

"... and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, (absolutely, there's only one Name given among men whereby we must be saved) one faith, one baptism,"

I always smile when people say, "Well, I'm of the Catholic faith," "I'm of the Methodist faith," "I'm of the Baptist faith," "I'm of this faith." What do they do with a verse like this? There aren't all that many faiths. There's one faith and only one. That's what The Book says.

**Ephesians 4:6**

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Let's look on down into verse 12 of Ephesians 4. Why do you suppose we're seeing all these references to the Body all of a sudden, in the book of Ephesians? More than we did in Romans or Corinthians. Paul's writings are a progressive revelation just like the Bible as a whole. Now when Paul first begins his letters he does not make that big a deal over the Body of Christ. In Romans just that one mention. In I Corinthians, one or two mentions. But now as you come into the book of Ephesians and Paul has had further revelations, this is one of the prison epistles. And he has now been sitting in prison in Caesarea for a year and a half and all of these deeper things come and now that's why you see more about the Body in Ephesians than you did in Romans and Corinthians. It's part of this greater revelation of our position in the Body, which is in Christ.

**Ephesians 4:12**
"For the perfecting (maturing) of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the (what?) body of Christ."

Do you see that? Now, let me make a point. Not every church member across the world is a member of the Body of Christ. In fact, I'm going to stick my neck out and say a small percentage of them. I don't care what church you belong to. Mine included. Yes, I'm a member of a local church. Some people call and ask. I love my pastor and I think it's mutual. But there are members of my church that are as lost as lost can be and they are not in the Body of Christ. I don't know who they are because I'm not judging. I'm not looking at somebody and saying, "Well, you're not in the Body." In fact I told somebody the other day, and I'll tell my whole television audience, don't ever look at anybody, I don't care how far down the tube they are, don't look at them and say, "Well, you're going to Hell", because you don't know that.

Salvation may come to that person at some future date and you don't know that. And so, please, don't ever tell someone that. That's God's prerogative, not ours. And the same with judging whether someone is a believer. I can't and neither can you. Only God can see the heart. But I do know from the Scripture and from everything else that bombards us, there are a lot of bonafide church members who are not members of the Body of Christ. Only The Lord himself places a person into the Body of Christ. Denominations can't, your preacher can't do it, a priest can't do it. This is something that only the Spirit of God can do. So, what is the purpose of all the things that God has been doing on behalf of the Church? To edify the Body of Christ, the true believer! Now let's go on down to pick up the whole thought. All this that's been going on in the earthly sojourn as he points out in verse 11, "apostles; prophets; and some evangelists, teachers, pastors. All of this is to edify the Body of Christ. Now let's look at verse 13.

**Ephesians 4:13**

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, (in the body) and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect (or mature) man, (not sinless perfection. We never reach that in this life)unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Let's look now at verse 14 and if this isn't apropos. I have to feel that the people I teach can look at this verse and say, "Yep, I know what it means." Because if we're taught then we will not be tossed to and fro.

**Ephesians 4:14**
"That we henceforth (have grown in our faith and stature) be no more children, tossed to and fro; and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight (or cunningness) of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

There's more deceptions today than the world has ever seen. How are we going to confront it? With a knowledge of the Word and a realization of what our position is in the Body. Now let's look at verse 15

**Ephesians 4:15**

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him (in that position in Christ) in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"

Now Paul is always using the human body as an illustration. Where does everything originate in the operation of our fingers, legs, toes and everything else? The brain! The mind! The head! That's what Christ is. He is the Head of the Body and as the Body functions, even in this world, where does its marching orders come from? The Head! Not some denominational hierarchy. I've got nothing against denominations, if they're into the Word. So be it. All I'm saying is, that's not where you get your marching orders. You get your orders from the Head and He is going to speak through the Word. Now if your pastor is preaching the Word, then great. But if he isn't, then you'd better come back to The Book because here is where you're going to be held accountable. Now let's go on into Colossians and let's begin at Chapter 1, verse 15. And again, this is just simply showing the preeminence of the position of Christ Who is the Head of the Body.

**Colossians 1:15**

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:"

I had a letter from a lady the other day who said, "I've enjoyed your programs, your teaching, but when I heard you say that Jesus was God, I had to shut you off and I don't want to ever listen to you again." Well, that's her privilege. But what is the poor girl doing? She is closing her eyes to all the truth of Scripture that Jesus Christ is very much God! You can see it all the way through the Scripture. Not just an off-spring of God, or something created by God, but he is God! Verse 16.

**Colossians 1:16-18a**

"For by him were all things created, 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 and for him:” And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the (what?) body, ...

Now are you beginning to see it? That He, in His position in the heavenlies, is the Head and we are functioning as the Body and we move, like Paul said to the Athenians in the book of Acts, everything we do - we breathe, we eat, we move, all because of Him. And so He is the Head of the Body.

Colossians 1:18,19

"And he is the head of the body, the church: 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 should all fulness dwell;" Yes he's preeminent. Now, let's come over to Chapter 2 verse 14:

Colossians 2:14-17

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, (the Law) which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over then in it. (In His work of the Cross) Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; (what does that flash back to? Judaism! The Law! That's all behind us. It's all been nailed to His Cross.) Which are a shadow of things to come but the body is of Christ."

Now I don't think the Body of Christ even had the preview of the types in the Old Testament, but the Cross did. His resurrection did. But I don't think the Body did. Now, there's one more scripture I want to get here in Colossians. Colossians Chapter 3 and verse 15.

Colossians 3:15,16a

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in your richly in all wisdom; ...

God doesn't want a bunch of ignorant believers in the Body. He wants every child of His to be well-taught, to be well instructed, to be grounded and to enjoy our faith. There's no room for a miserable Christian. If they're miserable, they're out of fellowship with The Lord. They are out there in the world where they shouldn't be. But it's a joyous life and God wants it to be that way. Now reading on.
Colossians 3:17

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
I Corinthians 15:23, and we're using that text as a jumping off place, because we previously asked, "Who are Christ's at His coming that will be resurrected in the largest part of the resurrection harvest?" Remember from the Old Testament economy we had the firstfruits - the sampling - that's Christ and those who came out of the graves after He came out in Matthew Chapter 27. Then we have the main harvest, which is the Church resurrection and includes the Rapture. Then we have the gleanings and the corners, and if we have time we'll go back to Daniel Chapter 12 and we'll see this is the resurrection of the Old Testament saints shortly after the Kingdom here on earth is established. So I teach the resurrection of the Just (the believers of all the ages) will be in three distinct separate stages.

I Corinthians 15:23

"But every man in his own order: (Or his own company) Christ the firstfruits; afterward (It's now been almost 2000 years.) they that are Christ's at his coming."

That's not a reference to His Second Coming but since Paul is writing about this he's talking about Christ's coming for the Body of Christ, "The Rapture of the Church," two completely different events that are separated by 7 years. Remember, all the Old Testament promises and programs never considered the out-calling of the Church. It was never in there because God had kept it secret. So all the Old Testament prophecies spoke of the coming of Christ to be their King, and they would have to go through the Tribulation and then they could have the King and the Kingdom. You can find that in Psalm Chapter 2, Joel Chapter 2, and Zechariah Chapter 14. They all speak of this kind of a Biblical timeline. However, Israel rejected the King back at the Cross and the Tribulation did not come in, they did not get the Kingdom. So instead, after having crucified their Messiah, and Peter does not succeed in turning Israel into repentance (Acts 2:38).

God then brings forth the Apostle Paul and this is what we have been looking at for the past three lessons, and it's the calling out the Body of Christ primarily from the Gentiles. And since it has nothing to do with the Old Testament program or Tribulation, which is also tied to the Old Testament and primarily for the Jew, then we maintain that the Body of Christ is insulated from God's dealings with Israel either before or after the Cross, and so consequently this is why I teach the Rapture. The Body of Christ has to be off the scene before God can pick up dealing with Israel
again. Always remember, if we could just take the Church out, which is in parentheses, then we can place the Tribulation back with the Old Testament economy of the Second Coming of the Messiah, the Tribulation, the King, and the Kingdom. However, when Israel rejected it, God went to Paul and the calling out of the Body of Christ, and it has to be raptured and then He will yet bring in the Tribulation to Israel. Now let's go back to Romans again. Turn to Chapter 11 verse 25 (that I always maintain will be the triggering mechanism for Christ coming for the Church). Now we know there is no time element, we can never say that in five years He's coming. I certainly like to think He is, but we can't say that. We don't know if He's coming in a hundred years, but we do know that He's coming, and we do know that He's coming the moment that the Body of Christ is complete. When the last person is saved, and the Body is complete then Christ will come for the Church.

