We’re glad you’re all here, and we just appreciate the fact that you all bring your Bible, because believe it or not, this is what people notice. Wherever I teach, everybody has their own Bible. And that means you’re using the textbook.

Okay, for those of you out in television now, we’re going to start in Revelation chapter 1 today. For those of you who are acquainted with my format, you know I skipped over the first 3 or 4 chapters for a purpose. As we were coming up through the Old Testament, and when we got to Daniel, then, of course, Daniel and Revelation just fit together like a hand in a glove.

I was so uncomfortable with the traditional view of the first three or four chapters that I just passed over it. I just didn’t feel that I was ready to agree to the traditional view of these chapters, and so rather than teach amiss, I just skipped over it. But, in these intervening years, I have now become comfortable with something that is not traditional and, of course, a lot of my teaching isn’t necessarily traditional.

But, I always have to come back to the Apostle Paul and what does Paul say about tradition? Just about in every case, we find it’s not much good.

So, traditionally, we know that these letters to the seven Jewish Churches are pushed into the Grace Age and seemingly trying to make them Body of Christ congregations, which they are not. Then they projected out skillfully how that each one of these letters was supposed to cover a particular period of church history leading from the time of Pentecost all the way up to the Tribulation.

But, when you study these letters and read them carefully as I had done even before I decided to skip over them, there is not one word of what we would call Church language in these letters. **It’s just not in there.**

John says not one word of anything that’s beyond what he had already expressed in the gospel of John, or in his little epistles. And, so, if I had my timeline on the board, and I was going to do it before we went on the air, but if I had had my timeline on the board and if you care to draw it yourself, just make one line straight across the top and
that’s coming out of the Old Testament. Nothing has changed. **The four gospels are just an extension of the Old Testament.**

These were promises made to the fathers, and of course Israel rejected it. He comes back in the Book of Acts and still pleads with Israel to repent of the fact that they had crucified their promised Messiah, but Israel refuses to believe it. But they don’t know that God is going to stop the time clock. And, so far as all these writers, the four gospel writers, Luke, the Book of Acts, and then again when you jump into James, Peter, John, Jude, and John writing Revelation, they are all still on that top line of Old Testament prophecies, in which there is not one smidgeon of understanding of the Church Age in their writings.

So, for our vantage point, of course, we usually draw the second line, and then we show that God opened up His timeline, stopped the time clock on Israel and went into the Church Age where we have been now for 1900 and something years, and to which we go to the Apostle Paul and the Church letters, Romans through Philemon, for salvation and all Body of Christ doctrines. For example, Paul’s writings are the only place you can find in Scripture that tells us that for salvation we must believe in our heart that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. (I Corinthians 15:1-4)

And, so, I’ve come to the conclusion, now, that all these Jewish writers were looking forward to the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies, which included His first coming, and then His rejection and then Pentecost and then was to come the wrath and vexation - the seven years of Tribulation. Then was to come the Second Coming, the establishment of the Kingdom, and Israel would be the top dog of the nations.

Well, that was all back in the Old Testament prophets. But, unbeknown to Old Testament prophecies, God stopped the time clock after the first advent even though Peter and James and John are still looking forward to everything unfolding, because they don’t know that He had done that. **God, in His wisdom, has made the overtures to bring about the Apostle Paul and the Age of Grace, which means the time clock had to stop.**

Now, I suppose the best place to show that is in Luke chapter 4. Here we go again - you know, I’ll never forget years ago, Monty used to sit on the front row when we were in the old studio, and I’d do this and I’d say, "Well we’re going to start in Revelation," and quietly he’d say, "You want to bet?" So, he knew me. So, before we start Revelation we’ll jump back a minute to Luke 4, because I always like to establish that we’re not using human thinking to do what we’re doing. **Because the Lord Jesus**
in His earthly ministry gave us an indication that indeed that prophetic timeline was going to be stopped.

It was going to be interrupted and rather than go on into the Tribulation and the Second Coming and so forth, God was going to allow Paul to become the Apostle for the Church Age which has now been going on for over 1900 years, and Jesus makes it very clear, known as the Creator of everything, exactly what’s going to happen. He knew the prophetic timeline was going to stop. I use this as my backup to doing what we do, by opening up the timeline.

Luke 4:16

"And he (Jesus) came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day, and stood up for to read." Now, everywhere I go, I emphasize that when Jesus was here on earth in those three years of earthly ministry, everything He said and did was under the Law. The temple is operating full speed and He never told any Jew to stop temple worship. He never told any of His followers to stop keeping the Law. But, quite the opposite, He told them to keep the Commandments – to keep the Law. He healed the lepers and what did He tell them? Go show the priests according to the Law.

Now, you see, most of Christendom ignores that, and that’s why I say it’s almost an exercise in futility to spend all their time in the four gospels, preaching and teaching what Jesus said under the Law. And, once you realize it, it’s almost ridiculous, because we’re not under the Law. We’re under Grace. But, nevertheless, here is Jesus in full accord with the Law, He’s in the synagogue on the Sabbath Day, Saturday Sabbath, right?

Luke 4:17

"And there was delivered unto Him the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written;" Now, what does that tell you? He knew exactly what portion He wanted to read to that synagogue congregation. So, He found it in the scroll. Now, it’s not a book like this, they were scrolls. So, He unrolls the scroll until He gets to Isaiah 61 starting with verse 1, and this is what it says:

Luke 4:18

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, (in other words a reference to His miracles,) to set at liberty them that are bruised." This is a reference
of course to setting free the Old Testament believers who had been held captive in Hades until the atoning blood would be shed. All right, so all these things He’s referring to are all part and parcel of His first advent.

Luke 4:19-21

"To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. 20. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." In other words, everything He’d taken from that verse up to that point was now fulfilled with His first coming. Now, go back to Isaiah 61 and we’ll read at least part of what He referred to here in Luke chapter 4. You’ve got to see this with your own eyes to appreciate it. And we’ll take the time, I wasn’t going to, but we’ll take the time. We’ll just re-read it.

Isaiah 61:1-2a

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives (see it’s almost word for word) and the opening of the prisons to those that are bound; 2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,…" Now, that’s where He stopped. But, now, in Isaiah where is that in the context? The middle of the verse - He stopped in the middle of the verse and said this has been fulfilled. And those synagogue people knew what He had done. And they were aghast. But why did He stop where He stopped? He knew the rest wasn’t going to take place –His time clock was going to stop. Well, read on:

Isaiah 61:2b

"...the day of vengeance of our God;..." Which is what? Tribulation. He couldn’t read on and then say this has been fulfilled. It hasn’t been fulfilled even yet today. It will be, but He stopped short. Then, after the Tribulation in this same prophecy, what would come next?

Isaiah 61:2c

"...to comfort all that mourn;" And when will that happen? In the Kingdom. And so Jesus knew that His timeline of prophecy of the Old Testament promises to the Father would be interrupted at the end of His first advent, and we would not see the continuation of it till sometime in the future. But, you see, even His followers didn’t know how far into the future that would be, whether it would be five years or ten
years or forty years, and so, consequently, those men all wrote with the understanding that everything would be fulfilled in their lifetime.

All those prophesies of Psalms chapter 2.

Now, by sake of comparison, we’ve done this a long time ago in our study in Acts, but that’s so long ago we’ll go back and look at how Peter handled the same kind of prophecy. Now, come with me back to Acts chapter 2 and we’ll see the difference between the Creator God’s knowledge of the future and the Apostle Peter. Peter had no concept of anything but the Old Testament prophetic program. Here in Acts chapter 2, Peter is doing the same thing as Jesus did. He’s quoting from an Old Testament prophecy. This is Peter speaking to this great crowd of Jews gathered for the feast of Pentecost.

Acts 2:16-21

"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; (now he quotes Joel and we’ll go back and look at it in a moment) 17. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: (well that had already happened and was happening, but then Peter goes right on and quotes from Joel) 19. And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, vapour of smoke: 20. The sun turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21. And it shall come to pass, (which is now our reference to the Kingdom Age) that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Did any of that happen? Well, of course not. But, did Peter know it wouldn’t? No. Peter was under the impression that all of this was still coming. Now, go back and see how completely Peter follows Joel’s prophecy. Now, if you have trouble finding that, that’s right after Daniel and then Hosea and then Joel and it’s in chapter 2, starting at verse 28. And, now, you’ll see it’s word for word. Peter was quoting word for word.

Joel 2:28-32

"It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions: 29. And also upon the servants and handmaids in those days I will pour out my spirit. (and then the prophecy goes right on) 30. I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, pillars of smoke. 31. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great
and the terrible day of the LORD come.(which of course is the final 3 ½ years of the 7 years of Tribulation)

32. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be delivered, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.'" All right, another one I like to use in that same vein, is just back up to Psalms chapter 2, which you’ve always heard me referred to as "The Outline of The Old Testament Program." It’s so clearly laid right out - Christ’s first advent, His rejection, the wrath and vexation, or what we call the Tribulation, and then the Kingdom; that glorious Kingdom on earth, which has been promised ever since you might say, Abraham, and especially from David on. And here again, we’ve just got to take every word.

Psalms 2:1-6

"Why do the heathen (the non-Jewish world) rage, (that is in their anti-God understanding. They just can’t see God having anything to do with the rule of the planet) and the people(even Israel) imagine a vain thing?

2. The kings of the earth (that is of the Gentile world) set themselves, and the rulers (that is of Israel. The religious rulers) take counsel (what’s the next word?) together, (it wasn’t just the Jew, it wasn’t just the Romans, they worked in counsel as the prophet said they would) against the LORD, (that is against the Messiah, against Jesus of Nazareth, and in so many words said,) and against his anointed, saying,

3. Let us break their (the plurality of the God head.) bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. (We’re not going to let God rule in the affairs of men. Then look at the response of God in heaven. He’s going to laugh at their foolishness, their ignorance) 4. He that sitteth in heavens shall laugh, the LORD (God the Son) shall have them in derision. 5. Then (now this is after His rejection and crucifixion and ascension of course) then shall he speak unto them (that is the nation of Israel as well as the rest of the world, as we’re going to see as we get further into the Book of Revelation) in his wrath, (not in His love and mercy – wrath) and vex them in his sore displeasure. (But, what follows? The Kingdom)

6. Yet have I set my king (which is the King of Kings) upon my holy hill of Zion." Well, why does the Psalmist specify Zion? Because we know from all other promises, Christ is going to rule on David’s throne and where was David’s throne? Mt. Zion. So, it all fits. So, the Psalmist is prophesying not only His rejection, not only the horrors and wrath of the Tribulation, but it’s followed by the Kingdom when Christ will rule from Mt. Zion.
Well, all of that is sufficient now, then, to show, as we go into Revelation, come back with me, that we’re going to emphasize that this whole Book of Revelation is Jewish – there’s nothing Gentile in here except as the Gentiles come under the wrath and vexation as the overflow from dealing with Israel. Now, that’s always my answer when people say, "Isn’t America in prophecy?"

No, you can’t find America in prophecies, because America never had any consort with the nation of Israel in antiquity. The only Gentiles you’ll find listed in Scripture are the nations that had a direct contact with the nation of Israel back in Israel’s history. So, consequently, yes, you have all the Middle Eastern people: you have the Greeks and the Romans, but when it comes to the new world, they had nothing to do with the old ancient nation of Israel. So, consequently, America cannot be included in prophecy.

All right, so now then if you’ll come back with me to the Book of Revelation, we’ll spend the last few minutes introduction here. This is also like James and Peter and John and Jude, Revelation is just another Jewish book getting the nation of Israel prepared for the horrors of those tribulation years that were in front of them. The horrors of which will make the holocaust look like a Sunday School picnic. Israel is getting ready to face those kinds of trials and testings. And so John, who writes the Book of Revelation, is the same John who wrote the Gospel of John; he’s the one who wrote the little epistles that we’ve studied, and now it says in verse 1:

**Revelation 1:1a**

"The Revelation..." Or the word I like better is a revealing. Now, we know that all of this has been back in your Old Testament, but it’s been veiled. It’s just like a sculpture in the park that on the day of dedication they pull the canvas off, and that sculpture is finally revealed, and we call it an "unveiling."

Well, that’s what the book of Revelation is. Everything that’s in here has been alluded to back in the Old Testament especially Daniel – Daniel and Revelation, like I’ve already said, fit together like a hand and glove, but it isn’t till we get here that we have a complete unveiling of this Second Coming of Christ.

**Revelation 1:1a**

"The Revelation (or the revealing) of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly (or quickly, or swiftly, if you want to go back and look up the Greek a little bit,) come to pass;..." All right, now let’s see how Paul also agrees with that. Come back with me to Thessalonians, and Paul is not an Old Testament prophet by any stretch, but on the other hand, he will say things that
are in full accord with it. So, join me now in I Thessalonians, chapter 5 verse 1. Now, in the preceding verses in chapter 4, and we might as well look at it first, we have Paul’s revealing the Rapture of the Church. - The out-calling of the Body of Christ which you and I are apart of. This is how the Church Age will end, and none of this is in prophecy - none of it! This has only been revealed to the Apostle of the Gentiles.

I Thessalonians 4:13-14a

"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, (who have died) that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,..." Now, what’s that? Hey, that’s Paul’s Gospel of salvation, which he refers to over and over as My Gospel, that Gospel which I preached to the Gentiles. The Gospel of salvation I Corinthians 15:1-4, that we all must believe for salvation.

I Thessalonians 4:14b

"...if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep (or have died) in Jesus, God will bring with him." In other words, when He descends from heaven, He will bring the soul and spirit of the departed believer with Him to be reunited with that resurrected body.

I Thessalonians 4:15-18

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (or go ahead) of them which are asleep. 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump (singular) of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (to be reunited with that soul and spirit that Christ has brought back from glory) 17. Then we which are alive and remain (hey, that’s us as believers) shall be caught up (Raptured in the Latin Vulgate – we shall be Raptured) together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we (believers) ever be with the Lord. 18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Now, I think it’s interesting that Paul includes the first person. I think Paul actually thought he, too, would experience this until he realized that he would die the martyr’s death. So, he uses the first person pronoun. Now, drop into verse 1 of chapter 5. Now we’re talking about those that are left behind. They’ve missed the Rapture, because they have not believed Paul’s Gospel for their salvation.
"But of the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. 2. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord (that’s the Tribulation) cometh as thief in the night. 3. For when they (the left behind part of humanity, whether it’s Jew or Gentile, black or white, makes no difference) shall say peace and safety; then (what?) sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." All right, go briefly back to Revelation chapter 1 verse 1, now what does he say?

"The Revelation (or the revealing, or the unveiling) of Jesus Christ which God gave to him, to show unto his servants (now he’s writing to believing Jew, not Gentiles; to believing Jews who had been scattered out of Jerusalem) things which must shortly (or swiftly, or instantly start happening) and he sent and signified it by his angel to his servant John:" So, when we see this word servant here, we’re referring to Jewish believers. John himself is a Jewish believer, he’s writing in turn to these other Jewish believers as we’ve seen in the last little epistles of James, and Peter and John. So, bear that in mind as we move on into Revelations in the verses to come.
For those of you joining us on television, this is just an informal Bible Study. We have no denominational handle, and over and over I tell people I’m not under any kind of peer pressure. I’m not under any kind of pressure from sponsors, because no one sponsors us. We depend totally on the gifts of God’s people, and I think I can safely say that 90 percent of our contributions are under $100 dollars, so we don’t have any huge millionaires supporting us. And we like it that way. That way we’re not beholden to anyone and the Lord is our only overseer. So, join us as we search the Scriptures. Again, we do like to always thank you folks for your letters and for your financial help, but most of all we thank you for your prayers, because praying does make a difference, and so we appreciate that more than you’ll ever know.

Okay, we finished up our last program with just sort of an introduction to the Book of Revelation. Remember, now, that this is a book of prophecy, tied to the Old Testament prophecies; Daniel and Revelation just fit hand and glove and it’s all Jewish. It is written primarily to the Jewish people in preparation for the horrors of those final seven years, which again comes out of Daniel chapter 9. But that doesn’t mean we don’t study it, that doesn’t mean it is not profitable for us, of course it is. I think the major profitability of it tonight is that everything you see happening in the world tonight is getting ready for this final seven years.

Don’t blame the politicians, don’t blame any one group, it all has to come to pass, whether the Democrats do it or the Republicans do it or someone else does it or the European Community gets in it, it has to happen, so always remember that. I think our only responsibility as believers in this whole scenario is to do all we can to hold back the wickedness. I had a question in one of our seminars in Florida – what can we as Christians do to turn this thing around? You will not turn it around. We’re too close to the end for that, I’m sure, but we can do what we can to hold it back.