\textit{Romans 11:25}

"For I would not, brethren,..." (Remember Paul is writing to the common ordinary believer out there in the pew. Every believer should be aware of these things, and that's why I teach. I don't have to teach the preachers and the seminarians, but rather I want to teach the common people out here in the everyday walk of life. Because God wants every one of us to drop our ignorance, and pick up on the wisdom of His Word).

"...that ye should be ignorant of this mystery,..."

Now define the word `ignorant.' When someone is ignorant it doesn't mean that they don't have the brain power. Someone who is ignorant isn't someone who is incapacitated to a degree, but rather ignorance is simply a lack of being taught. I consider myself ignorant regarding electricity. I know the ramifications of it, but to get right into the details of three-phase electricity, I'm lost. Why? Because I've never been taught about it. I'm sure I could learn it if I had to, and it's the same way with Scripture, most people are ignorant of the Scriptures not because they don't have the capacity but because no one has taught them. \textbf{So this is what Paul is constantly advocating; learn, learn, gain knowledge, get wisdom from The Book.}

\textit{Romans 11:25}

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; (And here is the secret) that blindness (A spiritual blindness) in part is happened to Israel,..."

Well, what's Paul talking about? When Israel rejected the Messiah, why did they reject Him? \textbf{Ignorance!} They didn't know Who He was. I've been telling my classes
for 25 years, over and over, Israel should have known Who Jesus was. Israel could have known Who Jesus was because it was in the Old Testament. Why didn't they? They didn't bother to study. The priests knew it, and they knew the stuff on the surface, but they didn't get right down into the nitty gritty of the Old Testament prophecies. When the wise men came to Herod and asked about the King of Israel, Herod calls up the big-wigs of Judaism, and they had to go search the Scriptures to see where He was to be born. Did they find it? Sure they did. They said "He was to be born in Bethlehem," so they could have known, but they didn't. And do you know America is no better right now today? Every last person in these 50 states should know that we are in the end times, that we are approaching the very coming of Christ, and the Tribulation, the appearance of the Anti-christ and world government, but do they? No. Most of them don't even know what you're talking about. Why? Because they chose to remain ignorant. They don't have to be, but they are. Paul is admonishing the believers at Rome, "Don't be ignorant of this fact that God has literally dropped a spiritual blindness on the Nation of Israel." Remember the individual Jew can still have his eyes opened and believe, but nationally they are blinded, in fact, here in this chapter look at verse 7.

**Romans 11:7**

"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; (What were they seeking? The King and the earthly Kingdom! How did they miss it? They were ignorant. How ignorant? Well, they were looking for a King Who would come in with pomp and power and circumstance, at least symbolically riding on a great white Arabian steed. Instead their King came riding in on a lowly donkey. And they missed it. Well, they were ignorant of Who He really was, and so Paul says, `that Israel did not obtain that which they were looking for,') but the election (Those few Jews who did believe) hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." And that's the Nation of Israel to this very day. They are still blind to Who Jesus really was. Now coming back to verse 25, Paul says, "That we Gentiles are to understand that this spiritual blindness has fallen on the Nation of Israel, and it will remain on their spiritual eyes"

**Romans 11:25b**

"...until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Well, what's the fulness of the Gentiles? The Body of Christ, the Church. So when the Body of Christ is full then God will take us out of the way and He will start dealing again with the Nation of Israel. Now when I say that the Tribulation is primarily Jewish, here's where I have to go back with you to Jeremiah Chapter 30, and of course this is just one verse. There are many, many others. However this one is so plain that I think anybody can comprehend it.
Jeremiah 30:6,7a

"Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?" (From what? Fear. The horrors of the Tribulation are not only going to be physical, but also mental. And it's going to test men's ability to keep their sanity, because of the horrors that are coming on the earth). Now verse 7:

"Alas! for that day is great, (What day? The Tribulation) so that none is like it:"

Remember what Jesus said in 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." And the world is getting ripe for that last seven years. When you read of the horrible wickedness, and sinfulness, and evil that men are practicing, not so much in America yet, but in other areas of the world, you wonder how God can put up with it. It's hard to sleep at night to think that men can get that low in their sins, and so the wrath of God is coming on sinful men, He's going to pour His wrath out. You might ask, "Well, why should this generation have to suffer so horribly when we've had 6000 years of human history?" Because there are more people living in the world right now than have lived almost all the way back to the beginning. And so the vast majority of the human race will come under the wrath and judgment of God, by virtue of our numbers. Now reading the verse again:

Jeremiah 30:7

"Alas! for that day is great, (in it's trauma and suffering) so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's (Israel's) trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Israel is the primary one that God is dealing with. In all of God's dealing with the human race, Israel is at the center of it all. I always like to share with you Deuteronomy Chapter 32:8. This verse can't make it any plainer.

Deuteronomy 32:8

"When the most High (that term of Deity is mostly associated with the Gentiles) divided to the nations (all the nations of the world) their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds (national boundaries) of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."

Do you see that? Everything God has done with the human race on this planet revolves around that little Nation of Israel. Now most of the world doesn't want to believe that, and it is hard to believe. How can one little nation of just a few million people be so important in God's overall picture of the billions of the rest of the world.
Well, that's what He said, "That at the core of everything is this little Nation of Israel." Now the same way then with the Tribulation, it's going to be primarily God pouring out His wrath on Christ-rejecting Jews. But the whole world is going to come under the effects of the Tribulation events. It's going to be cataclysmic, it's going to be meteorites, volcanoes, and earthquakes, and anything of a natural phenomena, and a disaster. The Tribulation will see it all in magnified portions.

But what we're talking about is the Body of Christ and how it has to be taken out of the way before God can pick up again with the Nation of Israel. Now come to I Corinthians 15, and we're going to jump ahead to verse 51, because this is still in the whole concept of resurrection. And this is the "Great Resurrection Day." This is the "Main Harvest." The Old Testament and Tribulation saints will be relatively few in number compared to the number in the Body of Christ. Now lest you think, "Well, there hasn't been all that many people saved during the Church age." Hold it, what about all the infants that have died in the third world countries for all these years, where are they? They're going to be in the Body of Christ. Where are all the aborted babies? They're also are going to be in the Body of Christ. So don't think for a moment that the Body of Christ isn't going to be humongous, but remember we're not going to be just confined to the planet when we rule and reign, but rather we're going to rule and reign in the heavenlies. I'm convinced the whole sphere of outer space is going to be our domain. We are going to have all kinds of room, and we're going to serve Him with joy unspeakable, and how is all that going to begin?

_I Corinthians 15:51,52_

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; (Something that has been kept secret, something that is not in the Old Testament, it's not in the Four Gospels, it's not in the Book of Acts, but here it comes from the pen of this apostle. A secret that) We shall not all sleep, (die) but we shall all be changed," Now that's common sense isn't it? If we're not going to die and have a resurrection body then we've got to have a new body. And he explains that in verse 52.

"In a moment, (In the Greek that means the smallest division of time) in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; (Now this has nothing to do with the trumpets in the Book of Revelation. Don't ever limit God. You know I get so disturbed that people always try to put God in a box. Just because there is a trumpet back in Revelation they think He's only got one and He has to use it here also. No, God has all kinds of trumpets, and He's going to use this one for the Church.) for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,(There's the resurrection of the dead believers, called out of the graves wherever they are, whether in the ocean, or in a cave, cemetery or wherever.) and we (who are alive) shall be changed." Now hold it right
there and let's go back to the Book of Philippians Chapter 3 and let's qualify that from another portion of Scripture.

**Philippians 3:20-21**

"For our conversation (citizenship, we are already citizens of Heaven) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, (Not the King) the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile (Corrupt, prone to death) body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, (the one He walked with those 40 days after His resurrection) according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

The Body He had during those 40 days was so supernatural, He didn't have to go to the door to enter and leave. Christ wasn't limited by time and space, and that's not gobbledy-gook, but Scriptural fact, and that's the kind of body that we're going to have. We're limited to the physical aspect of this old planet, but when we get into the eternal, it's a whole new ball game. Now for a moment let's come back to I Corinthians Chapter 15. And so we will be raised incorruptible, and changed into a glorious body like His resurrected body. Now verse 53:

**I Corinthians 15:53,54**

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on in corruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,..." We need to go for comparison to I Thessalonians Chapter 4, and here is the "Blessed Hope" as Paul writes to Titus.

**Titus 2:13,14a**

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Who gave himself for us,..." Now in Thessalonians 4, beginning with verse 13, and again Paul uses that word "ignorant."

**I Thessalonians 4:13,14**

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, (don't go through life and not understand these things. Even for believers. You know of believers who have no concept of this, but here it is.)brethren, concerning them which are asleep, (died in Christ) that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." And in this next verse is your qualification for being in the Rapture of the Church. If you are alive when it happens and you have believed with all your heart the Gospel of our Salvation as found in I Corinthians 15:1-4)
"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, (do you see how plain that is?) even so them also which sleep (or have died) in Jesus will God bring with him."

Now there is another instance where the Name Jesus and God are used interchangeably. The God that is coming for the saints is Jesus. Jesus is the God Who is coming with the saints. Do you see that. You can't separate it, I mean they're the same. Now verse 15:

I Thessalonians 4:15,16

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, (Remember as Paul wrote this The Lord Himself revealed this to him from His place in Heaven.) that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord (that is for the Body of Christ, the Church) shall not prevent (or go ahead of ) them which are asleep.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: (The same one He uses in I Corinthians 15) and the dead in Christ shall rise first:"

This will be in resurrection power when they hear the voice to come forth just like Lazarus did, only they're going to come out in resurrection power never to die again, and they're going to be drawn up to meet Him in the air. So the dead in Christ will go first, but in the next split second:

I Thessalonians 4:17

"Then (in the next split second) we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them (they have already received their new bodies coming out of the grave and we're going to join them) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: (And then Paul says) and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Now in verse 17 the two words "caught up" are the two words that comprise the word "Rapture." Now I know the word Rapture isn't in here but "caught up" is and it's the same meaning. Then Paul says"

I Thessalonians 4:18

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."
LESSON THREE * PART I

RESURRECTED INTO THE KINGDOM

I CORINTHIANS 15:24-34

Now in the last several lessons we have been talking about Christ and the firstfruits, as He was the first to be resurrected, and also those that came out of the graves after His resurrection in Matthew 27. And then we looked quite in-depth at the resurrection of the Body of Christ, the Church Age believers. How they will be separated from the rest of the believers, and we still have one group left that we didn't squeeze into our last four lessons, and that would be the resurrection of the Old Testament believers. The best place to pick that up will be back in the Book of Daniel. Before we go to Daniel let's read again this verse in I Corinthians 15 that we've been using as a jumping off place for the resurrection of the believers of all the ages.

I Corinthians 15:23

"But every man (that is every believer) in his own order: (or his own group or company, and here's it's reviewed again) Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Now here again the Scripture does not enumerate right here for us, but instead sends us back to other references to dig out where the various groups of believers come into play when it comes to resurrection. In our last lesson we looked at how Paul lays it out in the latter part of I Corinthians Chapter 15, and then going on into I and II Thessalonians how that the Church Age believers will be caught up to meet The Lord in the air. However, we did not have time to pick up the Old Testament believer, so in this lesson we're going to go all the way back to Daniel Chapter 12. Now in other remarks that I've made concerning the resurrection, the Old Testament certainly alludes to it, and the Old Testament saints certainly were believers in a resurrection, but there's nothing said about it in the Old Testament to build any real knowledge concerning it. Daniel Chapter 12 probably says the most of anything, although we've looked at Job's reference to the resurrection life, and we certainly know that David expected to be resurrected, but Daniel Chapter 12 lays it out as clearly as any place, and we might as well start at verse 1.

Daniel 12:1

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: (the Nation of Israel) and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: (that's a reference to the
Tribulation) and at that time thy people (the Nation of Israel) shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book."

So there we have the delineation that the unbelievers are not going to be resurrected at the same time as the believers. Now we pointed this out several lessons back that when Jesus spoke of resurrection in John Chapter 5 He did not divide them either. He just said that at the last day there would be a resurrection of the just and the unjust, but He does not put a time-frame around either one. Now verse 2.

Daniel 12:2

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Again that brings the two resurrections seemingly into the same event, but we know from other Scriptures that they are not. So we're going to have the resurrection of the believing Old Testament saints that will be totally separate from the resurrection of the unbelievers which we will pick up later. Now verse 3:

Daniel 12:3

"And they that be wise..."

Wise in faith, and you know I have to enlighten folk that regardless where it was in human history, whether it was Adam and Eve or whether it was Noah, Abraham, Moses, or David, they were all recipients of eternal life by virtue of faith. I can't emphasize that enough, because it has to be by faith. Iris and I have heard whole sermons on Salvation and not once heard the word faith mentioned. I don't see how they can do that. You must incorporate faith into our salvation experience, because it's all of faith. The Book of Hebrews said:

Hebrews 11:6

"But without faith it is impossible to please him:..."

Then how in the world can they preach salvation and never use the word. Well, it's beyond me, but here again we have to understand that these Old Testament believers were in their position as saved people, as we would call it today, by virtue of their faith. Now reading verse 3 again in Daniel 12:

Daniel 12:3
"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that
turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Now here in verse 4 The Lord comes right down and deals with Daniel in particular.

**Daniel 12:4**

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, (this Book of Daniel) even
to the time of the end: (in other words Daniel is a Book of prophecy that was just so
much gobbledy-gook, if I may put it that way, to most of the scholars and theologians
down through history, because it contains so much end-time scenarios that they
couldn't comprehend it. So it was a closed Book, but here Daniel is told that it would
be opened up at the time of the end, and we are certainly witnessing that today,
and) many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. (in the end time.)

And of course there are various connotations to that. And when it says, "**knowledge
shall be increased,**" I'm going to take that word to mean not just secular knowledge
and the explosion of technology, which of course is pertinent to the end time. In a
recent trip to Ohio and Indiana, Iris and I had a lovely time with a young couple out
there, and he is involved with one of the larger banks and its computerization. My,
what a thrilling time we had as he explained how all this amazing exploding
technology is just bringing the whole world so rapidly to the scenario of the end-time.
We know that all of the prophecies of this Book could never be fulfilled without the
technology that is exploding, it just couldn't happen. So it's necessary, and yet it's the
very thing that tells us that the end is near. Not only are we seeing secular knowledge,
but we're also seeing a greater understanding of the Scripture in these last days than
what men were able to do before, because as I've always taught, "**God is the keeper
of secrets.**" And I've used the verse Deuteronomy 29:29 over and over.

**Deuteronomy 29:29a**

"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God:...."

And this is so true that God has kept things secret but is now revealing them as we
approach the end of the age. So knowledge is not just limited to the secular world, but
also into the area of the spiritual, and the understanding of God's Word. Now verse 5.

**Daniel 12:5-7**

"Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the
bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. and one said to
the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, 'How long shall it be
to the end of these wonders?" And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon
the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven,
and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be (and here comes the Tribulation
in a little different language) a time, (one year) times, (two years) and an half; (half a
year, or a total of 3 1/2 years) and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the
power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."

Well, that's right in accord with all the rest of our Old Testament prophecy, as well as
what Paul writes in the Book of II Thessalonians; and what John reveals in the Book
of Revelation. It all speaks of these final 7 years when the Nation of Israel will come
to the place where God is dealing with them again on the basis of His Covenant
promises. Now verse 8, and I think this is such an appropriate verse for us to
understand today. Daniel wrote and he looked at what he had written:

Daniel 12:8a

"And I heard, but I understood not:...."

Let me give you a comparison in the New Testament, so come back with me to the
Book of Luke Chapter 18. I just happened to think of this. I think people are
beginning to catch on to my style of teaching. I do not go by a particular format, or
lesson plan, but rather when something comes to mind I'm going to go look at it. And
as we will see here in Luke, it happens throughout Scripture in God's dealing, how He
keeps things secret even though we can't understand. We say how could it have been
kept secret? God is Sovereign, and He has a way of closing minds and ears that we
know nothing of. Now remember this is the setting at the end of the three years of
Christ's earthly ministry, and they are about to go to Jerusalem for the final days
before His crucifixion. Now let's look at this carefully and compare it with what we
just saw in the Book of Daniel.