And so this whole Book of Revelation is for the Jewish believer who was facing the horrors of it, as were those little epistles. See, that’s what we emphasized when we taught Peter, James, and John, that they might be ready for the fires of testing that were just out in front of them. So, again, we’d like to go back to the timeline a moment. I put it on the board during the break and now the Old Testament prophecy starts way up here and all the promises and prophecies made to the fathers concerning even Christ’s first coming, His resurrection, His death, burial and, resurrection, His
ascension back to glory, and then would come in the seven years of wrath and vexation that is spoken of in the Old Testament. Christ would return and bring in the Kingdom promised to Israel ever since Abraham and David. But as we showed in the last program, only the Lord Himself knew that this program would be interrupted with this Age of Grace we’re now in, but feel it’s quickly coming to a close.

In the last program we went back and showed how that in the Old Testament prophecies, His first advent and His ascension were as far as the time clock went, and this was all pushed out which becomes then our second timeline. The same Old Testament promises - the crucifixion, the ascension, but instead of the wrath and the seven years, we’ve now had 1900 and something years of the Church Age. It has to end with the Rapture of the Church, we have to be out of the way. Because, I don’t care how much Scripture they want to use, you cannot mix the Church with Israel. It is totally impossible.

As the Tribulation begins, Israel will go back under the Law, the Church is under Grace, the promises made to Israel are not given to the Church and so I can see no way for the Church going even into the first half because, after all, nowhere does the Old or New Testament say that only three and one half years are Tribulation. And, when we look at Revelation chapter 6 and you go through the Seal Judgments, by the time you get down to chapter 6, I’ll just show you what I’m talking about. When you get down past the fourth seal, which are all introductory events in the first three and one half years, look what happens. John writes:

Revelation 6:8

"And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and death and beasts of the earth." So, by the middle of the Tribulation what percent of the world’s population is already gone? One-fourth – twenty-five percent. Well, if that isn’t Tribulation I’d like to know what is. And so the whole seven years are going to be part and parcel of the wrath and vexation of God, but the last three and one half, where the other three-fourths will go, will, of course, be far worse. But I can never buy this concept that the Tribulation is only three and one-half years long. Otherwise, how could they lose one-fourth of the people in the first half. So, I just don’t buy into that.

So, anyway, getting back to my timeline where we have the Church, nineteen hundred and something years, is just about over. I think right now as we speak, we’re right at the very closing day of it and the Rapture of the Church, and then maybe a little interval of time in between. We don’t know. And, then, the anti-Christ will make his
appearance, usher in the seven year peace treaty, and it will give Israel the freedom
and the opportunity to rebuild and re-establish temple worship. The anti-Christ will
turn against them at the middle of the seven years, and bring in the horrors of the last
three and one-half years. That will end, then, with the Second Coming of Christ, not
with the Rapture, but the Second Coming and then He will yet bring in the 1000
year Kingdom here on the earth. Well, that’s all somewhere down the road.

Now, come back with me if you will to Revelation. We’re still going to continue as
more or less a series of introductions to these Seven Jewish churches, but before we
get to them, we want to cover the opening verses. Alright, verse 2, speaking of John in
verse 1:

**Revelation 1:2**

"Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of
all the things he saw." Well, goodness, let’s go back to John’s Gospel a moment and
see what he’s talking about, because it’s the same John that’s writing under the
inspiration of the same Holy Spirit, under the headship of the same Creator God.

Now, look what John writes in his gospel, chapter 1, might as well start with verse 1.

**John 1:1**

"In the beginning (whenever it was, who cares, I don’t care if it was a million years
or six thousand or whatever, it matters not) was the Word, (the capitalized Word) and
the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And you know I always emphasize
that words are used to what? Communicate! So, this is a reference to God the Son, the
Communicator of the Godhead.

**John 1:2-4**

"The same was in the beginning with God. 3. All things were made by Him; (by the
Word) and without Him was not anything made that was made. 4. In him was life;
and the life was the light of men." Alright, now, you come down to verse 14 where
there is no doubt whatsoever who he is talking about. He’s talking about Jesus of
Nazareth, the Messiah, God the Son.

**John 1:14**

"And the Word was made flesh, (see how plain that is? That the Word who was in the
beginning was the maker of everything,) and dwelt among us, (and look how John
explains it. While Christ was among John and the other eleven,) (and we beheld his
glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and
Alright, now, we’re going to cover that word "begotten" a little bit later in chapter 1 of Revelation so come back with me. Now, in verse 3, John by the inspiration of the Spirit writes:

Revelation 1:3a

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy,..." Now, I’ve got to stop again. To whom is "all prophecy" directed? The Jew. He is the object of all prophecy. There is no distinct prophecy concerning the Body of Christ. Now, we fit in the midst of prophetic utterances, but there are no prophecies concerning the Body of Christ.

Now, let me go back to Genesis 15 and give what I call, the first true prophecy in Scripture. I’m not ignoring Genesis 3:15, but that was not a statement given to the nation of Israel. That’s a generalized statement that Jesus is speaking to Satan, as to what would happen between Him and the wicked one. But, here, in Genesis 15, we have what I call the first true prophecy, and it is concerning Israel and what would take place in the future. That’s what prophecy is all about.

Now, whenever I speak of other religions of the world, this is the point I make, and I make it without apology. There is not another religious book on earth, not a one, whether it’s the Oriental religions, or whether it’s any other religion you could name, not one of them can tell future events, hundreds or thousands of years out in the future and see them fulfilled one hundred percent. Now, you see, even some of our famous soothsayers can supposedly make prophecies, but they’re only fifty percent correct. This Book is one hundred percent. Now, look at the first true prophecy. Genesis 15 and we’re going to drop in at verse 13:

Genesis 15:13

"And he (God) said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed (or his offspring) shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;" Did it happen? Absolutely! To the exact day. Not three hundred and ninety-nine, but exactly four hundred. Or, if you want to take the full prophecy, it was four hundred and thirty.

Genesis 15:14

"And also that nation, (Egypt) whom they shall serve, will I judge: (Did it happen? Well the plagues were God’s judgment. And, now, here God is foretelling this hundreds of years before it happened. But it happened.) and afterwards shall they (Abraham’s offspring, the children of Israel) come out with great substance."
Did they? Of course they did! They spoiled the Egyptians. The Egyptians handed over all their wealth just to get them to go. So, indeed, it was fulfilled.

**Genesis 15:15**

"And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. (Well, Abraham died then about eighty years later, at the age of 175) 16. In the fourth generation they (the offspring of Abraham) shall come hither again; (Canaan) for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." And, so, that’s prophecy. This is God telling an event concerning Israel that’s going to take place out in the future, whether it is four hundred years or two thousand years or thirty-five hundred years. It’s still a distinct prophecy.

Now, when I say thirty-five hundred years, that reminds me of a verse, I wasn’t going to use, but now that we’re here we’ll do it; Deuteronomy, chapter 30. This is prophecy and we’ve seen it fulfilled in our own day. But, it wasn’t a prophecy concerning the Church, it was a prophecy concerning the Jew. Deuteronomy 30 verses 1 and 2, and this is why the present day situation in the Middle East with Israel back in the land and back in Jerusalem, is a fulfillment of this. And, that’s why we know the Word of God is true. Prophecy fulfilled to the last jot and tittle.

**Deuteronomy 30:1**

"And it shall come to pass, (what is that? It’s a promise. And what’s the promise? A prophecy. And here’s the prophecy) when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and thou shalt call them to mind (at some future time) among all the nations, where the LORD thy God hath driven thee." Did they get there? Sure they did! Jews ended up in every nation under heaven. I’m always referring to James Michner. I’ve done it more than once in our last week or two of travel. James Michner, who wrote the book "The Source" which was a fictional book concerning a Jewish family all the way up through history to the present time. But, in doing research for the book, James Michner determined that he found Jews in every nation under heaven, and that was in about 1980. Every nation under heaven had Jews. Well, it was prophesied! But what else was prophesied? The next verse:

**Deuteronomy 30:2**

"And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I commanded thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;" Well, they’re not there with all their heart and mind and soul, but
they’re there. They’ve been brought back from every nation under heaven and they’re back in the land as a result of prophecy. Now back to Revelation, verse 3.

**Revelation 1:3**

"**Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy,** (the one that is about to come from the pen of the Jew, John, and it’s a Jewish prophecy) **and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is (what?) at hand.**” So far as John was concerned, and I think Peter, James, and Jude, and all those Jewish believers, this seven year period of David’s prophecy was now right out in front of them. They had no idea, as I’ve said a hundred times in the last 6 months, of a Church Age. **They had no idea of an Apostle Paul being commissioned to go to the Gentiles; to begin this Age of Grace we’re now in.**

So, they’re on the top timeline. They’re looking for the Old Testament prophecies to be fulfilled one right after the other. For the time is at hand. They had every reason to believe that these prophecies were just going to continue to be fulfilled. Now, in light of that, the most obvious Jews for John to write to would be these believing Jews who had been scattered out of the Jerusalem church because of Saul of Tarsus’ persecution. Saul had brought in such intense persecution that they were scattered throughout the end of the world. Let me take you back to Acts chapter 8 because the only way I can establish this is with the Word itself. In the last verse of chapter 7 they have just put Stephen to death by stoning and Saul of Tarsus was holding the clothes of those who were throwing the rocks and now chapter 8 verse 1:

**Acts 8:1a**

"**And Saul** (Saul of Tarsus. The one who becomes the Apostle Paul), **was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was Jerusalem;...**" Now, there again, that always takes a 15-minute study on the word "ecclesia". But I’ve done it often enough, I’m not going to do it again today. But the word "ecclesia" is simply a word that means a "**called out assembly**". And there were various called out assemblies in the Biblical language. Israel, coming out of Egypt under Moses, was called the church in the wilderness in our King James, or in our New Testament. That wasn’t a New Testament Church. **But it was a called out assembly.**

God called them to Himself and they were out of Egypt, but the New Testament called it a church in the wilderness. That’s not a church. Well, the same way with the church at Jerusalem. The Jerusalem church was comprised of Jews who had separated themselves from the mainstream of Judaism and were detested by their fellow Jews, and that’s why old Saul, the orthodox, is trying to stamp them out of Israel. Ethnic
cleansing, they call it today, don’t they? And, so, he’s persecuting those Jewish believers unmercifully for having embraced Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. But it’s called a church, misleading indeed. It was an ecclesia – a called out assembly. Alright, so there was a great persecution against that called out assembly of believing Jews that believed that Jesus was the Christ out of the mainstream of orthodox Judaism, and because of that persecution they were what?

Acts 8:1b

"...scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, (except who?) the apostles." Now, this, beloved, is eight years after Pentecost! The apostles aren’t out there in the Gentile world preaching the Gospel. They’re still in Jerusalem. And I want to hammer this home. They haven’t gone out into the world to preach the Gospel. They are staying in Jerusalem because they knew that if Christ should come, it would be to the Mount of Olives, it would be Jerusalem. So they’re not going to go. And there they sit.

Alright, now then, to show you they didn’t go to anyone other than Jews, come over to 11:19, still in Acts; another great verse that just blows away most of what Christendom thinks and believes. This is just plain English. So plain a kid can understand it, the theologians can’t. Isn’t it funny? Acts 11:19 and, again, this is probably about 8 years after Pentecost.

Acts 11:19

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon that persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as (now watch these places) Phenice, and Cyprus (out there in the Mediterranean, and up to) Antioch (in Syria, and as these Jews were scattered, they were) preaching the word (the only word they have yet is the Old Testament. There is no New Testament yet, and so they are preaching the Old Testament) to none but (what?) Jews only." Your Bible said it, mine says it, but Christendom rebels at that. They think it all started back there in Matthew. No, it didn’t. They’re still sticking to the Jewish program. The Twelve are staying in Jerusalem and the Jews being scattered because of the persecution are still not approaching anybody but Jew only.

Alright, once again back to Revelation, and we’re going to run out of time again, So let’s finish verse 3.

Revelation 1:3a
"So blessed is he that readeth,…" Because, after all, this is written to Jews. So, for those Jewish believers scattered throughout that end of the world they will be blessed if they can follow their road map. Now, you know they like to talk about the road map in the Middle East today. Hey, they’d better take this one. They’d better use this one, the Word of God is more accurate than anything the politicians can put together.

Alright, so blessed would be these Jews if they could read and understand what God is laying out in front of them, so that they might deal with the horrors of the pressures; the testing of fire that is facing them.

Revelation 1:3

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, (this book of Revelation) and keep those things which are written therein: (that is in this prophecy) for the time is at hand." And, they had no reason to believe otherwise. Now, before we go any further, I’ll go back and hit our timeline once again. They (Peter, James, John, and Jude) are on the top timeline, and they are actually in this time frame right in here. Here they are. Christ has already ascended back to glory. He’s gone through the death, burial, and resurrection, the Tribulation is right out in front of them.

So, everything that is in place there, is now in place here, nearly 2000 years later. So both times are relevant, whether it’s just before the Tribulation up here, before the Church Age came, or here where we’re not quite at the end of the Church Age, and once again we’ll find Jews being readied for the horrors of the seven years to come. But, of course, remember before that happens the Church will have been Raptured out.

And, again, all you have to do is just look at the political scenario. We’re dealing with ancient Babylon in Iraq. Iran is ancient Meads/Persia. Syria is ancient Greece. The Roman Empire being revived is the European community, and it’s coming up daily. In fact, I was reading the other day, even the Jews are beginning to recognize that they’re going to have to really deal with Western Europe more than they do with America, because that’s where their markets are, that’s where the wealth is coming from, and so everything is right back 1900 and some years later as it was when these Jewish epistles were first written.

And, so, it applies to the past as well future, although not that far in the future. So, always remember these things; that as we read these little Jewish epistles, they were preparing Jews for that day and time for the coming Tribulation, but it was also preparing Jews today. The Jews today should be reading this, and realizing what is
ahead of the nation, because God will not return Christ to set up the Kingdom until this is all fulfilled.

And, you know, the glory of it is – Things in here that were never understood until our time of technology are now exploding out in front of us. You know, we all used to say, when they see the two witnesses laying in the streets of Jerusalem, it’d be satellite television. But, you know, my daughter Laura had a better idea the other day, it’s these cell phones. These picture sending cell phones are going to be everywhere by the time those two witnesses are laying in the streets of Jerusalem at the end of the first 3½ years of the Tribulation.
LESSON ONE * PART III
THE SEVEN JEWISH CHURCHES IN REVELATION

REVELATION 1:1-10

Alright, let’s go back where we picked up in our last program, we’re now ready for Revelation chapter 1 verse 4, where John now makes it so plain that he’s writing to:

_Revelation 1:4a_

"*John to the seven churches…*" The seven churches – Jewish churches, remember. These are the result of scattered Jews as we showed in the last program. Jews have been scattered out of the Jewish Jerusalem Church, which had begun in Christ’s earthly ministry. Peter at Pentecost, and in those succeeding years when Saul brought in the intense persecution, and those Jews scattered and established, not so much churches as we understand, but *synagogues*.

In fact, again, I’d like to just constantly repeat and repeat and repeat. Back up a few pages to James’s little epistle. Now remember, these are all the same men that were confronting the Apostle Paul in Acts 15 and Galatians chapter 2. These same men – James, Peter, and John, and they’re listed in that order in Galatians chapter 2. But here, in James, I want you to see that it is so plain in chapter verse 2 verse 2, that he doesn’t call it a church.

_James 2:2a_

"*For if there come unto your* (now the English translations have the word) *assembly…*" (But in the original, if you’ve got a marginal Bible it will show you – what is the original language?) "*…if there should come into* (what?) *Synagogues…*" Do you see that? These were Synagogues, and so never lose sight of the fact that just because the translators have taken the word "Ecclesia" and turned it into the word *church*, that doesn’t necessarily mean what we call church. It was a called out assembly. In this instance John is writing to seven distinct Jewish synagogue congregations, and they were in Asia.

Now that always takes an explanation, because from geography you and I have always learned, where’s Asia? India, China, and Mongolia, but the Asia of Scripture is Turkey.

The present land of Turkey is the Asia or the Asia Minor in our New Testament. Now we know from ancient history, then, that these seven synagogue congregations were in
cities in Western Turkey, including the seaport of Ephesus. All right, so now he’s writing to these seven congregations, and he says:

Revelation 1:4b

"...Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; (a reference of Christ from His eternity past, to His earthly ministry, and who will be returning the second time, and we’ll be looking at that sometime in the future in these letters.) and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;" Now, more than once you have that reference to the seven Spirits of God. Now those are attribute Spirits, so I’m going to take you back to Isaiah, chapter 11.

I think I can safely say anytime you see a reference to the seven Spirits of God, or the seven Spirits of Christ, this is the best Biblical explanation. Now, this is prophecy remember. Isaiah is a book almost totally comprised of prophecy.