Luke 18:31-34

"Then he (Jesus) 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.' (do you suppose The Lord said
that when the Twelve were sleeping? Why, no. They heard Him, they were listening
intently, but look what the next verse says.)And they understood none of these things:
and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken."
Now for goodness sake Who hid it? God did. It wasn't time for them to know. Have you ever stopped to think what the account would have been in the Four Gospels if the Twelve would have known all this? It would have completely upset the apple cart, because then you see it would have to be recorded that the eleven, and Mary, and the rest of them were sitting outside the tomb waiting for the resurrection. Because they had all understood just exactly what was taking place. But they didn't. They weren't waiting at the tomb, you know that. When they were told that He was alive they couldn't believe it. When you go into John's Gospel Chapter 20, and Peter and John raced to the empty tomb, and when they saw the proof of resurrection, it says:

**John 20:8,9**

"Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." Well you see that's God prerogative. He can hold things secret, and He did it with Daniel as well as He did with the Twelve. Now back to Daniel Chapter 12 again. Now verse 8 & 9.

**Daniel 12:8,9**

"And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, `O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?' And he said, `Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'" God is not going to reveal these prophetic truths until the end-time, and He's ready for men to begin to put it all together. Verse 10.

**Daniel 12:10a**

"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly:...."

We're seeing that today. I read a lot even from the secular world, and I was a reading a speech a gentlemen made from Georgetown university in Washington. He was decrying the fact that our whole society is falling apart because of the break-down of the family, and he was trying to put out some positive indications that we have sort of turned the corner. Let's hope so. But we've seen during the past 20-30 years the complete destruction of the fabric of our society. Absolute disregard for absolutes. A recent poll indicates that 60% of American thinks that there are no absolutes. Well no wonder we're in trouble. And this is what the prophecy said:

**Daniel 12:10b**
"...but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

Oklahoma is right here in the Bible belt (where most people go to Church at least once in a while) - but you bring up the fact that we're in the end-time, and even most of these people look at you with a blank look. They don't know what you're talking about. It's so sad that people don't comprehend how close we are to the end-time. Now I'm not saying in 48 hours or anything like that, but in the relative term of the last 6000 years we are certainly within the last moments of the age whether it's a few years or whatever. But we can understand because we know the Scripture. But now look at verses 11, 12, and 13. This is the crux of the whole things so far as I Corinthians Chapter 15 is concerned.

Daniel 12:11

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, (and remember that happens at the mid-point of the Tribulation at the end of that first 3 1/2 years when the Anti-christ will go into the Temple and defile, and turn on the Nation of Israel like they've never been persecuted before) and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. (1290 days)

Now here you have to be a little bit of a student of Scripture to realize that all of sudden you have a different number here. We're used to 1260 days as the length of each half of the Tribulation period. 7 years times 360 days a year = 2520 days, but we split that in half and then each half becomes 1260 days or 42 months. But here in verse 11 we have an extra 30 days thrown in. Is that a mistake? Well of course not. God knows what He's doing. Now looking at verse 12.

Daniel 12:12

"Blessed is he that waiteth..."

Now if you understand Daniel, and after reading about all this, and he gets the picture of the Great resurrection of the Just (or the believers), what would they be prone to be? Impatient. Let's hurry up. You know I'm getting that way myself. When I see the world falling apart, and see the things that are implicating some horrible days ahead for the planet, I get in a hurry for The Lord to come quickly. But Daniel is told to be patient and wait. Now reading on:

Daniel 12:12
"Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

Now what do we have? We've got an extra 75 days added to the end of the Tribulation. But here's the secret in verse 13: Why would God reveal to Daniel that there would be an extra 75 days after He returns and sets up His Kingdom on the earth? Well here it is:

Daniel 12:13

"But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, (that is in his deceased state) and stand in thy lot (Paul uses the word company) at the end of the days."

But here we have the same connotation that within this particular group of believers that are separated from all the rest, these are the Old Testament saints. Daniel and his fellow believers of the Old Testament economy, you will, "stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Well what days? The extra 75 days beyond the Tribulation.

Well, now what's the picture? After the Church has been Raptured, and that company of believers (you and I) are in the presence of The Lord in our resurrected state, next is the horrors of the seven years of Tribulation. During the Tribulation there's going to be multitudes of people that are going to believe and be martyred. That will be Jew and many, many Gentiles. Remember they are not members of the Body of Christ - the Church. They're going to be in the Kingdom, but are not going to be included in the Body, as that was complete when the Church was taken out of the way at the Rapture. So in my own thinking they will have to be put back with Old Testament believers because the Tribulation period is the time of God dealing with the Nation of Israel. The Temple will be operating and it's primarily a Jewish period of time. So therefore I'm going to put the whole lot of the Tribulation believers, and the Old Testament believers into this particular time of resurrection of this group of Just people. Now then this completes the resurrection of all the believers of the age.

Now we're ready for the Kingdom, but since this resurrection of the Old Testament saints is 75 days into the Kingdom there has to be a reason, and I hope I have time to explain it. Come back with me in Daniel to Chapter 2, and this is my explanation for this extra 75 days. Now for God a lot can happen in 75 days That's a long time for Him to operate. In this chapter we have the recovery of Nebuchadnezzar's dream concerning all the great empires of the world, and how they are pictured in that great image. Remember the head of gold, and the chest of silver, belly of brass, legs of iron, and the feet of iron and clay mixture. These are all pictures of the Gentile empires coming down through history. All right when The Lord returns then at the Second Coming, the end of the Tribulation, He will strike that image, that representative of all
the empires. The empire that is then functioning will be the empire of iron and clay, or the revived Roman empire, and He will crush every thing that smacks of Gentile rule. Then after He has returned and has crushed the residue of all these Gentiles, the armies of the Anti-christ at Armageddon, and has totally destroyed the planet, I think every city on the planet is going to fall in a matter of hours. Then verse 35:

*Daniel 2:35*

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; (remember chaff is light and like a feather the wind can just blow away. So the residue of these great Gentile empires will be literally blown away) and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone (the returning Christ) that smote the image became a great mountain, (His earthly Kingdom) and filled the whole earth."

Before He resurrects the Old Testament believers of which the greatest part will be believers out of the Nation of Israel (and remember in this earthly Kingdom everything that has been promised to them will be fulfilled just like He said), He is going to use these 75 days to get everything ready for this Kingdom economy. This 75 days will be used to just cleanse the earth of all the residue, and it will be beautiful. I think by the time these 75 days have run their course the earth will once again revert back as it was in the Garden of Eden, and the curse will be lifted, and it's just going to be beyond human comprehension. Now for just a moment let's turn to Psalms 45 and drop down to verse 8 through 12. Here is a connotation of a wedding feast, and I feel the Bride of Christ is the Body of Christ, the Church, and we will be united in that formal marriage after we are caught up to be with Him in Heaven. But we can't leave the Old Testament saints out of the picture completely, so they will come in, I think, as the wedding guests.

*Psalms 45:8-13*

"All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold." The King's daughters are going to be there for the wedding feast.
LESSON THREE * PART II

RESURRECTED INTO THE KINGDOM

I CORINTHIANS 15:24-34

My little wife just asked me if we would finish Chapter 15 today. I told her it would probably take four lessons after today, because this is such a tremendous chapter. It's sort of like Romans Chapter 8. I don't remember how long we spent in that great chapter, but this is also such a great chapter that we're not going to hurry through it. I'm not on a set schedule that I have to get all the way through the Bible before The Lord comes back for us.

II Timothy 2:15

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

It doesn't say to just read your Bible, but rather study it, and that of course is what we try to get people to do. Buy a good cross-reference study Bible with some good footnotes. That always helps, and learn how to study. Now I Corinthians Chapter 15, and we've pretty much covered verse 23. Now that the resurrection of the Just has been completed, the Kingdom is now set up, and everything is ready to go for the thousand year rule and reign of Christ. Remember that's going to be on the earth. A lot of people don't have a concept of that, but remember the Kingdom is the Kingdom is the Kingdom, and the reason I say that is because it's the only valid Kingdom in Scripture. Now if it were speaking of some Gentile Kingdom, or the Kingdom of Babylon, then that's something totally different. But when the Bible speaks of the "Kingdom" then it's this final thousand year reign of Christ, this Kingdom on the earth when He will finally, as we're going to see in this lesson, be King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and that's not the end. Remember that the thousand year reign is just the introduction to the eternal state. All of this comes into focus then, as we look at the Scripture concerning this earthly Kingdom. Now for review let's look at verse 23 again.