Isaiah 11:1-2

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, (who was the father of King David, so it’s all Jewish) and a Branch (capitalized. That’s another Old Testament term for the Messiah, the Christ) shall grow out of his roots: 2. "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, (that’s one) the spirit of wisdom (that’s two) and understanding (that’s three) the spirit of counsel (four) and might, (five) the spirit of knowledge (six) and of the fear of the LORD;"(seven. And according to Proverbs, that is wisdom.)

So those are the seven attributes of the Spirit of Christ that comprise His whole makeup and personality. Now, back to Revelation and verse 5.

Revelation 1:5a

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth....."

Now, I suppose that’s another term that has been totally, totally misunderstood across a good portion of Christendom "The only begotten Son of God."

Most people have got the idea that refers to Bethlehem when He was born a babe in the manger, the Son of God. But you see, that has nothing to do with it whatsoever.
And so come back with me to Acts chapter 13, and we’ll have to explain it Biblically, not what we think in the natural, but what does the Bible say about this term, "The only begotten Son of God."

Because when Christ was born at Bethlehem, it wasn’t the result of God the Father being His Sire. **God the Son has been just as much pre-eternal as God the Father and God the Spirit.** So the term "only begotten" has to mean something other than His being born at Bethlehem.

**Acts 13:33-34**

"God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm (Psalms 2) Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. (now the next verse is the clue) 34. And as concerning that (concerning what? His having been begotten) he (God) raised him (Christ) up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."

So the term "the only begotten of God" refers to His resurrection.

No one had ever died and been resurrected before Christ. He was the first to have ever been resurrected. Now, don’t be mistaken, others have died and were called back to life, but they weren’t resurrected. They died again. See, the widow’s son was called back to life, but he died. Lazarus died, was called back to life. He wasn’t resurrected – he died again.

But when Christ died and rose from the dead, never again to face death or corruption, **he then became the only begotten Son of God because no one else had ever died and been raised from the dead.**

Now, let’s follow that up then with Romans chapter 1. I’ll just start with 1 to get the flow.

**Romans 1:1-4**

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2. (Which he had promised before by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) (now here it comes) 3. Concerning his Son Jesus the Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David (tie that back with Isaiah 11, out of the branch that came from Jesse, who was the father of David) according to the flesh; 4. And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness,"
by (what great event?) the resurrection from the dead: "That’s what sets Him head and shoulders above anything else in this world. It’s His resurrection power.

Now of course, everybody has been talking, talking, talking about the movie, "The Passion of Christ." Well, as I said in my newsletter, film or print or whatever else kind of communication you want to use, can only take us just so far in the realm of the human, which we saw, His physical suffering. But that was only just an infinitesimal part of the suffering that He went through in the realm of the spirit, as the eternal, pre-eternal, Son of God. And that’s what we have to understand. And it was culminated with, not the end of the movie, but with the power of His resurrection.

And I beg of you, just if nothing else, close your eyes and try to think on the basis of however much Scripture you know, what all did that power overcome at resurrection? Well, it overcame everything that was in opposition with the work of God. It opposed death, it opposed the satanic powers, it opposed all the false religions of this world. It opposed and defeated all the chains that keep mankind in bondage. And we’ll never understand it, not till we get to glory; the power that was exerted when He came out of the tomb. The resurrection set everything free.

And most of Christendom tonight almost neglects it. They talk of His death, but they forget about the most really important part was His resurrection. Because without the resurrection His death would have been nothing! But because of resurrection, His death becomes everything. And, oh, never forget that! And so He became the only begotten Son of God because He was the first to have ever been raised from the dead. Never forget that!! Back to Revelation chapter 5, again.

Revelation 1:5a

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten (or called to life) from the dead,..." Never to face death again! And Jesus Christ was the first to have experienced that. And that’s why for us who are believers in that, we also now have been imputed not only with all that was transacted at the cross, not only the forgiveness and the cleansing from sin, but we have now been given eternal life. And we’re a part and parcel of that eternal life – never again to die and miss eternal bliss. Now, finishing the verse. He’s not only the first begotten of the dead, he’s:

Revelation 1:5b

"...the prince of the kings of the earth,..." I won’t have you look it up, but what does Revelation 19 say concerning His Second Coming?

Revelation 19:16
And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." See, that’s still future, but that’s what’s coming. But He’s also the One who what?

Revelation 1:5c

"...loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Now, there again that’s more of a Jewish analogy than it is for us as members of the Body of Christ; but it’s still profitable. We, too, have been cleansed from sin, we’ve been forgiven, as Paul says in Roman. Now let’s go back and look at it, so you know what I’m talking about. Go back to Romans chapter 3. But it’s a little different approach to the whole thing than what the Jews understood. They understood a washing concept.

We morally understand that the blood of Christ was applied to our sin debt and because of it we are forgiven, we’re set free.

Romans 3:24

"Being justified freely (without having to give anything) by his grace through the redemption (or paying the price) that is in Christ Jesus:" Redemption always refers to paying the price to gain back that which was lost.

Now, I always remind my listeners, when did God lose the human race? When Adam fell!! He lost the human race. And how was He going to get it back? By paying the price. And what’s the price of redemption? The blood of Christ. And, so, when His blood was shed He paid the price of redemption, not just for the few, but for every human being who’s ever lived.

Romans 3:25a

"Whom (Jesus Christ in verse 24) God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,..." Now, it doesn’t say that we’re washed in it necessarily, but that it has fulfilled everything that needed to be done when we place our faith in the fact that shed blood of Christ has paid my sin debt without a cause, without my doing anything, except me believing it.

Now, let’s go back and pick up the analogy as it’s used again with Israel. Come back with me to John’s Gospel, chapter 13, and we have a little different analogy. Here we have Jesus about to wash the disciples’ feet. You all know the account. All right now, let’s just go all the way up to verse 2, let’s just take this verse by verse. We haven’t done this in the past, I think we can do it now.
"And supper..." That is the last supper. I may get in trouble saying this, but I don’t think it was the Passover Supper. This is the last supper that the Lord experienced with the Twelve, but it couldn’t have been the Passover Supper because the Passover Lamb wasn’t killed until after He had been crucified, the evening of the next day. But whatever, here we have what we call the last supper, Jesus and the Twelve.

"Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, (that is especially the Eleven – we’re not going to include Judas) he loved them to the end.

2. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him;

3. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and he was come from God, and went to God; (speaking of Jesus of Nazareth now)

4. He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, (with water) and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6. Then cometh to Simon Peter; and Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" Now, I know they were reclining, but just to make my point, let’s assume they were sitting on chairs like we are today. What do you suppose Peter did with his feet? Put ‘em back under and he says, "Lord you’re not going to wash my feet!" And what did the Lord say?

"Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet...." Now, here’s where I get a kick out of Peter. I’m going to be anxious to meet him some day. Peter was a master at putting his foot in his mouth. Isn’t that right? I think someone said the only time he didn’t have his foot in his mouth was when he took it out and put in the other one. But here he’s got his foot in his mouth. You’re not going to wash my feet!! And what does Jesus say?
John 13:8b

"...Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Now he puts his other foot in his mouth. And he says:

John 13:9

"Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." In other words what’s he saying? Give me a bath. Now, look what Jesus answers in verse 10:

John 13:10

"Jesus saith to him, He that is washed (he that’s been to the bath house) needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."

That’s the purpose of the bath, and so Peter you’ve been bathed. "You're clean but not all of you are." So he’s referring to Judas.

John 13:11

"For he knew who should betray him; therefore he said ye are not all clean." So the point is, these disciples, the Eleven, were washed. What did that mean? They had their eternal life. They were what today we would call "saved!" Now, what was the purpose of the foot washing? Well, in this old life, in this sin cursed earth, it’s a constant defilement by virtue of contact. There’s not a one of us in this room that can go through a 24-hour day without begin bombarded with temptations. And even if we only do it in the thought processes, it’s still sin and we need to be cleansed of it. But see, we don’t wash with water, we’re washed with the Word of God. We’re cleansed by saturating ourselves with the Word.

But back here he was giving them the example that by washing the feet it not only was showing signs of humility, but more than that the fact that when they walked from the bath house after a complete bath, by the time they got home, their feet were already filthy. So the whole analogy to the eleven, was that they had been washed at their salvation, but they still needed a cleansing because they’re still in this old world. In fact, I think I’ve got time.

Let me show you how Paul applies it. And it’s much the same; in fact, this says it all. We cannot walk through this sin cursed world without being defiled by the proximity of it all. Otherwise you’d have to go into a monastery and lock yourself up
and then you’re no good. You’re not having any influence if you’re all locked up and isolated. But nevertheless, here are the warnings

*I Corinthians 5:9*

"I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: (or immoral people). 10. Yet not altogether with the fornicators (or immoral) of this world, (because if you’re not going to rub elbows with the immoral of even the world,) or with the covetous, or the extortioners, or with idolaters; (the only way you could avoid rubbing elbows with those kind of people would be to what?) for then must ye need go out of the world." You would have to leave this world. God knows we are constantly rubbing elbows, we are constantly having concourse with the unbelieving world. And we can’t avoid that. And so as a result of that, yes, we need cleansing, but the cleansing is not the foot washing that Jesus practiced. Let’s look at what we’re to do in the book of Ephesians.

*Ephesians 5:26*

"That he (God) might sanctify and cleanse it (that is members of the Body of Christ. You and I as believers are not washed with the blood of Christ here, but with what?) the washing of water by word." And I remember, I know I gave the illustration in our last taping, if you use a strainer and strain gravy or some thick commodity, and you’re through with the strainer, how are you going to wash it? Well, there’s only one way you can wash it. You have to swish it back and forth until it’s clean. Well, that’s what the Word does. The Word swishing through us as we are just taking it in, it’s going to have a cleansing effect.

And how does David put it? "Where with all shall a young man cleanse his ways?" And what’s the answer?

"By heeding thereto the Word of God." That’s even way back in Psalms. So the concept is no different today. We are defiled by simply living in this sin cursed world. But how do we remain clean from it? The Word of God. And you wake up in the middle of the night, you should be thinking the Word of God. The first thing you get up in the morning, you should be thinking the Word of God. The last thing when you lay down to sleep at night, you should be thinking the Word of God. That’s why I’m always emphasizing to memorize Scripture, so that even when you don’t have the Book, you can quote to yourself.
LESSON ONE PART IV
THE SEVEN JEWISH CHURCHES IN REVELATION
REVELATION 1:1-10

For those of you out in television, again, we just want to welcome you to a Bible Study. We just keep it plain and simple. I don’t claim to have all the answers, but hopefully we can prove what we say with Scripture, because after all, what man thinks means nothing, whether it’s myself or someone else. But what does the Book say. But as we study, always remember to rightly divide the Word as Paul writes, and there will never be any confusion or arguments. Paul was sent to us Gentiles with the gospel of salvation, and so it is in his epistles that we go for our instructions in this Age of Grace.

Alright, now let’s get back to Revelation chapter 1, where we left off in the last lesson and we’ll begin with verse 6. Remember now, the author of Revelation, who is John, is writing to primarily Jewish believers in view of the coming Tribulation that is right out in front of them.

Revelation 1:6a

"And hath made us (Jews) kings and priests unto God his Father; to him be glory and dominion…" Many of you already know where I can go to prove the point that this is all Jewish. Go back to Exodus chapter 19. And you see Paul never uses that term (kings and priest). So, if Paul doesn’t use it, but all the Jewish writers do, then what does that show? That it is for the Jew! It’s for Israel! The more I study, the more convinced I am the Church and Israel can’t be mixed. They can call me what they will, but you cannot mix God’s dealing with Israel (His earthly people), with the Body of Christ (His heavenly people.) You’ve got that distinction all the way through, and they can’t be mixed.

Let’s turn to Exodus 19. Now, just to show you that this is a called out assembly drop in with me at verse 3. They’ve come out of Egypt, through the Red Sea and they’re gathered around Mt. Sinai:

Exodus 19:3

"And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain (that is Mt. Sinai) and he says, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;" Now, stop and think. Is there anything in there that involves a Gentile? Nothing! This is God dealing with Israel.
Exodus 19:4-6

"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, (that is drowned them in the Red Sea) and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to myself. (Brought them through the Red Sea, out around Mt. Sinai) 5. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye (the nation) shall be a peculiar (Now, remember, I’m always stressing that word means something of intrinsic value.) treasure unto me above all people: (and the reason he can say that – He’s sovereign) for all the earth is mine. 6. And ye (Israel) shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." Now, do you see how that’s almost word for word what John just said in Revelation. Alright, but let’s go all the way up and see how Peter puts it in his epistle of I Peter. Peter uses this same identical language. In fact, you can keep your hand in Exodus 19 and just flip back and forth and see how identical these words are. Peter is writing under the same circumstances that, I feel, John is.

I Peter 2:9

"But (Peter says) ye (and remember he’s writing to Jews, just like Exodus was) are a chosen generation, a royal (what?) priesthood, an holy nation, (the word "holy" simply means set apart for God’s purposes. They were a set apart people for God’s purposes) a peculiar people; (That’s exact language) that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:" That’s how Peter puts it. Now, come back to Revelation and John says almost exactly the same thing. That He has made us (Jews - The believing element of Israel); He has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father to be glory and dominion forever. Now, once again back to Revelation and verse 7.

Revelation 1:7a

"Behold, (John writes) he (the Messiah, the Son, the returning Christ) cometh with (what?) clouds: and every eye shall see him,…" Now, let’s just back up one page to Jude, verse 14:

Jude 1:14-15a

"And Enoch also, (Jude writes, way back there in Genesis) the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15. To execute judgment (His Second Coming will be associated with the final destruction of the Gentile world) upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly…” Now, back to Revelation, again; verse 7:
Revelation 1:7a

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Now, that’s not going to happen at the Rapture. The world isn’t going to see the Rapture take place. It’s just going to be a sudden, silent disappearance. **They’re not going to see Christ as He has come to the air.** But here, He’s ready to come all the way to the planet earth, He’s going to stand on the Mt. of Olives and the prophecy is that every eye shall see Him.

Revelation 1:17b

"...and they also who pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him,..." For the piercing then, we have to really go back to Zechariah, chapter 12. Come back again to the Old Testament, and again I want you to realize that these are all Old Testament references which tie it all to the nation of Israel. The exact language, and how can anybody separate what God says to Israel in the Old Testament prophets and what He’s saying to Israel from the words of the apostle John. Zechariah chapter 12 verse 10 where God says through the prophet:

Zechariah 12:10

"And I will pour upon the house of David, (That’s not a Gentile term, that’s Israel) and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication; and they (the house of Israel, or the house of David, the nation of Israel) shall look upon me whom they have pierced. And they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." Well, now, there’s another beautiful illustration in the Old Testament of a family mourning over a great joyful reunion and you all know what it is don’t you? Joseph. All right, let’s come all the way back to Genesis and pick up Joseph being reunited with his brethren.

Go to chapter 45 of Genesis. And let’s just start at verse 1, and we’ll hit just a few of the pertinent verses. Now, remember what we’re talking about. That every eye will see Him at his returning at His Second Coming, primarily to deal and confirm and fulfill all the promises made to the Old Testament prophets, and **there will be a great mourning, tears of joy, really, when they see and recognize their Messiah, and here is a picture of it.**

Genesis 45:1-3

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while
Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. (The ones that had sold him into slavery) 2. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. 3. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence." But now as you go through all this, Joseph puts them at ease.

*Genesis 45:5*

"Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that you sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." That was all part of the purposes of God. That Joseph would have to be in Egypt to gather the grain that would help everyone to survive during the seven years of famine.

*Genesis 45:6-7*

"For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. 7. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." So it wasn’t you that sent me here, but God. Now, come on down to verse 13.

*Genesis 45:13-14a*

"And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither, 14. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and (what?) wept;…" Well, not tears of remorse, but tears of what? Joy! Joy unspeakable! Now, verse 15. He didn’t limit it to Benjamin.

*Genesis 45:15*

"Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him." And so it was that great joyful reunion between Joseph and the estranged brethren. Well, so it will be when Christ returns to the Mt. of Olives and will finally be accepted by his covenant people, Israel.

All right, back to Revelation chapter 1 verse 8. Now, the Lord is speaking through the Apostle John and He says:

*Revelation 1:8*

"I am Alpha and Omega, (the first letter in the alphabet and the last letter in the alphabet) the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was,
and which is to come, the Almighty." Now, if you start making a study of this Book of Revelation, you will find that John uses the same terms of Deity that the Old Testament uses, but Paul does not. And there again is that graphic difference. This is all Jewish. Paul never refers to – for example - term the "Son of Man". Did you know that? But all the rest of the Scripture that’s Jewish will constantly refer to Christ, or God the Son, as the Son of Man. Paul never does. That’s just one.

But now, let’s go back to Isaiah 41 verse 4, and see how all of this ties together with the Old Testament. John the Jewish writer, writing to Jews. Isaiah the Jewish prophet writing to the Jews. And they say basically the same thing.

Isaiah 41:4

"Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, (and we’re going to look a minute to see who that is) the first, and with the last; I am he." Now, come all the way back – keep your hand in Isaiah, we’re coming back in a little bit – come all the way back to Exodus again, chapter 3. A portion that you’re all well acquainted with, I hope you are anyway – you should be. Here we’re going to look at the burning bush. And Moses is taken by it that it’s burning and yet it’s not being consumed. And so he comes to the burning bush and the Lord speaks out of the bush:

Exodus 3:5-6

"And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. 6. Moreover he said, (the burning bush) I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon (who?) God." So, who’s the burning bush? God." All right, move on down to verse 13. All the way through it’s a constant reference to the Lord and to God.

Exodus 3:13-14

"And Moses said unto God, (there at the burning bush) Behold, when I come to the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? (What’s the name of this God you’re talking about? Moses says) what shall I say to them? 14. And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." See how plain that is, and this is the Lord, this is God the Son speaking. We refer to him as Jehovah and Adonai and the Almighty, which is what I’m going to have you look at next. Come back to Isaiah chapter 9, and we’ll begin
with verse 6. Now, these were all Old Testament terms concerning the Son. None of which, if I’m not mistaken, Paul uses. He does not use these same terms of Deity.

Isaiah 9:6-7a

"For unto us (and I’m always emphasizing, who is the us? Israel. This isn’t talking to the world in general. This is talking to the nation of Israel) a child is born, unto us a son is given: (now we jump all the way up to the millennial reign) and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, (The same term that John uses) The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the Throne of David,…" See how the Scriptures constantly emphasize, that when Christ returns to set up this Kingdom, He will rule from David’s Throne in Jerusalem on Mount Zion.

Now, to take a little further take on the I AM of Exodus 3, go up to John’s gospel, chapter 8, most of you know where I’m going. And for sake of time, we’ll just go all the way down to verse 51. Here’s Christ in His earthly ministry, Jesus is speaking, and he says:

John 8:51-58

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. 52. Then said the Jews unto him, (see there it’s amongst His earthly ministry. No Gentiles here.) Now we know that thou hast a devil (demon). Abraham is dead, the prophets; (they’re dead) and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead: and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?" 54. Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; whom ye say, that he is your God. 55. Yet ye have not known him; (that is their God) but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I should be a liar like you: (quite a statement wasn’t it?) but I know him, and keep his saying. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, (that is through the eyes of faith) and was glad. 57. Then said the Jews unto him, (now do you pick up the scoffing?) Thou are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham? (Can’t you just see the smirk on their face? Come on, what are you trying to do? You can’t fool us. Abraham lived 2000 years ago, and you’re telling us you’ve seen him? Now look at Jesus’ answer) 58. Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, (who?) I am." Do you see what He’s showing them? That He was the I AM of the Old Testament Deity. He was the Jehovah God of Abraham, He was the pre-eternal Creator. He was the God of everything, and He made no apology for making those claims.
Alright, now let’s come back again to Revelation again, and see how the Apostle John can just pick up all these things concerning this Christ who is now about to return as King of King and Lord of Lords, once the horrors of the wrath and vexation have unfolded.

Revelation 1:9a

"I John who also am your (what?) brother, (now spiritually of course. Racially? Yes. He’s just as much a Jew as the Jews to whom he’s writing.) and companion in (what?)tribulation,…" They were all under the same pressure. Now, you’ve got to remember, these Jews to whom these men are writing, Peter, James and John, were already under a lot of persecution, even before the Tribulation began. They were under pressure from the Orthodox Judiasers. They were under pressure from the pagan Romans, so they knew what persecution was. And so John could say, I can correlate with you.

Revelation 1:9b

"...am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom (that is the kingdom promises that they’re all waiting for.) and patience of Jesus Christ, (I John) was in the isle that is called Patmos,..." a little island off the coast of Western Turkey, a little off the mainland.

Revelation 1:9b

"...for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Now, the speculation is that it was a means of house arrest, or persecution, but not all historians agree with that. It may have been a normal life for John on the island of Patmos. There isn’t anything to indicate that he was under intense persecution at this time, but he may have been. But whatever, he’s on the island of Patmos, "for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ." Now, verse 10. This verse has been so twisted out of shape it’s unbelievable.

Revelation 1:10a

"I was in the Spirit (that is under the control of the Spirit of God) on the Lord’s day,..." That’s not Sunday. That’s what most everybody thinks, that this was a Sunday and that he was writing this. No – What is the day of the Lord in Scripture? Tribulation!

So what is he saying? That miraculously the Spirit of God is transporting him into the Tribulation so he can write about it in the first person. He knew what he was writing.
He was experiencing it in the realm of the Spirit, not writing on the Island of Patmos on Sunday afternoon. No, he was being transported into the Day of the Lord and that term the "Day of the Lord" throughout all the Old Testament, throughout the Jewish epistles is always a reference to the seven years of the Tribulation. Never forget that.

Alright, I haven’t got time enough to go on in to another verse, but here it’s as plain day that as John is in the Spirit, in this transformed Day of the Lord, so he can write about it with first hand experience, he experiences the voice behind him as a trumpet. And so we go on from there and we pick this up in our next program where this voice is again the voice of the Lord Jesus Himself.
LESSON TWO * PART I

THE ISLE OF PATMOS VISION

REVELATION 1:11-2:10

I always like to remind folks that we’re just an informal, non-denominational Bible study. We don’t try to attack anyone; we’re just going to see what the Book says and that’s the way we teach it. And of course, my main prerogative is to get folks to study the Bible on their own. Don’t just sit back and say, well this is what Les Feldick says, or this is what so and so says, but learn to search the Scriptures, comparing Scripture with Scripture. In fact, that’s why I use as many references as I possibly can. It isn’t to show you how much I know, it’s to show that when we teach something, we can base it on more than one verse, usually. Once in awhile we have to bank on one verse, but the whole idea is to just compare Scripture with Scripture and with the Holy Spirit’s leading, determine that you can’t always go by what the majority says. In fact, I think I’ve said it years and years ago, when it comes to the things of the Spirit, the majority is usually wrong. So don’t just rest on the majority.

So, for those of you in television, and for you here in the studio, we’re going to jump right in where we left off in our last program, which is in chapter 1 of Revelation and for sake of exercising our memory, we’re going to read the last verse we ended with, verse 10. Remember, John the Revelator is writing it, and he’s on the island of Patmos, quite likely as an exile for his faith. But nevertheless, he has evidently so far not been under any undo persecution. But now, in verse 10, he speaks of how he brings this revelation about:

_Revelation 1:10a_

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day..." And remember. I emphasized in the last lesson, that does not mean the first day of the week. But rather, just put the other way around, "The day of the Lord." So that all of Scripture refers to as "The day of the Lord." And so, an unusual supernatural experience and John is literally just transported up into these coming seven years of Tribulation. Alright, now wherever he is, whether he’s up in the glory or whatever in this vision:

_Revelation 1:10b_

"...and heard behind me a great voice, as of (or like) a trumpet.” Now, I think we’re all aware that when a trumpet lets go, there’s no "what did I hear?" It’s pretty obvious, and it’s something that even alarmed John, I think.
Revelation 1:11a

"Saying, I am Alpha and Omega..." And we know from other portions of Scriptures those are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, which refer to Christ’s eternity past and His eternity future. **He is without end, He is without beginning, and that is beyond our human understanding.**

Revelation 1:11a

"Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: (the Jesus, the Christ who is speaking says to John) and, What thou seest, (in these vision experiences that are coming) write in a book, (not books, write in a book) and send it (not them) unto the seven churches..." Now, I dare say if I could take a poll right here in the studio this afternoon, and if I were to ask you how many of you have always had the impression that these seven church letters were individually sent to the seven churches, I think I’d have 95% that would say that’s what we’ve always been taught.

But you see, that’s not what it says. God is instructing John to take this whole body of truth, these seven church letters, make a book of it and evidently a copy was sent to each one of the seven churches. And I think, as we come on through the chapter, you’ll see why that is so pertinent. It wasn’t that these few verses belong to Ephesus, and these few to Pergamus, and so forth, but that the whole body of truth involved in these seven letters were to be put in one book and a copy sent to every one of the seven churches. Now then, here they are:

Revelation 1:11b

"...send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia;..."

Now, we pointed out in our last program that Asia in the New Testament especially, is Asia Minor, which is today’s land of Turkey. Now, even Galatia, to which the Galatians was addressed was central Turkey. And when Paul said, back in the Book of Acts, that he intended to go back into Asia, he was talking about the geographical area that we now call Turkey.

All right now, the same way here. These seven little cities are all in western Turkey. Now, I think most of you know from your Bible maps that Ephesus was on the very western coast of Turkey. It was a seaport. But then fanning out from Ephesus were these other six little cities, almost in a circle. If you look at a Bible map, they’re just a bunch of dots. Well, the reason I’m doing this is to make it plain that when we get down here a little further in verse 12, **we’re going to see that this is a group of Jewish congregations, synagogues if you please,** that Christ is now dealing with,
having left the temple in Jerusalem many, many years before. With the temple in Jerusalem shortly to be destroyed, He is more or less moving his place of authority now from Jerusalem to these seven churches in Asia. And that’s what I’m trying to emphasize, that they were in a group. They’re almost in a circle. All right, now let’s read on and you’ll get what I’m talking about.

*Revelation 1:11c-12*

"...send it (this book) unto the seven church, which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. 12. And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks." Now, the term that we normally think of from the Old Testament and everything, is the lamp stands. And he saw seven golden lamp stands. Now the purpose of the lamp stand is to give light to the area. So what were these seven churches to be? Light to the surrounding community.

Now there again, I’ve got to stop. It’s unfortunate, I think, it’s terribly unfortunate, that our English translators used the word "churches" or "church" all the way through the New Testament. It would have been so much easier to understand if they had used *assembly* because the word "church" really is a Scottish word, which was "Kirk "and you’ve heard that. And from that old Scottish word "Kirk" the English translators came up with this word "church," and I think it’s unfortunate. They should rather be called assemblies, and here in this case they were called what? Do you remember? Synagogues.

Do you remember that from one of our previous lessons? Let me go back and show you. I’ve just got to do this over and over because whenever we travel people will comment on the fact that we make these things so plain that they never hear otherwise. And so come back with me to James chapter 2, so that you’ll know where I’m coming from.

*James 2:2a*

"For if there come into your assembly..." But now if you have a marginal Bible and look in your margin, what was the word in the Greek? Synagogue!! I like it when other people agree with that. They were synagogues. Well, even today, what do the Messianic Jews call their place of worship? Synagogues! They don’t call them a church; they call them a synagogue.

All right now, it’s same way here. These were all Jewish congregations, having scattered out of the central church in Jerusalem, which was a Jewish church, or a
Jewish assembly, there was maybe a Gentile or two, but I doubt it. And so from that scattered Jewish church in Jerusalem, we have these seven synagogues here in western Turkey. But now you want to remember these weren’t the only ones. There were various assemblies of Jews who had been scattered throughout that part of the world. In fact, we’ve done this over, but repetition, as we hear over and over, is the mother of learning. Coming back with me to Acts chapter 11, verse 19. And I’ve said it many, many times before, and I’ll probably say it many times more if the Lord continues to bless me with life; this is the one verse that probably did more to opening my understanding as I teach than any other verse in Scripture. This just bombarded my thinking.

I don’t know whether I shared it with the television audience last week or not, but one place we were down in Florida, there were several families with young kids and this one little girl, if I remember right, she said she was seven years old; she came up to me afterwards and she had all the references that I’d used that evening. Of course, now that was over a period of about 2 or 3 hours. She had two whole pages full of references and I said, "Do you mean to tell me I used all those tonight?" She said, "Every one of them." But this is why we do it – just to give you a chance to see what the Book says and not just what I’m saying.

Acts 11:19:

"Now they who are scattered abroad (that is out of Jerusalem) upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and (the island of) Cyprus, and (up to) Antioch (in Syria which is present day north of Lebanon, up toward the Euphrates River) and they were preaching the word to (who?) none but Jews only." All right, now where did these Jews come from? Back up now a couple more pages to Acts chapter 8, and we have just seen Stephen martyred in chapter 7. Remember, all this just sets the stage and then you can better understand what the Bible is talking and why it’s saying what it does.

Acts 8:1

"And Saul (who will later become the Apostle Paul) was consenting unto his (Stephen’s) death. And at that time (at the stoning of Stephen, seven years after Pentecost, remember. This isn’t all within just a matter of weeks. This is seven years after Pentecost) there was a great persecution against the church (assembly) which was at Jerusalem; (the Jewish assembly. The Jewish synagogue of believers that believed for salvation that Jesus was the Christ) and they were all (all of that Jerusalem congregation were) scattered throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria except (whom?) the apostles." See, and I always make note of that. Everybody thinks the Twelve have already been out fulfilling the Great Commission
for seven years. No, they haven’t. They are still in Jerusalem waiting for the return of their Messiah. So anyway, we have to understand that as all these little Jewish writers back here, James and Peter and John, and now as John writes in Revelation come back there again, Chapter 1, that these were Jewish congregations, called synagogues. They were still hanging on to the whole concept for their salvation that Jesus of Nazareth was their Messiah, they are still under the Law. Don’t forget the temple is still operating. This is probably written in the late 50’s and there’s nothing in Scripture to indicate that the temple worship had stopped.

It was only that they had been scattered out of Jerusalem because of Saul’s persecution. So these little seven congregations, especially now since they’re grouped in almost a circle in western Turkey, become an area that the Lord can almost use as a final habitation for Himself. All right, Revelation chapter 1 then, again reading verse 12:

Revelation 1:12-13a

"And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw the seven golden candlesticks: (lamp stands) 13. And in the midst of the seven (not in the midst of any one of them. But as these seven assemblies comprise a circle of geography) was one like unto the Son of man." Now stop and think. Does the Apostle Paul ever refer to Christ as the Son of man? I’m not tricking you. No, not that I know of. He never refers to Christ as the Son of God, He’s the Christ, but never as the Son of man. That of course was unique to the Book of Matthew which over and over refers to Jesus as the Son of man.

Revelation 1:13b

"...was one like unto the Son of man (it’s God the Son, it’s Jesus the Christ) clothed with a garment down to the foot, girt about the paps with a golden girdle (now watch this description of him) 14. His head and his hair were white like wool, (and another a translation sort of says, or like snow. It was perfectly white. It does say) as white as snow; and his eyes were as (doesn’t say they are. There’s a big difference you know) as flames of fire; 15. And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters."

Now, just in the light of that kind of language, does that speak of a God of love, mercy, and grace, or a God of judgment? Judgment!! All these terms speak of judgment. Brass - way back in the tabernacle what was the brazen altar? Well, it was the place of sacrifice where sin was judged. The brazen serpent, when it was raised on the pole so that Israel could look at it. What does it speak of? Judgment! So brass is always that which speaks of judgment. Well, the same way with the flames of fire. It
spoke not of love and grace, but judgment, see? And then you come down to the feet, like they were burned in a furnace. Well, to being burned as a furnace doesn’t speak of love and grace. It speaks of what? Judgment! So what’s the picture? Now, remember, ever since we started the little letter of James, what do these Jewish believers anticipate right out in front of them? Tribulation. The seven years of God’s wrath and vexation is right in front of them. So the whole thrust here is to prepare these believers for a coming judgment.

But now I know the question is why should these believers come under that judgment? Has it ever been any different? You know what’s the matter with us in America – and I’m included? We’ve been spoiled. Do you realize that this is the only time in all of human history, that is since our forefathers came to these shores, and we in America especially, have enjoyed such religious freedom without any fear. That’s never happened before. All through human history the believers, whether it was Israel or whether it was later on in the Christian community, suffered constantly.

You know, I’m always stressing when Paul would come into these Gentile cities like Thessalonica and Corinth and these folks were won to salvation out of paganism into Christianity, what was the first thing they faced? I call it the buzz saw of persecution. I hope you all know what a buzz saw is – it’s what you cut wood with. Intense persecution. It’s always been that way. If you know anything about ancient history, the dark ages if I’m not mistaken, there’s one history book that maintains that during that 1000 years, from 500 A.D. to 1500 A.D., 50 million Christians, believers, lost their lives through persecution. So you see, for us to live in a time of such tranquility is not the normal, it’s unusual. So the same way in this time. These Jews were used to persecution, but now you see, they’re being faced with the coming wrath and vexation of God. Now again, for sake of repetition, come back with me to Psalms chapter 2, and this is where I get the language that I use. I don’t make it up as I go along; believe me. Psalms, Chapter 2, which I always call the outline of the Old Testament program; how the Old Testament prophets saw how it would all unfold. How that Christ would be rejected in the first three verses, at His first advent. Jews and Gentiles both reject Him. Then verse 4.