I Corinthians 15:23

"But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

That is all the believers of all the ages from Adam and Eve on up through the end of the Tribulation, which we covered as the resurrection of the Church, the Rapture, the
great resurrection day of the major harvest of God's reaping. Then the bringing
together of the Old Testament saints, and the Tribulation saints as we saw in our last
lesson in Daniel Chapter 12. Now verse 24:

**I Corinthians 15:24,25**

"Then cometh the end, (time as we know it, human history) when he shall have
delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all
rule and all authority and power. (now let's read verse 25, and then we'll come back
to verse 24) For he (Christ) must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

Turn for a moment to Psalms Chapter 110. A lot of people don't look at the psalms as
prophetic writings, but they are. There is so much prophecy in the Book of Psalms,
and someday I'm hoping to have an in-depth study just on this Book. Now verse 1,
and this verse is alluded to so often throughout Scripture.

**Psalms 110:1**

"The LORD (now that's all in capital letters) said unto my Lord, (with just a capital
L) `Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,'" Now what we
have here is God the Father speaking to God the Son, because we have all these other
references with regard to Christ sitting at the Father's right hand.

The enemies that will be the footstool of Christ are all of the forces of opposition. I
think I made a point in one of my seminars, that just as soon as God revealed to Satan
back there in Genesis 3:15 that even though man had fallen, the day was coming when
the Seed of the woman would deal with the powers of Satan and defeat them and
 crush them. We know this happened at the Cross, so far as the potential But even after
Christ was raised from the dead victoriously over a defeated Satan, yet we know that
Satan is still the god of this world, and he is still destroying lives. So Satan is not yet
under Christ's feet. Now look at the verse again. We find that Christ is to:

**Psalms 110:1**

"...Sit thou at my right hand, until (now there's your time word) I make thine enemies
thy footstool."

Now let's go to the Book of Hebrews Chapter 1, and we see that epitomized, because
Christ has now accomplished the work of the Cross. He has risen from the dead, and
that's why we're spending so much time in I Corinthians Chapter 15. Do you realize
that there is not another single religion (now Christianity is not a religion, but that's
the only way I can refer to it in this statement.) anyway, there's not a religion on earth,
not even in the religions of the cults, with a doctrine concerning resurrection. Oh, they have reincarnation, but that's not the same. Only our Christian faith promotes the resurrection as we understand it. And that's what makes it unique. We'll see that as we go on though the rest of Chapter 15, resurrection is the whole hope for the believers. And that's why the Apostle Paul makes so much of resurrection in this chapter. But coming back to Hebrews Chapter 1, and I might as well start in verse 1 because I like to pick up the flow, and not just jump on one verse.

**Hebrews 1:1,2a**

"God (the Triune God of Heaven, of creation) who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers (that is the forefathers of Israel) by the prophets, (through the Old Testament writings.) Hath..." (past tense) You know there are still people who come up with grand visions that they have special revelations. They now have something above and beyond that which is between these two covers. Listen, that flies in the face of this verse. And this is the way I refute them. I will say you cannot tell me that you've had a special revelation because my Bible tells me, "It's finished!" So there is no further revelation, and here it is in verse 2.

**Hebrews 1:2a**

"Hath (past tense) in these last days spoken (remember `spoken' indicates a past tense finished transaction) unto us by his Son,..."

Think about that for a moment. We normally just reckoned the Scriptures as being Holy Spirit inspired, and they are, no doubt about it. But yet over and over the Apostle Paul will say that The Lord Jesus Himself appeared unto him and revealed these things. The Holy Spirit was instrumental, but it was The Lord Jesus Who was speaking it. And it's the same way in the Book of Revelation when John writes that great Book of revealing things that had been unknown. Who reveals it to him? The ascended Lord! Continuing in verse 2.

**Hebrews 1:2b**

"...whom he hath appointed heir (the Son) of all things, by whom also he (the Triune God of which the Son is a part) made the worlds;" Now these are some of the verses I use showing that Christ was the Creator, and there are many. One of the best is John 1:1-3 then John 1:14. Now verse 3 of Hebrews Chapter 1.

**Hebrews 1:3a**

"Who (speaking of God the Son) being the brightness of his glory,..."
Let's go back a few pages to Colossians. We've got to make all these things fit because these are questions that come up in our mail, and phone conversations, and I know that they are things that we have to address, and we might as well do it here for the benefit of everybody.

**Colossians 1:13-15**

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who (speaking of the Son up in verse 13.) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:"

Now Who is the invisible God? The Triune! The Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They're Spirit, and they were invisible, but out of that invisible Triune God stepped the Son, and He became visible. In the Old Testament economy it was a temporary thing, and then He would disappear, but in our New Testament account He became visible, tangible, touchable, He lived in the flesh by virtue of His Bethlehem birth. All right, it's the same God now manifested in the flesh by the Son. Now verse 16:

**Colossians 1:16**

"For by him (God the Son) were all things created, (see most folks won't give Christ the credit for that. But He is the Creator, He's the Sustainer of the universe.) that are in the 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 and for him:" Keeping these things in mind, come back to Hebrews 1:3:

**Hebrews 1:3a**

"Who (God the Son) being the brightness of his glory, (of the Godhead) and the express image of his person, (whose Person? The Godhead Whom He's representing) and upholding all things by the word of his power,..."

Think about that for a moment. This vast universe with it's billions upon billions of celestial bodies. Why don't they ever crash into one another? Why don't some of them drop out of orbit, and cause a tremendous calamity? Because Christ has them all under control. I know this is beyond our comprehension. We can use that example for you and I. How do I know that God is aware of everyone of us as an individual? Because He knows every single celestial body, He knows everyone of them. At any given moment He knows exactly where they are in their orbit. Now listen, there's many more celestial bodies than there are people. And if He knows all of them individually
then He won't have any trouble keeping track of you and I. I know that's mind-boggling, but this is what this Book teaches, and this Book is true.

**Hebrews 1:3b**

"...when he had by himself (this same Creator) purged our sins, (this is the One that died on Calvary's Cross, and arose from the dead) sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"

That's just what Psalms said. But Psalms was speaking of it in the future. Now Paul can write it as past tense. It's accomplished. Prophecy in that regard, is already fulfilled. Come back to I Corinthians 15. The Kingdom has just been ushered in and God has put everything under the power of the King of this Kingdom, Who is the Messiah of Israel, the Son of God, the Savior of mankind, the Head of the Body, our Lord Jesus Christ. I've always made a point in my teaching that Christ is not the King of the Church. He's the Head of the Body. And if we were under a Kingship, then we could never be called joint-heirs because then we would be subjects.

Remember that in His Kingship, that is over the Nation of Israel, over the rejuvenated earth and over everything that's in His domain, which includes the Kingdom of God under which the Kingdom of Heaven operates. As members of the Body of Christ, we are in a unique position as being under the Headship of Christ and we are joint-heirs with Him.

**I Corinthians 15:24,25**

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, (as King of Kings) till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

We pretty much understand that after the seven years of the tribulation has run it's course (and remember, I always divide it 3 1/2 and 3 1/2), that Christ returns. The Second Coming. And He comes to the Mount of Olives and He will stand there according to Zechariah, and He sets up this glorious Kingdom on earth. All the Old Testament speaks of it as on the earth. Zechariah 14 and Daniel 2 and Isaiah 11, and all these others speak of this glorious Kingdom on earth over which He will rule and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. But while He's reigning during this 1,000 years, old Satan is still alive. Satan is merely bound up in an abyss of some kind. And he will be held there under spiritual chains of one order or another until this 1,000 years has run it's course. But, according to God's own sovereign way of doing things, Satan will once again be released and will once again cause the nations to follow him and reject the sovereignty of the King and of God. Now this is why Paul has been led by the Spirit to put in these words in verse 25.
**I Corinthians 15:25**

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

Now we understand that from the onset of His rule and reign in the thousand years He is absolute King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There will be nothing of Satanic power to oppose Him, but remember Satan is still alive at that time. He hasn't been put away forever, and so this final setting away of Satan cannot take place until the thousand years are finished. We might look at that for a moment in Revelation so that we see the Scriptures certainly teaches this. We find this in Chapter 20, and let's begin with verse 7.