Psalms 2:4-5

"He (God) that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh (at the foolishness of men) the LORD shall have them in derision. (confusion, Then the next thing on God’s program) 5. Then shall he speak unto them in his (what?) wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure."

In other words, He’s going to pour out His anger on the whole human race, which of course the nation of Israel will be the vortex in judgment as well in other revelations.
But it’s going to be an outpouring of wrath and vexation, and then the next thing on the agenda is what? The Kingdom!

**Psalms 2:6**

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

All right, so all of Scripture has that unfolding of God’s agenda for the human race. Now remember, as we’ve been pointing out for the last several weeks or months, there’s not a word about the Church Age in prophecy. Not one word. It’s all how God will deal with the nation of Israel in particular, the whole human race in general, and then after the rejection of their Messiah and His ascension, then was to come the wrath and the vexation, the judgment, the wrath of God, and that would set the stage of the coming of Christ the second time. **That will be at the battle of Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation.**

Now of course we’ve stressed, we know that God opened that timeline, stopped the wrath and vexation before it happened, and brought in the Church Age, but we’re not dealing with that here in Revelation, we’re dealing with the seven year period of the wrath and vexation programmed into the Old Testament prophecy. So now we can come on down to verse 16. Now, this Son of man who is revealing Himself to this transplanted area of God dealing with Israel, to these 7 little churches, synagogues, assemblies. It’s amazing what habit does. I’ve been trying for years to quit calling these churches, and I just can’t do it, because it’s a habit, but they were not churches as we think of the church. They were Jewish synagogues. They were Jewish called-out assemblies.

**Revelation 1:16a**

"And he had in his right hand seven stars: (one for each one of these seven assemblies) and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword:…"

Now to the casual reader, what does he immediately vision? Standing there with a dagger in his mouth. No, that’s not the picture at all. What is the sword? **The Word of God.** To look at that, come back with me to Hebrews chapter 4, because we do this for the benefit of new listeners who haven’t been with us over the years. You see, the Scripture always interprets itself. Always! And we’re finding listeners that are learning that.

**Hebrews 4:12a**
"For the word of God is quick, (It’s alive. That’s what the word quick means here in our King James at least) and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit (which I always define as is intertwined as Siamese twins, but the Word of God can separate them. Alright, and the dividing of) the joints and marrow,…"

Now again, don’t lose the subject. And the Word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Have you ever had somebody tell you, "I never sinned?" Have you? I’ve had, "Oh, I never sin." You don’t ever think an evil thought? "Oh well, that’s not sin." Oh no? God sees them. That's a sobering thought isn't it; that God sees every thought. I don’t know if He wants to watch them all, but it’s within His realm of capability, and that’s what the Word of God is capable of doing. Back to Revelation again and verse 14.

Revelation 1:14a

"And His head and hairs were white like wool, as white as snow;…”

Now, let’s see how since this is all Jewish, it’s all connected with the Old Testament in one way or another. Now, come back with me to Daniel chapter 7 and we’ll see the same identical language, because God is dealing with the same people. Now again, Paul does not make this kind of a description of Christ because it isn’t necessary for us. But for Israel, it meant everything in the world to realize that their Scriptures tied together. Daniel chapter 7, verse 9. Here, of course, is the same vision where he sees the Gentile empires coming down the pipe of history, and he sees them as wild animals rather than the gold, silver, and so forth that Nebuchadnezzar saw.

Daniel 7:9

"I beheld (or he saw in this vision) till the thrones (that is of these various empires) 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: (do you see the comparison? Almost word for word) his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. 10. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him (now this is a view of the throne room, remember) thousands, thousands, (that’s millions) ministered unto him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; (now here’s exactly what Revelation is talking about) and the (what?) judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Now here we see then that God, in Daniel as well as in Revelation and in other places, is also going to be the God of Judgment.

Now today, we’re not under His judgment, we’re under His Grace. We’re under His mercy. We’re under His love. But His patience is going to run out one day, and when
that runs out then is going to come judgment like the world has never seen. Now we
know He judged the world at the flood and it was awesome. But it was nothing
compared to what’s coming. What’s coming is going to be beyond human description,
and I think that even a lot of my class people, when I read these verses concerning
"The day of the Lord;" a lot of them don’t really want to believe it. It’s so beyond
comprehension, but the Book declares it, so we’d better believe it!
All right, again, we always like to thank our television audience for your prayers. My, how we appreciate it that you tell us constantly either by letter or by phone or when we’re on our seminars, how that you pray for us everyday.

My, what a comfort that is to know we have so many believers praying for us. We also like to thank you for your financial help. We never beg for money, never have, and we never will, because I’m a firm believer in the system of giving that Paul teaches in II Corinthians chapter 9, "that believers give as the Lord lays it on the heart to give." And I do not feel that we should ever have to pressure anybody to give to this ministry. **Because if the Lord wants you to give, He’ll let you know it.**

All right, we’re going to go right back where we had to end in the last lesson, and we didn’t quite finish verse 16, before we move on into the next verse.

**Revelation 1:16**

"And he had in his right hand seven stars: (one for each one of these synagogues) **and out of his mouth went the sharp two-edged sword:** (the Word of God) **and his countenance** (His appearance) **was as the sun shineth in its strength."

In other words, at high noon. Now, there’s a beautiful example of that, of course, back in Matthew chapter 17 and you all know what it was. The Mount of Transfiguration, and again, I do these things just to exhilarate us. My, when we say we can’t wait to see Him face to face, it’s not going to be the lowly Jesus of Nazareth. It’s not going to be the Jesus of the earthly ministry.

**It’s going to be the resurrected, glorified, exalted Son of God.** And it’s beyond our human comprehension, but yet we know we’re going to see Him face to face. Even as Peter, James, and John did at the Mount of Transfiguration. All right, Matthew 17 starting at verse 1, and remember why I’m doing this. One day we’re going to experience this same thing.

**Matthew 17:1-2**

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John, his brother, and he bringeth them unto a high mountain apart. 2. And (He) was transfigured (he was
changed) before them: and his face did shine as the sun, (just like John sees it in Revelation) and his raiment was white as the light."

That is pure white light and that’s the way we’re going to see Him. And then, of course, the other comfort is we’re going to recognize our loved ones. Now, not as husband and wife, not as son and daughter and so forth, but we’re going to know who we are because I use this as a background, here we have the appearance now of Moses and Elijah talking with them. Did Peter, James, and John have to ask who they were? No! They knew who they were. Because Peter goes right on and says unto Jesus:

Matthew 17:4b "…Lord, it’s good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

How did he know they were Moses and Elijah? Well, they just knew. The same way when we get to glory and we behold Him as bright as the sun; we will know everybody else by name. We’ll know who they are and from whence they came. All right, now let’s move down into the next verse in Revelation chapter 1 verse 18:

Revelation 1:18

"I am he (now this is the Lord Jesus again speaking to these seven synagogues of Jewish believers) that liveth and was dead; (so we know this is after the death, burial and resurrection) behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of hell and death."

Well, there’s more than one place to look, but first I want to go back to Isaiah chapter 41 and I want to see how Isaiah says the same thing. Now, again, I do this to show that the Old and the New all fit together, especially as it pertains to Israel.

Isaiah 41:4

"Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, (or I Jehovah, Lord, God the Son) the first, and with the last; I am he."

Now, on your way back to Revelation I’m going to have you stop, if you will, at I Corinthians 15. But now before you look at I Corinthians 15, maybe we’d better go back again and read our verse in Revelation so you’ll see why I’m going where I’m going; verse 18, again.

Revelation 1:18a
"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I liveth forevermore...."

The Alpha and the Omega, the one who was, is, and always will be. Remember? Now, come back to I Corinthians 15, the great resurrection chapter. Alright, let’s just jump in at verse 3, the very heart of what Paul calls "my Gospel" or what we call the Gospel of the Grace of God, which is all dependent on His very death, burial, and resurrection for our salvation.

I Corinthians 15:3-4

"For I delivered (Paul says unto you) first of all that which I also received, (that is when the Lord revealed all this to him, probably down in the desert) how that Christ died for our sins according to the scripture; 4. And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"

Isn’t it wonderful! That’s all we must believe in our heart to have eternal life? Absolutely no works involved. Verse 5.

I Corinthians 15:5-6a

"And that, he was seen of Cephas (that is Peter) and then of the Twelve: (the whole batch together) 6. After that, (after he was seen of Peter and the Eleven) he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom (Paul says) the greater part remain unto this present,..."

In other words, they were still living, because you want to remember, we’ve only got about a 30-year interval here, so if these people were in their late 20’s or early 30’s they wouldn’t be all that old. They were certainly still alive at the time Paul writes to the Corinthians.

I Corinthians 15:6b-8

"...but some are fallen asleep. (or died.)

7. After that, (after he was seen of the Twelve and of the five-hundred) he was seen of James (and again Paul repeats that he was seen) then of all the apostles.

8. And last of all he was seen of me also, (which means that Paul saw the resurrected Christ face to face, but he didn’t see him in his days of rebellion. He saw him, now, after his conversion experience. And, again, probably out at the desert experience.) as of one born out of due time."
Now, since I’m here I might as well comment on that. What does Paul mean here? "as of one born out of due time" Well, you see he was a singular example of the whole nation. But he was born as a result of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection as a single individual, as Israel will be someday in the future. Now we know the remnant of Israel will be totallysaved when they see Christ re-appearing at His second coming. And so this is what Paul is referring to.

That he saw Him as one who was converted and became a believer hundreds of years before the nation as a whole which is still out in the future. Now, let’s jump to verse 12.

*I Corinthians 15:12*

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you there is no resurrection of the dead?"

Remember the Sadducees didn’t believe in resurrection, and there were probably other groups that didn’t.

*I Corinthians 15:13-14*

"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. 14. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

Might as well throw the Book away and go home. But He did rise from the dead? Now, verse 15.

*I Corinthians 15:15-19*

"Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: (and Paul says, if He didn’t then I’m a liar) whom he raised not up, if be that the dead rise not. 16. For if the dead rise not, (in other words if we die like a dog, and that’s the end of it), then Christ is not raised. 17. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; (we’re spinning our wheels, we’re wasting our time) ye are yet in your sins." 18. And they also which are fallen asleep (those who have died in Christ) are perished. (there would be no hope)
19. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But we do have that blessed hope, because He did arise from the dead. Now look at verse 25.

I Corinthians 15:25-27a

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. (He will reign, as King)

26. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. (Death, it will finally be completely obsolete, it will be off the scene)

27. For he hath, put all things under his feet…"

He is Lord of all, He is the One who was alive, He is alive now, and will be for all eternity future. Alright, back to Revelation 1, the last part of verse 18:

Revelation 1:18b

"…. behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death."

That’s why one day He will be victorious over it and He will obliterate it, never again to be part and parcel of our experience or even His. He’s going to end it once and for all as we go into eternity. Verse 19, Now, the Lord of glory says to John: Revelation 1:19" Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter:"

Now, the reason why I didn’t teach it when we went into Revelation several years ago was that I was never comfortable with that approach. Now, I don’t go contrary to tradition just to be contrary.

In all my years of teaching, I can go clear back to when we first stepped out of a denominational umbrella and began to teach men and women from all these denominations and with all their questions. My, the Methodists would have a far different question than a Baptist ever dreamed of. The Lutherans would have different, the Catholics would have different, and from all of these summary questions I started searching the Scriptures. Then I suddenly realized, hey, I’m not comfortable with everything that I’ve always learned. I haven’t been told all there is to know. And, as I had to search the Scriptures to answer all these questions, then there would be areas that, I would have to say, "Now wait a minute, there’s something lacking."
Well, the first place I had problems with was the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There was just something that I wasn’t putting together, and I couldn’t put my finger on it. And, most of you know by now, we sent out hundreds of these little books by Paul Van Gorder, who used to be a guest teacher on the old Radio Bible Class. And I happened to pick up that little booklet and it just opened my eyes. And of course, many of you know which one I’m talking about. The title of the little book is "Which Gospel When?"

We sent out hundreds of them. I found Dr. Van Gorder, I think in Georgia, and I called him and asked him if he’d give me permission to distribute these little books, because if it opened my eyes, it’ll open anybody’s eyes. And so he gave me full permission, and I’ve told him we’ll never charge for them and we never have. And we’ve had others that have contributed to the reproduction of them. But anyway, it was just a great opening of my eyes concerning the four gospels that I had never seen before.

Well, then I went on with some of the other things – the Book of Acts – for the longest time. I knew there was something that I just didn’t have straight. And all of a sudden these things started opening up. Well, the same way with these early church letters in Revelation. When we started teaching Revelation many years ago, I think, ten years ago I just wasn’t comfortable with the traditional view that these are Church Age churches, because there’s not a word of church language in here. There’s not a word about salvation by faith alone. There’s not a word in here about the shed blood. There’s not a word in here about the death, burial, and resurrection. And so, I had to skip over them. I wasn’t going to teach something that I didn’t agree with. But now in the last year or two, and I’ll have to give Matt McGee credit for some of this. He wrote an interesting little article. It’s up on his web page, which is I think right next to ours isn’t it? And you just click over to Matt’s and he’s got a good little article on the Book of Revelation and so forth, and that gave me courage to move on. Then, in various other sources, I began to see that this isn’t the way the traditional people always taught it. It is not a picture of Church Age history and the Body of Christ.

It is all Jewish. These are all Jewish congregations and all the language is directed to the Jewish believers.

Well, enough of that, looking at verse 19, again.

*Revelation 1:19b*

"Write the things which thou hast seen,..."
Well, what had John seen? Of course he had seen Christ’s earthly ministry – he was one of the Twelve. But now God is transporting him up into a vision experience of the horrors of the Tribulation, and that’s what the Book of Revelation is – it’s a road map of the seven years of Tribulation, like almost no other place in Scripture as you compare it of course with the Old Testament prophecies. But here he’s told now to write:

Revelation 1:19b

"...and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter:"

Well, what does John do? Just exactly that. Turn all the way to his last few chapters and this is what he was talking about – write about the things that are future. Because up and through the verses in chapter 20 it’s all still the seven years of wrath and vexation which are in time, as we know it. But then you jump into chapter 20 and we slip into what? Eternity! And what were the instructions? "Write the things that will be hereafter." Well, after what? After time as we know it; which will end with the thousand year reign of Christ. This is what’s out in the future.

Revelation 21:1a

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth:"

Now, stop and think a minute. Where did you first see those two words? Genesis 1:1. Remember?

"In the beginning God created (what?) heaven and earth." And we’ve had those two entities all the way through Scripture, and then we get to II Peter and they all disappear, and we’ll look at that in a minute. But, what’s going to happen? God’s going to replace it with something totally new.

Revelation 21:1a

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth: (why?) for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away;"

Now, I know a lot of people don’t believe that. A lot of good men do not agree that this whole system is going to disappear. They think it’s just going to be renovated. Well, for the Kingdom Age, yes. For the thousand years it’s going to be renovated. But for eternity, brand new. Why brand new? Well, who has spoiled everything that God has made so far? Satan! He’s put his filthy fingers on everything that God’s
created. I think even in outer space. And so what’s God going to do? He’s going to re-
do it, **and make all things new.**

Now, let me remind you, years ago I used to take a scientific journal, just for sake of interest, and one of the articles was written, if I’m not mistaken, by a physicist, at that time down at the University of Texas, on the origin of the universe. And I’ve shared it with some of you more than once. During the course of that article, he came to the conclusion that everything that had ever been created, came from one original source of light. Well, who is light? God is! So I read it to Iris and said, "Listen to this, honey. This guy doesn’t know what he’s saying. But he’s right on." Everything came from God. But you know how he ended his article? He said, "I can foresee the day, billions and billions of years from now, where the whole thing will go back into that original source of light." Well, isn’t that enough to give you goose bumps? Sure it will. That’s all God has to do is speak the Word and He can call it all back into that original source of light.

All right, now I said we’d show you the earth and heaven disappearing in Peter. Okay, let’s go back to II Peter, chapter 3, I think it is. Now, we’ve got to be careful how we read this.

**II Peter 3:10a**

"**But**" (Peter writes) **the day of the Lord** (remember the day of the Lord begins with that signing of the peace treaty, the seven year Tribulation, but it goes right on through the whole millennial thousand year reign of Christ. That’s all part and parcel of the day of the Lord.)

**II Peter 3:10b**

"...will come as a thief in the night;" (now, you got a punctuation mark – a semi-
colon – a break in the thought. At the end of that thousand and seven years, the end of the day of the Lord) **in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise,** (can’t you hear it? My, when the whole universe is all of a sudden just going to be coming together, and I think it’s going to be coming back into that original source of light.) **and the elements** (that is all the minerals and so forth that make up matter) **shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

All right now, when you put things under intense heat in the chemistry lab what do they do? They dissolve. That’s a chemistry word.

**II Peter 3:11**
"And seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, (melted down. Now Peter says) what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation (manner of living) and godliness." Knowing that this is the God whom we serve. He’s beyond human comprehension. And all He has to do is speak the Word.

II Peter 3:12

"Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be (what?) dissolved (melted down) and the elements (all the things that make up matter) shall melt with fervent heat?" (It’s going to be dissolved. It’s going to be done away with. The Scripture calls it like folding up a garment and laying it aside. But don’t stop there, next verse.)

II Peter 3:13

"Nevertheless (even though it’s all going to be one day consummated) we (as believers) according to his promise, look for (see now how it fits with Revelation) new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth (what?) righteousness."

Totally cleansed, nothing that defiles. It’s going to be glorious for all eternity. But now, my question again is, why new a heaven and a new earth? Well, I’ve taught it and I haven’t had any reason to back off. I think Israel is, and has been, God’s earthly people through time as we, The Body of Christ, have been God’s heavenly people.

But, I think it’s going to continue all the way into eternity. I don’t think we’ll ever mix with the nation of Israel. Now, I may be wrong, and I don’t get adamant if somebody disagrees, I’m not going to get all upset. But, I think the purpose for the new heaven and the new earth is that God can continue on that same format that Israel will be the earthly people and we’re always going to be the heavenly people.

Amazing, how God never, in one way or another, never changes.

Revelation 1:20

"The mystery (now remember the other word for mystery, even in Paul’s writings, is the secret.) so the mystery (secret) of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks, (lamp stands) the seven stars are the angels (or the ministers, or the overseers) of these seven churches; (synagogues) the seven lamp stands which thou sawest are the seven churches." (synagogues)
Now, let’s stop and think a minute. Remember that the temple was the center of all of God’s dealing with Israel wasn’t it? It was just the center of the nation’s activity. You see, way back in Old Testament times, Israel, because of their unbelief, had gotten so far from God, that who was it? Was it Hezekiah who found the Law? I think it was. I beg to be corrected, if I’m wrong.

But Israel was so far from God that they couldn’t even find the Law. And then, finally, somebody found it in some secret conclave in the temple and oh, there was great rejoicing that they found the Law.

All right, what had happened to God in the meantime? He left them. The Shekinah glory left them. They hadn’t had a temple for centuries. And so even at the time of Christ, the temple was still the center of their national activity, their social life. But spiritually what was it? It was a dead cause.

God had long since left it.

All right, so now, where is He picking it up for the last few years of His dealing with Israel? In the midst of these seven synagogues. Do you get the picture?

He has now left Jerusalem that’s going to soon be destroyed by the Romans, but God is going to continue dealing with His people here on earth, getting ready for the Tribulation, which is going to shortly come to pass, and so He stands in the midst of these seven lamp stands which are really congregations of Jewish believers. They are the last Jewish witness. Now, by the time we get to the end of the first century, 30 years after the temple is gone, what’s happened even to these seven congregations?

They disappear. They are just simply taken off the scene and any semblance of God dealing with His covenant people disappears and they go into the dispersion that has held even until our present time.
All right, we’re going to get right back where we left off, Revelation chapter 2, and verse 1. We’re just a non-denominational, independent Bible study, and the only one I have to report to is the Lord of Glory. I don’t take the responsibility of teaching the Word lightly, as you know by now. We just depend on His leading and His guidance, and I don’t purposely try to step on people’s toes, but if in the process of teaching the Word we do, well so be it. Then they’ve just got to pay attention to what the Book says, as well as what the Book doesn’t say. But above all, while studying the Scriptures keep the Word of God divided. What was said to Israel, for example was said under the Law, and what Paul said to the Body of Christ believers was said under grace, and you cannot mix the two. Paul calls that "rightly dividing the Word of Truth," which makes everything fit so beautifully.

All right, Revelation chapter 2. Now remember, we’re dealing with seven Jewish congregations in Western Turkey, who have more or less taken the place of God’s dealing in preparation for the wrath and vexation that at this point in time is still right out in front of them. We, in the Age of Grace we’re living in, know that God opened up the timeline. He did not bring in the wrath and vexation, it’s still out in the future, but these Jewish believers didn’t know that. They thought the whole Old Testament program was just going to keep right on flowing, and that they would, in due time, be in the midst of the wrath and vexation.

So, now the Lord is dealing with these seven congregations in a particular, unique way. As I mentioned in the last program, the importance of the temple was losing its clout, and by 70 A.D. it would be totally destroyed, and Jerusalem would be destroyed, and the Jews would be dispersed throughout the whole world. So, if John is writing, as I think he is, in probably the 50’s, 55 to 60, somewhere in there, they are only about 10 or 12 years before the temple would be destroyed, and consequently God is using these seven lamp stands as a final testimony of His power and His glory and His coming judgment.

Revelation 2:1a

"Unto the angel (or minister, or the leader) of the church (assembly) of Ephesus write;..." Now, I’m going to quit using the word church if we’re not using Paul’s writings, because I’ve explained why I don’t like it. It comes from the Greek
word "ecclesia" which is a called out assembly, but these were mostly synagogues. So you can either use assembly or synagogues.

Revelation 2:1

"These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;"

Or we’ve been calling them the lamp stands. They were the last real source of spiritual light in the darkening clouds of that time leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem. Now verse 2, and remember this is the Lord Jesus Himself speaking. If you have a red-letter edition Bible, it’ll all be in red. And Jesus says to this synagogue of believing Jews - Now when I say believing Jews, I trust you all know what I’m talking about. These are Jews who are still under the Law, but they have recognized and believed for salvation that Jesus of Nazareth was their Messiah. And that was the whole crux of their belief system.

They knew that Jesus was that promised Messiah. Yes, He had died, He’d been raised. He’d gone back to glory, but in short order He’d be returning to set up the Kingdom. Now, maybe this is a good time to go back and look at just one or two Old Testament references to that. Come back with me to Zechariah, chapter 14. This is just exactly what they’re looking forward to. This is prophecy. Zechariah is writing about 400 and some years, almost 500 B.C. And how graphically he lays it out, as to what we’re seeing in the Book of Revelation. These are the events at the last part of the Tribulation; this is the battle of Armageddon as you’ve all heard of it.

Zechariah 14:1-2a

"Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, (well, this is the closing days of those first seven years) and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. 2. For I (God says) will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle;…”

That’s what we refer to as the Battle of Armageddon; when all the nations of the world that are left, will be brought to the nation of Israel by the anti-Christ in one great final push to destroy the Jewish nation, and it ends up in a battle against Israel’s Christ. Now today we can see that so vividly. What is the whole core of the hatred in the Middle East? The Jew. Oh, they hate them. They hate them like you and I cannot believe they hate them. They’re willing to send their little ten and eleven-year old kids with bombs wrapped around them; you know Israel’s picked up a couple of them just a couple of weeks ago. One little eleven-year old chickened out. He was too afraid to go and pull the trigger. Why would people do this? Because they hate the Jew.
I just read one of their clichés last night. "The Arab world loves death more than the Jews loves life." I think I quoted it. That’s exactly what they figure. Well why? Because they want to get rid of the Jew. They want every semblance of him off the planet. All right, so here it comes. Consequently the anti-Christ is going to bring all the nations of the world against Jerusalem to have the final solution brought to an end.

Zechariah 14:2b-3

"...and the city (Jerusalem) shall be taken, and the houses rifled, (they’re going ravage the city) the women ravished; (raped,) and half the city shall go forth into captivity, (it will be overrun) and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. (Then, when it looks like it’s almost to the place that the world wants; that the Jews are gone.) Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle."

That would be back in Israel’s history. Now in verse 4, here’s the Second Coming as we saw in Acts chapter 1, when the angel told the eleven: "...why stand you gazing up into heaven, this same Jesus in like manner will come in..."

Zechariah 14:4

And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, (the Second Coming when He returns) which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave(separate) in the midst thereof toward the east (where Christ will now establish His throne, the capital of His world government) and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." And then from that valley will come a great river of water from out of the Throne room in Jerusalem.

Zechariah 14:8

"And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the former sea, (the Mediterranean) and half of them toward the hinder sea: (the Dead Sea) in the summer and in winter shall it be."

And we know from Ezekiel that because of that fresh water flowing into the Dead Sea, the Dead Sea will become a fresh water lake, and all the species of fish that are in the Mediterranean will also be in what is now the Dead Sea. Now, verse 9, and it will all culminate in this great prophecy.

Zechariah 14:9
"And the LORD (Jehovah, God the Son) shall be king over all the earth: (not just Israel. Israel will simply be the vortex of it all.) and in that day (when He has established His Kingdom) there shall be one LORD, and his name one."

Alright, that’s what all of prophecy is looking forward to, and that’s what Israel down through the ages has been anticipating, and even today the heart cry of every Jew that has any spiritual concern at all is what? "Next year Jerusalem" Well, why Jerusalem? Because they’re hoping the Lord will return and yet give them the Kingdom. So that’s the hope that keeps the Jewish people going.

All right, back to Revelation, and the very first verse of chapter 2; he’s dealing with the congregation there at Ephesus. But my own take on this is that this is a separate Jewish congregation, removed from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. Just like we have today. We can certainly have a protestant denomination of some sort, and maybe down the street a a few places is a Jewish synagogue, which is Messianic believers, and for salvation they have believed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, but they are not part and parcel of what we would call a main stream denomination. So, my personal take is that Paul’s Gentile believers were in a separate congregation from these Jewish believers.

Now, I can’t prove that, but I have got my reasons for thinking that. Verse 2. This is the Lord Jesus commenting on this particular congregation. Now remember, as I said at the beginning of this afternoon’s program, these seven letters were written in one book, and the whole book was sent to all seven Jewish assemblies. So what does that mean? That every one of the seven congregations could feed on all seven letters. Well, it’s just like for you and me. Paul writes to the Corinthians, he writes to the Galatians, he writes the Ephesians, the Thessalonians, all different letters, but what do we do? We feed on every one of them. They have become a composite. Well, that’s the way these little letters were meant to deal with these Jewish congregations. So, now he says to the Ephesian congregation:

Revelation 2:2a

"I know thy works..." Now what does that tell you? That smacks of Law, doesn’t it? Law is works, works, works and Jesus knew that their works were according to the Law. Absolutely they were. These believing Jews were never told not to keep the Law.

Revelation 2:2b

"...and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou cannot bear them who are evil;..."
Well, that’s understandable isn’t it? If they were Law-keeping Jews, could they condone wickedness? Of course not. That’s obvious and so they were right on with their understanding of the Mosaic Law; that would not bear with adultery and corruption and coveting and idolatry - all those things. No, they couldn’t handle that.

*Revelation 2:2c*

"…who are evil; thou hast tried (or tested) them who say they are apostles, and are not, and hath found them liars:"

All right, back up a few pages. Let’s see how John puts it in his little epistle. I John chapter 4, and they were practicing this and the Lord is commending them for it.

*I John 4:1-2*

"Beloved, (so he’s writing to again these Jewish believers) believe not every spirit, but try (or test) the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2. Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:"

Now you remember, as we’ve been looking at these little epistles over the last year, that was right in line with Peter’s confession back in Matthew 16. And what was Peter’s confession? "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" In John 11 we have Martha’s confession:

*John 11:24-27*

"Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the last day. 25. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? 27. She (Martha) saith unto him, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

All right, John carries it on here to these little Jewish congregations; that if you confess that Jesus is the Christ and that He’s the Son of God, then you have the Spirit of God. All right verse 3:

*I John 4:3a*

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God:…"
In other words, if someone can’t believe that Jesus was God manifested in the flesh, he has no hope of eternal life until he has a change of heart on that.

_I John 4:3b_

"...and this is that spirit of anti-Christ, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now is already in the world."

See how John is admonishing these believers, and now he can quote the Lord Jesus. Come back now to Revelation 2, and that’s exactly what they’ve been doing. Just exactly like John had instructed. They have held these men up against the Word of God and they claim to be apostles but they weren’t and the Ephesian people had enough wherewithal to see that they were what? Liars! They were false teachers. And the Lord continues to commend them.

_Revelation 2:3-4_

"And (You) have borne, (or you have been able to bear these burdens) and, (you) have patience, and for my name’s sake ye have labored (there’s works again) and have not fainted. 4. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

All right now, stop and think a minute. Is there anything in those three verses that smacks of any of Paul’s teaching? Not a word! Not a word about the resurrection. Not a word about Christ having died for our sin. Not a word about being in the Body of Christ. See where I’m coming from? This is all Jewish, just as if Paul’s letters had never yet been written, and that’s the way it should be, because Paul’s letters were completely separated from the Jewish program. After having said, in verse 4, that they had left their first love; in fact they’re energized spiritual life all of a sudden was running out of steam.

_Revelation 2:5a_

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, (what was happening? They were losing their zeal. They were losing their heart in the face of Tribulation and testing. So Jesus writes through the pen of John,) repent,..."

Now, I maintain that the word _repent_ in the New Testament Greek is not a groveling in the dirt being sorrow and begging for mercy, but it’s a change of direction. It’s just simply 180 degrees. Instead of going that way, you go this way. So what have we got here? These Jews were going further and further from Christ and their love for Him and they were getting more lackadaisical; they were probably getting more tolerant of
evil and what were they to do? So, He’s saying, "Turn around and go back the other direction".

Revelation 2:5b

"...and do the first works; (get back to where you were at the beginning) or else I will come unto thee quickly, and I will remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent."

Or turn around. And did it happen? Yeah, it did. Before very many years went by, these Jewish synagogue congregations totally disappeared. And of course with them, so also went Paul’s congregations. Now it’s amazing, how that part of the world became so destitute of anything concerning the Word of God when they had had so much.

Back up with me if you will to Timothy, back to II Timothy chapter 1. The same thing that happened to Paul and his little Gentile congregations happened to the seven Jewish congregations in that same area of the world. And remember where is it? Turkey! How much of Christianity is left in Turkey? Some of you people have been there, practically nothing. Now, you can go across the Aegean Sea to Greece, and you’ll still see evidence everywhere of Paul’s ministry and so forth. But this part of the world that we now call Turkey, or what in Scripture was Asia and Asia Minor, is destitute.

II Timothy 1:13-14a

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us. (Here’s why Paul is admonishing Timothy – "Don’t do as the rest of those folks are doing") For this thou knowest, that all they who are in Asia (now remember that’s not China and India, that’s Turkey) be turned away from me:…"

Isn’t that awful? Before the man has even ended his life here on earth, that whole area of what we call Asia Minor, or the land of Turkey, had already abandoned Paul and his teachings. And it’s almost like that today. About the same thing is happening to the Jewish synagogue.

Now back to Revelation. So the Lord Jesus is telling this synagogue in Ephesus to turn around from their lackadaisical careless lack of love and get back with it. And God says, "I will remove your lamp stand unless you do." And like I said, history
shows that that’s exactly what happened. All right verse 6, but He still had something that He could give them credit for and that is:

*Revelation 2:6*

"But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."

Now, there’s more than one take on who the Nicolaitans were. I think the Scofield depicts it as an over-coming of the laity, a clergy. Other commentaries I’ve read have had various others, but the other one I read just again last night was the Nicolaitans were worshippers of a particular pagan goddess. And these Jews, of course, would naturally hate any kind of pagan idolatry, and so they were still up enough on what they believed to hate the Nicolaitans, whichever it was. It was something that was totally false and they hated it, but the Lord said, so do I.

*Revelation 2:7a*

"He that hath an ear, (now this is unusual because here again I think this is strictly a Jewish term of language) let him hear what the Spirit (that is the Holy Spirit) saith to the churches; (congregations. Not singular, plural, so it’s a message to all seven of them. And here it is) To him that overcometh…"

Now again, I think I’ve made mention of it earlier, I don’t think that the Apostle Paul ever speaks of you and I as Grace Age believers as being over comers. But here, these Jews are constantly being reminded to be over comers. And then God says:

*Revelation 2:7b*

"…will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

Well, with that we can make a comment. Tell me, where does the Tree of Life first appear? Back in Genesis, in the Garden of Eden. And after the fall and after the flood, it disappears. Now it seems, from Scripture, that the Tree of Life continued on even after the expulsion because God put angelic creatures in front of the gate to the Tree of Life so that no one would partake of it. But anyway, it disappears from human experience, but here we have it popping up again in eternity as revealed in Revelation.