**Revelation 20:7,8a**

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, (he's been incapable of causing mayhem up here in the Kingdom, but now he's going to be set free)And shall go out to deceive the nations..." (plural)

And that's why I teach that after the judgment of Matthew Chapter 25, the survivors (believers) of the Tribulation will probably go back to their original homeland. Those will be Gentiles in Matthew 25. And as they go back to their original homeland they will be the progenitors of the nations that are once again in full bloom at the end of the thousand years. Satan goes out once again, and once more he's going to try thwart the very plans of God.

**Revelations 20:8,9a**

"And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: (it's sort of of like another battle of Armageddon)the number of whom (these nations that have been under Christ's rule, but Satan leads them together around Jerusalem attempting to defeat Christ and His throne) is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, (they come from every nation on earth) and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: (Jerusalem.)

But this time God's not going to fool around with them, and with one short swift stroke, He's going to do what I've often thought He must now at times consider, seeing what's going on in the world today of the wickedness, and ungodliness, and rebelliousness of mankind. Why doesn't He just zap the whole lot of them. Well, it's because we're living in the Age of Grace, but Grace won't be operating here. This is going to be judgment. So with one quick swoop then:
Revelation 20:9a,10

"...and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. And the devil (Satan) that deceived them (these nations) was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast (Anti-christ) and the false prophet are, (the religious leader of the Tribulation. They're still there even after a thousand years) and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

And then in the succeeding verses, we have the judgment of the lost and their doom. Now coming back to I Corinthians again. After the consummation of the Tribulation, the King comes and sets up His Kingdom. The Nation of Israel will finally enjoy all those Covenant promises. They're going to enjoy a territory that will go clear out to the Euphrates river. Not desert sand, but rather like the Garden of Eden, and all the earth will come under Christ's rule and reign. And then after He has shown His authority and His power He has to defeat that final enemy.

I Corinthians 15:26

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

And we'll see a little more about that when we get toward the end of this chapter. But all of these things have to be consummated in order for Christ to bring to the epitome of the understanding of all of us as believers, of the angelic host, of Who He is. Now remember that was the whole downfall of the Nation of Israel in His earthly ministry. They were to have understood from His signs and miracles, and His teachings, His compassion, His wisdom, Who He was. That He was the promised Messiah, that He was the Son of God, but you see they just never comprehended it. But once all this has been accomplished, and He has poured out His wrath on the nations of the world as well as Israel; He has returned and set up His glorious Kingdom, He has brought in the resurrected of all the ages to reign and rule with Him; He has ruled over a whole new generation of human beings that have repopulated the earth during this thousand years of perfect rule.

But in order again to prove the rebelliousness of the Adamic nature, in all those new children that have been born during this thousand-years reign to the believers who made it through the Tribulation. These children never had to make a choice like you and I did, and their parents did, and that's why Satan has to be released. So when Satan is released at the end of the thousand year Kingdom rule it's for that specific purpose. Satan will try and test this new generation who before never made a choice, and again they're going to follow Satan.
LESSON THREE * PART III

RESURRECTED INTO THE KINGDOM

I CORINTHIANS 15:24-34

I know that we’ve been in this chapter for a long time, but there is a lot of material that we need to dig out. So let's continue on with this line of thinking that Paul is giving here that Christ is going to be all in all, King of Kings, and He will reign, and rule until everything has been defeated, even death itself which came when Adam sinned. Now we talked a little bit about His reign and ruling during the thousand years of His Kingdom rule, but now let's come back to I Corinthians 15:25, and as I've said before, we're going to take this slowly.

I Corinthians 15:25-27

"For he (Christ) must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him."

Verse 27 sounds confusing doesn't it? Remember that even though Christ rules and reigns, especially over this 1000 year Kingdom here on the earth, yet we have the rest of the Godhead still sitting back there in the background, and we can't just forget that. We just can't cancel out God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit, because when we're dealing with God, we're dealing with that Triune, Spirit, Godhead, and I don't want to lose that. Now let's turn to the Book of Ephesians Chapter 1 verse 17. This is more or less a prayer that Paul is praying on behalf of these Ephesian believers, and the Book of Ephesians takes us into a deeper realm of teaching concerning the Church, The Body of Christ. You'll find truths in this Book that you won't even find in Romans and I Corinthians. Here as Paul prays on behalf of these believers we find:

Ephesians 1:17,18

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, The Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; (remember these are prayer requests that Paul is petitioning) that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

Now right there I'll have to stop for a moment. We ran across this in one our classes in Oklahoma a few weeks ago and I had never noticed it before. We always speak of
Christ as our inheritance don't we? That's the normal nomenclature, that we are co-heirs with Him. In other words, we're going to be inheriting what He has, and what's His. But this is exactly opposite, and this is hard to comprehend. Look at it again:

**Ephesians 1:18b**

"...that we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

Now that's past human understanding that God, because of our position in Christ, actually puts us on such an even keel with Christ that as He is our inheritance we are His inheritance. Remember that the members of the Body of Christ are the complement, the fullness of Christ which is the same word that was used concerning Eve when God presented her to Adam. That she might be the complement, the help meet of the man. Well this is beyond human understanding, but we take it by faith. This is our glorious position as members of the Body of Christ. You know I think the average member thinks that he's saved to escape hell fire, and that's about as much as they put on it. Hey, listen, it's so far beyond that, that it's beyond comprehension. We aren't saved just escape hell fire, we are saved to come into this tremendous relationship with Christ Himself. Now reading on:

**Ephesians 1:19**

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who (have repented and been baptized, walk the aisle, and join the church? No, but rather) believe," Now there's nothing wrong with those things in their rightful place. I'm merely saying that that is not the way of salvation. The way of salvation is to believe. Put our faith and our trust into what God has said. Reading the verse again:

**Ephesians 1:19,20a**

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." Oh don't ever sell the power of God short. Now verse 20. And this power, this tremendous all consuming power:

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead,..."

Now do you see why I came back here? What's the 15th Chapter of I Corinthians all about? Resurrection! And resurrection is the high point of every thing that God has accomplished. And as we're going to see a little later in Chapter 15, we're going to get to those verses that say, "If there is no resurrection then everything else falls apart." But there is resurrection power. Now reading on:
Ephesians 1:20

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead (and now look at His position) and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly..." Now look at the pronoun usage here.

Ephesians 1:20

"Which he wrought in Christ (Who? God the Father up there in verse 17) when he (God the Father, and God the Spirit, and again the Triune God) raised him (Christ) from the dead and set him (Christ. That's being done by an outside Personage. Jesus Christ didn't come up and say, `I'll set myself down,' because that's not the way the Scripture says, but rather that God)set him at his own right hand in the heavenly..." And we just saw that in Hebrews Chapter 1 in the last program. Now look at His position in verse 21.

Ephesians 1:21

"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:"

Now do you know what's in that list of names? All the gods of mythology, all the gods of the far Eastern religions, all the gods of the New Agers, all the gods of whatever you can dream up. Oh, He's going so far above and beyond them. Do you see that? And then the verse I alluded to a few moment ago.

Ephesians 1:22a

"And hath put all things under his feet,..."

That's exactly the picture of total dominion. I know I've heard people refer to someone with power, and do you know how they like to picture it? Hey look out he'll put his feet on your neck. Well what does that mean? He's got you where he wants you, and he's got total control over you. That's what Christ is going to do with His enemies. He's going to have them under His control feet, so to speak.

Ephesians 1:22b,23

"...and gave him to be the head over all things to the church. (And who's the Church? You and I.) Which is his body, the fullness (the complement, the completion) of him that filleth all in all."
Another Scripture keeps ringing in my mind as I've been reading these verses. So let's go to Daniel Chapter 7. Here we have this same idea of God the Father on the supreme area of the Throne, and God the Son comes before Him, and let's begin with verse 9.

**Daniel 7:9,10**

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands (or millions of the angelic hosts) ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: (and then time leaps thousands of years to the great White Judgment throne with just a colon) the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Now come down to verse 13.

**Daniel 7:13,14**

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, (the same we read about in verse 9) and they brought him near before him." (This Ancient of days, I have to look at being the Godhead again) And there was given him (Who? God the Son, The Lord Jesus) dominion and glory, and a kingdom, (this earthly 1000 year reign of Christ) that all people, nations, and languages, (see that separation of the nations?) should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Remember the thousand years doesn't end time as we know it, but rather the thousand years is just an introduction to eternity. It's just that elementary phase that gives us a limited view of the eternal state of our ruling and reigning with Christ over the heavenlies. Remember, there's going to be a new Heaven and a new earth. Now back again to the Book of Ephesians, Chapter 1 verse 10.

**Ephesians 1:10**

"That in the dispensation (or the administration) of the fullness of times (well that's the Kingdom, the thousand years; that compiles the final 7000 years of human history.) he (God)might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:"

Everything is going to be brought together in Christ, but the whole Godhead is involved, we can't leave the Godhead out of the picture. But Who is the manifestation
of the Godhead? The Lord Jesus is! Come back to the Book of Isaiah. Let's read verses 6 and 7. These are fabulous verses. Normally we just think of them at Christmas time with Handel's Messiah, but there's much more than that to it.

Isaiah 9:6,7

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government (that reigning and ruling of that thousand years) shall be upon his shoulder: (now here's the part that I want you to see.) and his name (remember we're talking about the Son Who was born in Bethlehem) shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, (here's He's called the Father, and we know it's talking about the Son. Now that makes the Gospel of John a little easier to understand.) The Prince of Peace. Now these are all wrapped up in the Son, we know it's talking about Christ. And in verse 7 here we come back to His rule over the Kingdom again.

"Of the increase of his government (as He rules and reigns) and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever...."

Remember we can't comprehend eternity. I may have mentioned before that Iris and I were someplace and a fellow was sitting in front of us had writing on the back of his shirt that said, "eternity, have you thought about it." Boy I thought, how apropos. How many people right here in Oklahoma in the Bible belt do you meet day in and day out, that ever stop, even for five seconds to think about eternity. But they had better, because it's out there, and they're going to be there one way or the other. But most don't even want to think about it. I've got a friend who works in a bank, and he can see how all this new technology is moving us toward the end-time scenario. And I said, "Well how about the people who work with you?" He said, "They don't want to listen to me, they have their heads in the sand and they don't want to pull them out, they just want to be left alone." Hey, that's typical, that's where most people are today, they just want to keep going, and as long as the checking account is healthy and they're driving a nice car, and they've got a nice home, who cares about eternity. But they'd better because it's coming, and no bank account is ever going to help you escape it. Now reading verse 7 again:

Isaiah 9:7

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. (it's going to go right on into eternity under a new Heaven and a new earth.) The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."
Let's return to I Corinthians 15, and now we come into a verse that is hard for me to put the whole thing together. I think I have put it together, but I certainly don't claim absolutely. Now verse 28: Now this is mind-boggling if you really analyze the verse. And every word of this Book is the Word of God so we can't just slough it off.

**I Corinthians 15:28**

"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, (as we've been seeing now. All principalities, and powers, kingdoms, and even death are going to come under His supreme rule) then (there we have another time word. There's coming a point in time which I think is at the onset of eternity, but whatever there's still coming a point in time when) shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Now you can just about wake up in the middle of the night and consider that verse can't you? That after He has put everything under Christ's feet, and He has become all and all, yet there's coming a day when even Christ evidently gives everything up to the Godhead. I have to be careful because I know I've got highly educated theologians listening to me, and I don't want to get into hot water unnecessarily, but I'm also not going to compromise. But I have to believe that somehow or other when we go on into eternity, and the thousand years of Christ's King of Kings, and His absolute rule has been fulfilled, then somehow or other He's going to give everything up to the Triune God, which will then be the consummation of the whole; everything from the beginning in eternity past when THEY first called creation into being, until we now go into that new eternal state with a new Heaven and a new earth, new everything. Nothing has been touched by Satan or the things that defile, and under those circumstances then I have to think according to a verse like this that God will be consummate. He will finally come to the place where even The Lord Jesus will be under the power of that Godhead.

Now verse 29 is a verse that I wish I could do like most commentators usually do with a verse that I want to know something about. They usually go over, or around or skip it, but I can't do that, because people are going to hold my feet to the fire, and if I just skip this verse they're going to call and want to know why I skipped it. Well I'm not going to skip it but rather walk in where angels fear to tread, and verse 29 is a tough one. I don't claim to have it but I think I've got the answer, and it's a confusing statement.

**I Corinthians 15:29**

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"
I do not feel that we are talking about water baptism, and I do know that there are groups that baptize by proxy. I suppose they do that on the basis of this verse, but what the Holy Spirit is really telling the Apostle Paul and he is really telling us is, "Why would God do anything on behalf of the believer if there is no resurrection from the dead." Remember that God does everything in the light of resurrection. I think the baptism that Paul is referring to here is in Chapter 12. Paul tells us in Ephesians Chapter 4 and verse 5 that there is only one baptism:

**Ephesians 4:4,5**

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism,"

In I Corinthians Chapter 12 he tells us about that baptism we read about in Ephesians. Let's look at verse 13, a verse we've used often.

**I Corinthians 12:13**

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, (The Church, The Body of Christ) whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

In other words, we know that as believers we have been placed into the Body of Christ by an act of God. Now come back to I Corinthians 15:29. Why should God even bother to place us into Body of Christ if there is no resurrection. See that's the point that Paul is making here. Why are they baptized for the dead? And also verse 30:

**I Corinthians 15:30**

"And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?"

If there is no resurrection from the dead then what's the use. Everything becomes vanity, everything becomes futile, and we of all people, the Scripture says, are most miserable.

**I Corinthians 15:19,20a**

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead,..."
LESSON THREE * PART IV

RESURRECTED INTO THE KINGDOM

I CORINTHIANS 15:24-34

Now to begin the last lesson in book 29 let's begin with verse 31. Remember in our last lesson we were dealing again with the consummation of all things First Christ will be King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and everything is put under His feet. Then we go on into the eternal where everything is consummated in God Himself. Then Paul said in verse 29 "What's the use in all these things if there is no resurrection of the dead." Always remember that there is no other religion on earth nor ever has been, that has a resurrection of the dead in it's so-called theology. None of the mythologies teach resurrection, none of the cults teach it, some have reincarnation, but resurrection is strictly a Biblical concept because not only is it a Christian concept, it was also part of the Old Testament economy. Everything centers on the resurrection of the dead. Otherwise what's the use if that's not true; then you might as well eat, drink and be merry. So looking at verse 31 where Paul says:

I Corinthians 15:31

"I protest (or affirm) by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily."

In other words, that although this is a carnal congregation. Here this apostle is writing these deep doctrines concerning resurrection, but the people to whom he's writing are carnal believers. And so again he reminds them that he affirms by their rejoicing, even as carnal Christians, that they realize that there was some things to rejoice in, and by that the apostle Paul says, "I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." Now I think there's a two-fold approach to "I die daily." Number one, remember that Paul teaches so strongly the idea of the old and new nature. One of the questions I've answered in our next newsletter is "Do I believe in two natures for the believers?" Absolutely! We are still with the old nature, that old Adam that just constantly pursues us, and we also have that new nature as a result of our salvation experience, and our union with Christ, and that's only a Pauline doctrine. We are constantly in a warfare, "The old sin nature against the new Divine nature." But what Paul is speaking here in dying daily is that he has to constantly keep old Adam in subjection, he has to put him to death. In fact, let's go back for a moment to the Book of Romans because that's where Paul makes that so plain. All of Paul's writings dovetail together so beautifully. So turn to Chapter 6 and let's begin with verse 13, and throughout this whole 6th Chapter of Romans Paul is dealing with, "reckoning that Old Adam as our mortal enemy, and putting him constantly to death." Now that may sound like double talk, but we have
to realize that God in His omniscience, and Sovereignty, the moment we believe for salvation, God reckoned our old Adam as crucified with Christ, he's dead. But in experience he's still with us, and he plagues us, and will until we leave this body of mortality. Here Paul says it so clearly:

**Romans 6:13a**

"Neither yield (or give in) ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin:"

Or unto the old Adam. It's up to us as you are given that free will. God is not going to take you by the nape of the neck and say "You will obey Me. You will walk in My ways." God doesn't do that, but rather it's that constant urging by the indwelling Spirit. Also remember that three-letter-word "sin" is the old Adam, the old sin nature. But the flip side is.

**Romans 6:13b**

"...but yield yourselves unto God, (in other words be what God wants us to be.) as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Now this is exactly what Paul is talking about here in this verse 31 of I Corinthians. Paul says, "I die daily." And as you move into verse 32 I think he is also alluding to the fact that he was under constant physical pressure and suffering. We have no idea how much the Apostle Paul suffered for the sake of the Gospel. Now you want to remember that The Lord promised in Acts Chapter 9 this very thing.