And so he tells these Jewish believers, that if they would overcome all the things that were working against them and restore to where they were at the beginning, then they would have the promise of eternal life in that world that is to come, that new heaven and new earth. Now, let’s just move on into verse 8 and the second letter, which is to
Smyrna. Now of course, you have to realize that the Jewish believers, as well as Paul’s believers, were under intense persecution at this time. It was dependant quite often on the particular Roman Emperor, some were worse than others, but this was a period of time leading up to the destruction of the temple, where the Romans were intense in their persecution against believers. And so Smyrna speaks of that. In fact, the very name Smyrna comes, I think, as a root of the word Myrrh. And Myrrh, of course, was that perfume which was brought about by the crushing of a little seed. The more that little seed was crushed, the more odor would come from it. **And so the indication, of course, is that they were in a place of intense persecution.**

*Revelation 2:8*

"And unto the angel (or leader) of the church (assembly) in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, (in other words, again, the Alpha and the Omega,) the one who was dead, (as a result of His crucifixion) and is alive."*

Now stop a minute and think. Is Jesus associating salvation with their believing that? No! Not at all. He’s just simply making it known that the One they’re dealing with is the One who was alive from eternity past, He had gone through death, He had been brought back to life. But He doesn’t associate it any iota with salvation with these Jewish believers. This is the point I’m trying to make. Just because they mention the fact that He was dead and risen from the dead, unless it’s promoted as a means of salvation, then they had no connection that it was for them to enjoy salvation.

Now with Paul, of course, it’s the other way around. He emphasizes that because He died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose from the dead for our justification, here in this Church Age, and that is what we must believe in our heart for salvation.

*Revelation 2:9a*

"I know thy works,… (Now, I’m going to make the point. Do you realize in every one of these seven letters works is the preeminent word, because it’s a legalistic religion. They are still under the Law.)

Even though the temple is several hundred miles away and they probably still have to try to get to a feast day, yet these believers that had believed for salvation that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, are for all practical purposes Law-keeping Jews. And in order to be a Law-keeper, I know we’ve got some of you in here that have come out of those kinds of religions; if you are under a Law-keeping religion, what do you have to do? Works! Works, in one way or another, either by opening up your billfold, or doing this, or doing that. Whenever you have a works religion, it is work,
work, work. And that’s why a works religion can never be sure of their eternal destiny. Why? Because you don’t know if you’ve worked enough.
We just want to thank you over and over for all your precious notes. Mail time is just a thrill when we read all these letters of how you’ve gotten a new insight into Scripture. Many of you are telling us of your newfound salvation, and as we said before, we hardly ever get a letter that is less than kind. We just thank the Lord for it. And again, we thank you for your financial help, because, after all, that’s what keeps us on the air.

Before we get back into the lesson, I’d like to remind you, if you haven’t noticed already, our web address, of course, is up here on the board www.lesfeldick.org and I don’t take any credit for it. We have one of the best web sites up there, and again, I always have to give Matt McGee the credit. Matt has just done a tremendous job for us without ever taking a dime of compensation, and I want him to know publicly that we appreciate all that he does.

Okay, back to Revelation chapter 2, verse 9. Well, we might as well start at verse 8 and begin at the beginning of the letter, and remember, as we said in the first program, these seven letters were all in a composite of one book. The whole book was sent to all seven congregations, so that every congregation could benefit from every other portion of the whole; just like Paul’s letters to us. Paul also wrote seven letters to seven churches, and we, too, use all seven of them in this Age of Grace.

Revelation 2:8

"And to the angel (or minister or to the leader of the congregation, or the synagogue) in Smyrna write; These things saith the first, the last, who was dead and is alive;"

Now remember, this is all after His death, burial and resurrection. But as we said in our last program, there is nothing associated here with salvation for these Jewish believers. It’s just simply a statement of fact that the eternal, pre-eternal Christ had died, had been raised from the dead and is alive – alive for all eternity to come. Now then, verse 9 where He again commends them, like He did Ephesus:

Revelation 2:9a

"I know thy works..."
I reminded you in the closing minutes of last program that this is under the works religion of Judaism. The only difference is now they have recognized who Jesus of Nazareth really is.

**Revelation 2:9b**

"...and **(your) tribulation,** (their testing, the persecution they were under) **and** (their) **poverty** (which of course was fairly common when people were under intense persecution they would lose their wherewithal for making an income) **but thou art rich** (spiritually) **and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews,**…"

Now, here’s another good point. Remember, to be a true Jew you had to be a what? A believing Jew! So these people claimed to be believers but they were not. Anything any different today? No, we’ve got the same thing. Our churches are full of people who claim to be believers but they’re not, they’re following a false god. We’re going to look at it in just a minute.

**Revelation 2:9c**

"...**but they are the synagogue of Satan.**"

Now again, analyze that. Pick it apart. Is there any Gentile language in there? It’s all Jewish! They claim to be Jews but they’re not. Now, that didn’t mean that they were not Jews by blood, **but Jews by faith.** They were not in accord with the belief system of these fellow Jews in these assemblies. They were false teachers, and so they were consequently then, the followers of the synagogue of Satan.

All right now, Paul warns us of much the same way for this Age of Grace. Now, back up with me if you will to II Corinthians chapter 11, and we have the same dilemma. My, the world is full of these false teachers. They’re coming in like a flood. Fortunately, folks who are seeing what the Word says are catching on. More and more people are coming up and telling me how they are shutting off these false teachers. Well, that’s great! Because if they’re not in the Scriptures and truthful with it, then they do not merit your time. All right, verse 13 of II Corinthians 11, and my, what a statement under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Paul says:

**II Corinthians 11:13**

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."
See, they’ve done it of their own volition of what they claim to be and what they claim to know. But Paul tells us, "don’t fall for them."

**II Corinthians 11:14**

"And no marvel; (don’t be surprised) for Satan himself is transformed into (what?) an angel of light."

My, he can appear in such a way that people say, "This is the truth." But now, wait a minute, what light are you listening to? What spirit are you listening to? And we have to have the wherewithal to discern. That’s why God has given us the Scriptures to compare and if they don’t line up with Scripture that Paul wrote to us in this Age of Grace, then you’d better run from it.

**II Corinthians 11:14b-15a**

"...for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15. Therefore it is not a great thing (it’s nothing to be surprised about) if his ministers (Satan’s ministers – not God’s) are transformed as the ministers of righteousness;..."

Now, what do they do? They use all the right language. They’ll refer to the cross, they’ll refer to Christ, they’ll refer to a lot of the other things that we can agree with. But then in comes about 20 or 30 percent of absolute garbage and that makes it what? False! Totally false, and that’s why we have to be so careful. And Paul’s letters are just full of these constant reminders – beware, beware of the false teachers. Beware of those who will come in unawares and mislead the believing congregation. All right, it was the same way with these Jews. Satan doesn’t care who he deals with, whether it’s Gentiles or Jews, his end is the same.

**Revelations 2:9b-10a**

"...and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. 10. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer:..."

Well, now again, as I mentioned in our first program this afternoon, we’re spoiled aren’t we? Can we handle real suffering? Could we handle intense persecution? Because you see our whole system of civilization abhors it, but you’ve got to realize that in many portions of the world, torture and suffering is almost an everyday occurrence. I’m sure none of them enjoy it, but I think they’re more capable of thinking about it than we are, because to us to it’s just an unheard of thing. We don’t know what it is to be tortured, but Christians have been tortured down through
the ages. They have not lived on beds of ease as we have in America. Alright, so he says to these Jews: "But fear none of these things which thou shall suffer:..."

Well, the Tribulation is going to be awful. Let me see, can I take you back to some of them. Let’s go back and pick up some of the horrors of the Tribulation that are coming. I think I want Jeremiah 25. Now, this is toward the end of the Tribulation when it’s going to be by far worse than it will be earlier, but just look at the closing days of the wrath and vexation. Jeremiah 25 verse 29. The whole chapter is dealing with these things, but we’ll just take the final few verses. Now, this is just a little glimpse of what these Jews were being prepared for, because so far as they knew it was right out in front of them.

They had no idea that God was going to stop His time clock and push it out into the future 2000 years; which means the Jews of the present time are also going to go through all of this, as well as the rest of the world. All right, Jeremiah 25:29. It’s prophecy. It’s going to happen. That is what I can’t get people to understand; that since it hasn’t happened does not mean that it won’t. It is coming! And I think if you know anything about world events you can agree with me. We’re getting close.

Jeremiah 25:29-30

"For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, (what’s that? Jerusalem) and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, (but it’s going to be the vortex in Jerusalem. It will be at the very center, just like it’s been with everything else in God’s dealing with the human race, so also with His judgments) saith the LORD of host. 30. Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, (and this is what God says, and God doesn’t lie) The LORD shall roar from on high, (now this is of course at the time of His Second Coming. This is at the end of the seven years. Like I say this will be the very epitome of the wrath of God being poured out) and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes against all the inhabitants of the earth."

I’m going to take time, so come back with me to Isaiah. I hope I can find it. Where does He speak of the grapes? 63? Yeah. Isaiah 63, and this compares word for word with Revelation where you have the same scenario. While you’re looking up Isaiah 63, I’ll see if I can find it in Revelation – Fourteen? Ok, let’s look first at Isaiah, chapter 63. Let’s just begin with verse 1. This is all part and parcel of those final seven years, but this, too, like where we just were in Jeremiah, is speaking of the Second Coming, when we come to the very epitome of God’s wrath and vexation.
"Who is this that cometh from Edom, (so evidently the Second Coming is going to begin down there south of the Dead Sea area, and His judgment will just sort of flow up over Jerusalem, and up over the northern part of Israel) with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? (so who are we talking about? Christ at His Second Coming!) I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. (again, the question is) 2. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that (what?) treadeth in the wine vat?"

Well, use a little imagination. We don’t do it here anymore, but in the Middle East, I know because we’ve been there and we’ve seen their wine vat. And the one we saw had a large wine vat and had a rope in the middle, and they’d usually have teenage kids get in there and just hang onto the rope, and they would just tramp those grapes. Well, if you tramp the grapes, how are you going to look? Grape juice splatters all over you. That’s the same analogy. So, verse 3 the Lord responds.

"I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in my (love? No. His) anger. (It’s the day of vengeance) and I will trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, I will stain all my raiment. (That doesn’t sound like the God of mercy and love does it? Well it isn’t. This is a God of vengeance when He’s finally had enough) 4. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. 5. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. 6. And I will tread down the people in my anger, I will make them drunk in my fury, I will bring down their strength to the earth."

That’s the vengeance of God that’s coming. Alright, keep your hand in Jeremiah 25, I’m not through there yet, now come back with me to Revelation 14, because I want you to see how these word pictures fit all the way through Scripture. And even though these men wrote hundreds and hundreds of years apart, yet everything fits so beautifully.

"And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, (now where did you see that term? Earlier today in Revelation. The Son of man, the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth) having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle."
Now, you’ve got to remember when you’re reading Scripture, and words come up, you have to understand the symbolic meaning. What was the use of the sickle in the ancient? Harvesting. In fact, remember when we were in Jordan a few years ago, they were harvesting wheat. Just a few years ago, and they still had that little one-handed sickle, or scythe as we call it, and they were still cutting the wheat and piling it up by hand. Well, the sickle here is speaking then of a harvest - God’s harvest. Not for glory, but for doom!

Revelation 14:15

"And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap the harvest of the earth is ripe, (and the Greek really implies, "over-ripe." It’s past time, God has already extended grace even longer than He would have had to.) 16. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. 17. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle." He’s going to take part in this symbolic harvest.

Revelation 14:18-19a

"And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire; and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in the sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. (That is Christ rejecting humanity; that is what we’re talking about now. The humanity that is still on the earth at the end of the Tribulation) 19. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth,...."

Now, we know in the final days leading up to Armageddon, the armies of the world are going to be called to Israel. They’re going to pack into Israel’s valleys like sardines in a can, contrary to all good military strategy, and this is that wine vat.

Revelation 14:19b

"...and gathers the vine of the earth, (which is the armies of the world) and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."

Not pretty is it? How much nicer to proclaim the grace of God. How much more thrilling to proclaim the Gospel of our salvation. (I Corinthians 15:1-4) But, listen, mankind better wake up, because we can see all the evidence that this is coming, around the world today.

Revelation 14:20
"And the winepress (the wine vat as we would call it) was trodden (by someone who is going to crush mankind like the grapes are crushed in a wine vat) without the city, and the blood comes out of the winepress, even to the horse bridles, by the space of thousand, six hundred furlongs."

That, I think, is about 180 miles, which stretches from northern Israel, down to the Red Sea. And that will be the crushing of the armies of the world as they have gathered into the valleys of Israel. All right, now come back with me to Jeremiah 25, and we’ll read a little further. We were in verse 30.

**Jeremiah 25:30b-32a**

"...he (The. LORD) shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. (Now granted, the main part will be in the valleys of Israel, but all the planet is going to come under this final vexation) **31. A noise shall even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD** (God the Son, the Son of Man, Jesus of Nazareth, all the titles you can put on Him) **has a controversy with the nations,** (not just Israel, now. We’re dealing with the whole human race) **he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword,** (death) **saith the LORD. 32. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation,**...

Now you see, in our present day scenario of instant communication, tremendous travel opportunity, you can go from one end of the earth to the other in a matter of hours. This is all going to culminate, now, in God dealing the same way with nation to nation, **no corner of the globe is going to escape it, not one.**

**Jeremiah 25:32b**

"...and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the borders of the earth." And I think I mentioned this one other time, I think that’s an indication of nuclear explosions, because they set up tremendous wind currents. And so there’ll be nuclear explosions around the planet. They’re not building all these WMDs for nothing, don’t you ever think it. **They’re going to be used someday.**

**Jeremiah 25:33**

"And the slain of the LORD (it will be His judgment. Not man, but when the LORD decrees it then) shall be at day from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, (there will be no time for sorrowing or funerals) **neither gathered, nor buried;** (they’ll be too many) **they shall be dung upon the ground.**" That’s the coming judgment that all of Scripture is pointing to.
Alright, now then, let’s come back where we were in Revelation chapter 2 verse 10 again, so he says:

_Revelation 2:10a_

"Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer: (because God’s going to protect His own) behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, (and we’ve seen it all the way through human history) that you may be tried; (or tested. Now the Lord says) and ye shall have tribulation ten days;…"

Now, I know all the other approaches to this thing speaks of ten separate times of persecution and that may be, but I prefer to go back and use the Scriptural application which takes us back to Genesis 24. Let’s go back and see how Scripture deals with ten days, not men’s ideas, but how does God use the term.

Genesis chapter 24 and we’re dealing with the bride Rebekah up there in Syria, and the servant has gone to get her for Isaac. All right now, let’s pick up the story. She’s going to be going back down into Canaan with the servant of Abraham, but they’re all human just like we are. It’s not easy to break with family. Let’s pick it up in verse 49. I want you to get the full picture. And the servant is getting anxious to get back down to Canaan to take this lovely bride for his master’s son, Isaac.

_Genesis 24:49_

"And now (the servant says) if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, (which of course was Abraham) tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left. 50. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. 51. Behold, Rebekah (the girl in question) is before thee, take her, and go, (but before you go, now for the sake of time we’ve got to drop all the way down to verse 55) And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least (what?) ten; and then she shall go."

So, how is it used? Well, as indication of just a short period of time, just let her stay ten more days and by that time she’ll be ready to say her goodbyes and you can take her down to your master’s son. Well, I think you’ve got the same implication here in Revelation. Yes, there’s going to be some intense persecution, but don’t worry, it will be a short time, it won’t last long and when it’s over you’re going to have the blessings of the Kingdom that’s coming upon the earth.
LESSON THREE * PART I

WINKING AT EVIL? WAKE UP!

REVELATION 2:11 – 3:22

I’ve never asked the studio audience how many different denominations and groups are represented but I imagine it’s quite a few. We find that in our seminars as we travel it’s the same way; we get people from so many different backgrounds and some from none, but we can probably instigate some hunger for the Word of God, and after all, that’s all we want to do is just whet people’s appetites to study on their own.

I don’t want people to just say, "Well, that’s what Les says." I want folks to be able to just get in here and study it and see how everything fits so beautifully, if you just simply watch what it says. So anyway, we’re going to just jump right in where we left off in our last program, which was in Revelation chapter 2, verse 12.

Now again, I’ve got to stop a moment and remind myself that we’re gaining new listeners every day. I mean it’s just shocking how our database in those computers is growing something ferocious every month, so that means we’ve got a lot of new listeners who have not heard much of our teaching before, so bear with me as I keep repeating.

In fact, Monday night at our class up at Tahlequah, a gentleman who has been coming for several years came up and said, ‘Les keep repeating! Tonight’s the first time I got it!’ And it was something that I’d probably taught ten or twelve times since he’s been coming, but that’s typical. It just takes so long before all of a sudden this opens up and we can say, "Finally, there it is." So, I’m going to repeat some of these things for the benefit of new listeners.