**Acts 9:15,16**

"But the Lord said unto him, `Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.'"  

And the man did. He suffered at the hands of the Jews, the Romans, physical disabilities, and sickness, and if you would like to see how much just look at II Corinthians Chapter 11. Now verse 32.

**I Corinthians 15:32a**

"If after the manner of men (If so to speak) I have fought with beasts at Ephesus,..."
Most people just read that casually, and they probably think of the Roman coliseum where they actually tossed him to the lions. But I don't think that happened to Paul. I don't think he ever had to face the lions of the Roman Coliseum, but rather I think here he's talking about his physical enemies. I think it was this constant opposition from his fellow men, ungodly men.

_I Corinthians 15:32_

"If after the manner of men (If so to speak) I have fought with beasts at Ephesus (these men who were constantly opposing him) what advantageth it me, (why should I fight against them) if the dead rise not? (You simply can't get away from resurrection in Chapter 15, because it hits you in every verse. What's the use, Paul says, in facing all of this opposition to the Gospel if there's no resurrection, and if that be the case) let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die."

Now that thinking is becoming pretty much the mind-set of our own nation today. Most people are not thinking in terms of eternity, but what's in it for me today. Instant gratification is all people are concerned about. How can I gratify the flesh the fastest and the easiest? Well Paul says, "If there's no resurrection then have at it." Why not? **But there is resurrection!** Now verse 33, and what's the admonition?

_I Corinthians 15:33_

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."

Let's go back to the Book of Proverbs to compare. We don't use Proverbs very often. And if I happen to have young people listening to me I would hope you would take this verse to heart. I know looking back at my own youth, and looking at the lives of others around me, I wonder how many times good young people have been totally destroyed by their bad friends. And so many of them are just simply bad people and that's what's making it so difficult to raise kids today. They have no compunction for right and wrong, they have no principles, there are no absolutes in their lives, so it's hard for good parents to raise a good child in the midst of all those bad friends. But the Word of God is so adamant that this is what is going to happen.

_Proverbs 13:20_

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

Now do you see what that says? If you are operating and functioning in the midst of good company then you're going to be useful. Now of course I think as Solomon
writes the Proverbs he writes a lot of times in the area of the material, but nevertheless it holds both ways. Even in the area of the spiritual you will never rise any higher than the people you fellowship with. In fact I learned that years ago in my youth as I saw what happened to churches in the community in which I was raised. I could see that great strong Bible preaching Church, by just one liberal, Bible doubting preacher, could go down the tube. We've all seen it and again, that brings me to the place that a church will rise no higher than its leadership. Now that usually centers in the pastor, but it doesn't stop there. It also involves the leadership of lay people, whether you call them elders or deacons or whatever. That's beside the point. But that church congregation will rise no higher than that leadership takes them. And the same way in our everyday intercourse with people. We are going to be like the people with whom we spend most of our time.

We once had a politician up in Iowa, and I know my Iowa listeners are going to know immediately who I'm talking about. He did a lot of speaking in churches around the state and he could preach better than a lot of them. But he had a favorite little cliche that as a politician he adhered to. And my wife is probably going to cringe when I say it. He said, "If you're going to run with skunks, you're going to smell like them." Very apropos isn't it? And that's exactly the picture with all of our activity. If we are going to run with people of low integrity, if we are going to run with the people who have no compunction about things right and wrong, we're going to become like them. It rubs off. Now that brings up another verse. Come back to Hebrews, Chapter 10 verse 25.

**Hebrews 10:23-25**

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Now, never lose sight of the fact that Paul thought The Lord was going to come in his life time. And so we have to look at it in the light that if Paul was alive today, he'd say the same thing. "Do not neglect your Christian fellowship, because as we see the end-time approaching, and we've got all of this opposition, we need the encouragement of each other. We need the prayers of one another." There's nothing that thrills Iris and I more than when people write and say that they pray for us twice or three times a day. And when you realize that people all over the country are doing that, that's quite an encouragement. We all need that. And we have to have that fellowship with like-minded believers. Now, when professing Christians turn their back on that kind of fellowship and start running with the world, I can just about tell you what their end is
going to be. It's no different than our kids, whether in grade school or high school or college or whatever. They are going to be like the friends that they run with. They have to be! I know I've tried to encourage my kids, when they were in school, to seek out kids with their own principles and their own values. They are there. You're not alone because those kids are out there. Sometimes it takes a little looking, and when you find them that other person is as tickled to see that they are not alone as you are. And the same way with believers. Don't ever just be like an "Elijah". He said, "Lord, just go ahead and take my life. I'm the only one left." God said, "No, you're not." Wherever we go there are believers who look at it like we do. And so don't neglect the assembling of yourselves together. Now, let's go back to I Corinthians Chapter 15.

I Corinthians 15:33,34a

"Be not deceived: evil communications (that doesn't mean just the words, but it's our concourse with people. And if it's going to be with evil people, it's going to rub off) corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; ..."

We've talked about that in our Tulsa class the last time we were together. Is it possible to live without sin? Is it possible to live sinless? No it's not possible! Not because the new nature can sin - we know it can't. I maintain the new nature is the vine and it cannot sin. But what did I say a few moments ago? What is opposite of our new nature? That old Adam! And that old Adam is working on us constantly to sin. And he succeeds too often. But, if we can keep old Adam in subjection and we can feed that new divine nature, then we can see what this scripture talks about. We're not supposed to sin. Grace is not license. I will repeat that until my dying day. I'm a promoter of the Grace of God, that where sin aboundeth, grace is greater, but for the believer, grace is not license. And this is what Paul is talking about. Turn from the instincts of old Adam and put him down, keep him under control, that we sin not. Now then, remember who he is talking to. He's still got the Corinthian church in the back of his mind. And he said,

I Corinthians 15:34b

"...for some have not the knowledge of God, I speak this to your shame."

Who is he talking about? I think he was talking about the people within his congregation at Corinth. They were carnal. They were believers, but they didn't have that knowledge and wisdom. Now, that brings up another verse. Let's go to Ephesians Chapter 3 and verse 16. Again, this is a prayer of the apostle Paul for the Ephesian believers, but also for us.

Ephesians 3:16-18a
"That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend ...

What's the difference between knowledge and comprehending? Nothing, except maybe putting it into action. But if you have knowledge, you can comprehend. And when you comprehend you have knowledge. Let's read on.

_Ephesians 3:18b_

"... with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; "

Now if I'm not mistaken this was something that Einstein was the first to promote and the world didn't know what he was talking about. He was talking about a fourth dimension. We always live in three. But when Einstein talked about a fourth dimension and his so-called formulas and so forth, the world didn't know what he was thinking. But this is what the Bible says that we are to enjoy. We are to enjoy a knowledge that goes into the fourth dimension. Now let's read on:

_Ephesians 3:19_

"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth (goes beyond) knowledge, that ye (this is for every believer. Remember I'm always going back to Tyndale and who were those he was most concerned about? The plowboys in England. Those guys who didn't even have a third grade education. That's who he risked his life for, to get them the Word of God.) might be filled with all the fulness of God."

Isn't that something? We always like to sit back and say, "I can't have this kind of wisdom, or knowledge. I'm just not that strong a believer." Listen, if you have Christ in your heart, you have the potential for all this. It's laying there waiting for you to exercise it. That's beyond understanding I know, but with God's help we can. Now let's read on.

_Ephesians 3:20_

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,"

Now he's not talking to angels, or people who have gone on to glory. He's talking to people in his own day and time, living there in the area of Ephesus. Now let's return to I Corinthians and look at verse 34 again.
I Corinthians 15:34

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."

What would Paul speak to the average Christian today? The same thing. Let's look for a moment in Chapter 3, and see the kind of people he's writing this heavy stuff to. And it is deep, I know it is. But he would not have been prompted by the Holy Spirit to write this to a carnal Church if it would have been too much for them to handle, but it isn't, it's here for every believer, even babes in Christ.

I Corinthians 3:1-3a

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal:...."

Now that's like too many people today, and God doesn't want people to be fleshly and carnal, but rather to be spiritual, and enjoy this knowledge of God. And I would like to stop with this thought. "Are you a shame to God because of your Biblical ignorance, or are you someone to whom God will someday say, "Well done, thou good and faith servant.""