To begin with, these seven letters, as we normally refer to them, were not churches per se. They were Jewish congregations, more than likely called synagogues as we had back in James chapter 2, verse 2, and these were not written to be just one individual letter to a congregation but it was to be a composite. All seven of these letters were to be put into one book and then a copy of the book was to be sent to each one of these seven Jewish congregations. And they are Jewish. Now there may have been a Gentile or two in amongst them, but I doubt it. I think it was basically Jewish coming all the way out of Christ’s earthly ministry and the congregation there at Jerusalem, which was scattered because of Saul’s persecution.

You want to remember now that the destruction of the temple is just a few years into the future. But they have no idea that anything different from the Old Testament
prophecy was coming down the pike and that was that they were ready to go into the Tribulation. They were expecting those final years of wrath and vexation and then Christ would return and bring in the 1000 year earthly kingdom promised to Israel.

And so these seven letters are written as a composite of the whole, just like Paul’s letters are written to us in this Age of Grace. In fact, I was thinking about it again last night, how every one of us are so aware that Paul wrote all the letters between Romans and Philemon and primarily the seven church letters as we call them, which do not include Timothy and Titus, but we use all of them. We use Corinthians and we use Galatians. We use Romans and we use Thessalonians. Well, if you look at these letters in that light, this is what those Jewish believers could do with these letters. They were getting them ready for the 7 years of Tribulation they presumed were right out in front of them.

Now, you know when I teach, especially Paul’s prison epistles – Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon – they are like personal mail to you and I today. They were just written to the Grace Age believer in particular. And consequently, there was almost no background in the Old Testament. So consequently, these were all new revelations that were given to Paul for us the Gentile believers.

Well, I think you can look at these little letters to these Jewish churches in the same way. It was like personal mail to these Jewish believers that certainly had no real status with the Gentile believers out there under Paul. And before the next program, I’m going to put my timeline back on the board, and we’re going to see how all of these things came out of the Old Testament prophecies and brought about the Jerusalem Jewish church. It, in turn, was scattered by the intense persecution of Saul of Tarsus, and those Jews were scattered and have predominately now gathered in Western Turkey where these seven little cities are located. We pointed out in our last taping, since the temple is almost within earshot of being destroyed in just a few more years, that God has now moved the authority from the temple, it seems, to the area of these seven congregations. And if we look at it in that light it just makes all the difference in the world.

He had already given up on Jerusalem and the temple. It’s doomed. It’s going to be gone before long. So, He’s closing His dealing with the Jewish believers, of the Kingdom economy now, who had believed for salvation that Jesus was the Promised Messiah, still under the Law but here they are gathered in these seven cites in Western Turkey (or Asia Minor as the Scripture calls it). Remember now, that they are all to be digested between the various congregations. All right, maybe that’s enough introduction for now.
Revelation 2:12

"And to the angel (or the minister or the leader) of the church (assembly) in Pergamus write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;" Now remember that’s a definitive description of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One who speaks the Word and it’s the Word that is the two edged sword through Scripture.

Everything that Christ ever did with regard to creation or anything else was by the spoken Word. He didn’t have to bring the dust together and formulate something. He spoke the Word and Adam appeared. And so throughout all the Old Testament Scriptures, He could speak the Word and things happened. Take the Red Sea, one of the primary miracles of the Old Testament, He didn’t go down there and do anything physically. He spoke the Word and the waters parted and the power of God is evident. All right, so the same Christ, God the Son, is now dealing with these Jewish believers, and He’s telling them - and I’m going to keep hammering it home and hopefully it’ll finally sink in:

Revelation 2:13a

"I know thy works,..." Now what do works entail? What you can do. To look at that, let’s go all the way back and see how this fits the Jewish picture. Go all the way back to Exodus 19. We’ve used this time and time again. And always remember, Paul never uses that kind of language for us.

Certainly he teaches that as a believer we are to do good works for rewards, (I Corinthians 3:9-15) But for salvation through Paul writings we find in many places there can be no works in this Grace Age. Paul never emphasizes the works element like Christ does with these Jews. All through these seven letters in Revelations it’s: "I know thy works," see? All right, here’s why, back in Exodus 19 they were still under this same law that began back there at Sinai. Let’s drop all the way down to verse 8.

Exodus 19:8

"And all the people (that is the nation of Israel now gathered around Sinai) answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will (believe? What?) do...."' And so right from day one we see that Judaism or the legalism of Moses’ law and the temple worship was a "works" religion. Of course, faith was the basis of it all, but nevertheless it’s that constant emphasis on works.

All right, back to Revelation 2. Verse 13 again,
"I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is:...." In other words, physically. He knew their geographical area. He knew the politics that was involved in that geographical area and what was it? "Satan’s throne." Now, don’t just glibly read over that. There’s a reason for Christ calling Pergamos the place of "Satan’s throne." Now, we don’t ordinarily think of Satan having a throne here on earth do we, but evidently he did. I think it started down at the Tower of Babel. I think it began at the Tower of Babel when Nimrod gathered all of the then living people and they instituted the pagan idolatrous worship of Babel and from there it just continued on.

All right, now I’m going to give reference to a good book on this subject and it’s no longer in print but certainly a good library would have it and the name of the book is "Two Babylons". I’ve read excerpts from it, I’ve never read the whole book, but "Two Babylons" and the author’s name is Hislop, and he’s done a tremendous work on this a long, long time ago. That’s why I think the book is long out of print. But anyway, he established this very thing, that the appearance of idolatry and all of the pagan mythological gods and goddesses began down there at Babylon and the Tower of Babel.

Then, over a period of time, those high priests of mystic eastern religions moved their headquarters to Pergamus. And evidently that’s why it’s referred to then as the "throne of Satan." All of these priests and priestesses of the pagan religions had seemingly moved away from Babylon up to this little city of Pergamus in Western Turkey. So, the Lord knows that they’re right in the midst of all this satanic power and activity.

"...and thou holdest fast my name,..." They had not denied their faith in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Now, let’s be sure that we keep connecting this with the Jewish element. Come back a moment to Acts chapter 3, because you see, that was the whole critical mass of Judaism after Christ’s first advent, that they were to believe who Jesus of Nazareth really was. That was the idea. That was the heart of the gospel of the Kingdom, but not the Gospel of Grace we’re in today. Today it’s that finished work of the cross that we put our faith in for salvation.

All right, here’s where we have that same thing that Jesus is saying to the church at Pergamus. Here in Acts chapter 3, Peter is again appealing to the Jewish nation up there at Jerusalem, and they have just healed the lame man and the people are full of consternation. How did Peter, James, and John heal this fellow who had been lying at
the temple gate for almost forty years? Even Jesus didn’t heal him. Purposely I’m sure, so that Peter, James, and John could do it here. But anyhow, they’ve just healed him and now you come down and to answer all of the questions of the Jews, Peter gives the reason that he was healed in verse 16:

Act 3:16a

"And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong,…"

(or whole.) Not faith in his death, burial, and resurrection, but rather faith in his "name." And so that becomes the crux of the matter all the way through Peter, James, and John’s preaching. Now, I’ll just show you another one on your way back to Revelation, stop at I John. It’s been several months now since we taught that chapter. Stop at I John, because if I don’t make any other point today, I want to make that, that at the heart of the gospel of the Kingdom for these believing Jews, was believing in the "name" of Jesus of Nazareth, as to who He was.

I John 5:1a

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:…" Now did you see that? "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ." Well, what does that mean? Anybody who knows who Jesus of Nazareth is. What did His name imply? He’s the Son of God! He’s the Messiah of Israel! And that’s what they were to believe, and when they did, God considered them as a child of God, just like for us when we believe in our heart for salvation that Christ died and was buried and rose from the dead, but for the Jews, it was believing in the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

All right, back to Revelation. So, here in the midst of all this satanic power, the very headquarters of Satan’s rule on the planet was evidently in this little city of Pergamus, these Jewish believers were holding tough to their faith. But, they suffered in spite of it. So, here goes the next part of the verse:

Revelation 2:13c

"...and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth." Antipas had died for his faith. And of course, that’s been true throughout human history. You’re seeing it more and more how that Christians are not only dying today for their faith, but they have all the way back even through the Old Testament economy. But here it was especially evident that in the very midst of these satanic powers we have this Antipas, who was martyred for the sake of the name of Christ and he says, again, "Who was slain among you."
In other words, they probably, like we in the last few days, they witnessed the horrors of it with their own eyes. And then he emphasizes again, what’s the cause of it? You are "where Satan dwelleth." The anti-God power itself was evident right there in Pergamus.

All right, then verse 14, in spite of all of that, they were surviving persecution, they were holding fast to their faith in who their Jesus was, but what?

_Revelation 2:14a_

"But I have a few things against thee,…." Oh, there was no doubt, like I think in so many congregations, there was a core of true Jewish believers who were willing to die for their faith, but there was also a rather large element and I don’t think it was limited to any one congregation, I think they were all seven guilty of many of these same things and that’s why as a composite you see, it would speak to each and every one of these seven assemblies.

_Revelation 2:14a_

"But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there (that is in your congregations) them that hold the doctrine (or teaching) of Balaam…." Now again, where does that take you? Well, clear back to the book of Numbers. Now, I’m not going to take you back there today, but you know the story of King Balak who met the children of Israel coming out of their wilderness experience, and they wanted to go through Moab on their way up to the east side of Jordan to go into the Promised Land. When he saw those millions of Israelites and all their flocks and herds, he knew he couldn’t destroy them militarily. They were too far outnumbered for that.

So, you remember what old Balak did, he went out east and found a sorcerer, Balaam. A false prophet who was able to actually converse with God, but he was a false prophet. Well now, when he came to Moab and he looked out over those multitudes of Israelites, in fact, if you read Numbers, it’s evident that as far as the eye could see were the encampments of the children of Israel - Millions of them.

Don’t ever think, like I’ve said a hundred times on this program, don’t ever equate it with Cecile B. DeMille’s _Ten Commandments_. That little ragtag bunch of Jews going through the Red Sea in that movie is almost laughable. No. **There were millions.** And more and more, even Jewish scholars are coming around to the fact that there were six or seven million of them that came out of Egypt and were out there in the wilderness. Well now, can you imagine six to seven million out there on that flat open desert? Well, old Balak knew he didn’t stand a chance trying to defeat them any way but by using demonic powers. Put a curse on Israel, and that curse was going to cause the
children of Israel to commit sexual immorality with the Moabites. And if he could get the Jews to do that, then his thinking was that God would have to destroy them because of their sin. **But you see, what Balak and Balaam didn’t understand was God’s mercy. Because God promised that Israel's sin would never take away His mercy for them.**

So, you see, this element carries all the way up through history. And you know what? It’s still here today. My, the more I’m reading and hearing from our television audience of what’s going on in so much of Christendom, nothing’s changed. We’ve still got that sexual immorality running rampant throughout the churches. Over and over people call to tell us how their pastor has gotten involved with women in the church. I’ve got books at home that say the same thing, so it’s always been this way. But this, of course, is dealing with the Jewish congregation in light of the soon coming Tribulation. **And if they can survive those seven years, they’ll be ready to go into the promised glorious 1000 year kingdom, just like the Garden of Eden.**

Now, we’ll come to that a little later this afternoon. All right, so here we have in this particular congregation, which was not limited to the one. Like I said, I think everything that’s written to one congregation had application to all six of the others. Just like when we read something in Romans, it’s something that Christians for the last 2000 years have been able to latch on to. All right, so to this particular group, but involved all the others he said, "You have those there that are embracing the doctrine of Balaam." **And Balaam’s doctrine was – sexual immorality.**

In fact, if you know anything of the pagan religions, they raise sex to a high form of worship, and that’s why God hates it so intrinsically. Because they have so corrupted the things of God, and just like we’re seeing today, they call wrong things right, they call right things wrong, they call black things white, and white things black. It’s always been this way, the only thing now is that it’s compounding. Here they’re embracing the teachings of Balaam

**Revelation 2:14b**

"...who taught (or instructed) Balak (the king of the Moabites) to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel (which were the more attractive women of Moab and they were being almost, what should I say? Coaxed?) to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and commit fornication." And then along with their idol worship what would they follow up with? Sexual immorality. It’s the way it always goes; always has and always will. And that’s what we’re seeing, I think, going across the whole spectrum of Christianity today. Nothing has changed. All right, so this is what he has against them. Now verse 15, you also have another problem.
Revelation 2:15

"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine (or the teaching) of the Nicolaitans, which I hate." Which, again, I think is a reference to these followers of the ancient god Baal. And again, it’s "what God hated."

I’ve always stressed that probably the one thing God hates more than anything else in the human race is unbelief. Remember that? I’m always stressing how God hates it. Well, if there’s a second thing that God hates it’s idolatry. Because, you know, one of the first commandments is what? "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." And Israel, of course, finally got cured of it with the seventy years of Babylonian captivity, but nevertheless God hates those two things I think preeminently more than anything else in the human experience – unbelief and idolatry. And the two go hand in hand.

Just as soon as you’re saturated in unbelief it is so easy to fall into false gods. The door is wide open, because if you can’t believe in the true One, you can rest assured it won’t be hard to believe the false ones. And so we have this constant reminder that He hates those who hold the doctrine of false worship, Nicolaitans, which would be Baal worship coming out of the Old Testament as well as the worship patterned after Balaam, who was going to cause the children of Israel to eat things sacrificed unto idols and also sexual immorality.

Now, I don’t think I have time, but maybe you can just think back with me to when the Apostle Paul covered this matter of eating meat offered to idols. Did he make this kind of a statement? No. Do you ever wonder why? Now see, here Jesus is so adamant that this is a false teaching; these Jews were to have nothing to do with meat that had been offered to idols. Well, I think the whole thing was they were so close to it, and they were so constantly tempted to go into idolatry, but Paul on the other hand, knows that the true believer is never tempted with something like that. Consequently did Paul have any compunction about eating meat offered to an idol?

He said, "No, that idol can’t hurt that meat." He knew better. But for these Jews who were being bombarded by, probably fellow Jews, to go into the pagan practices of idolatry, it had to be stressed that they don’t even eat the meat offered to an idol let alone do it themselves. And so these are all things that we have to understand; that these Jewish congregations were confronted with things that Paul’s Gentile congregations had no problem with. All right, now I think we can take one more verse; we’ve got a minute left. So the only remedy is what? Change your mind. Turn around. Take a different direction.

Revelation 2:16a
"Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and I will fight against them with the sword (or the Word) of my mouth. 17. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; (Jewish assemblies) To him that overcometh (in other words, stays true to the Word of God) **will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.**" Well, a white stone in antiquity was that which spoke of purity. It spoke of friendship; it spoke of total forgiveness. It spoke of innocence. In fact, a judge would give a white stone for acquittal and a black stone for the person that was guilty. And so, all these things have a particular place in the language of these letters.
Again, we always like to remind folks who maybe new to the program that we’re non-denominational. I don’t follow any particular denominational line. We’re going to teach the Word the way we see it and the Spirit leads, and I think a lot of people are beginning to understand that if you just look at what it says it’s there as plain as day, and I always stress, it’s just as important to look for what is not there as what is there.

And, in that line, I can say that very thing concerning these seven letters we’ve been studying here in Revelation, and this is why I feel that they are Jewish. They are still under the Kingdom economy because there is not one Pauline doctrinal statement in here, not a one. There’s not a reference to salvation by faith alone. For these Jewish believers it’s all works as we saw in the last program. And there’s no reference to faith in the death burial and resurrection for salvation as it is for us today in this Age of Grace. It was all based on who Jesus of Nazareth really is and was for these Jewish believers. So, all of these things are pertinent to Bible study; that you recognize to whom it’s spoken. What is the language that’s being used? Who’s writing it? And then, what is not there. And that pretty much settles it.

All right, we’re going to go right on from where we left off and that would be in Revelation chapter 2, and we’re going to start the letter to Thyatira, which is verse 18. And again, remember, these are all words spoken by the Son of Man, as He’s referred to Israel so often, but here He’s referred to as the Son of God. So remember those are all titles that mean the same person.

Revelation 2:18

"And unto the angel (or the minister or the leader) of the church (assembly) in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who has eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;" Now again, as we pointed out in one of the programs last taping, what do those terminologies refer to? Love? Mercy? Grace? No. What? Judgment! He is about ready to move in with judgment. And remember, God is just as capable of pouring out judgment as He is mercy and grace.

Israel experienced it in her past history. My, what was the whole purpose of the prophets? To warn Israel that if they did not turn from their wicked ways judgment
was coming. Well, not the flood, not the Tribulation back then, but invading armies. **And did it happen? Yes, it happened because Israel refused to listen.**

Well, we have the same thing now. Remember, this is probably written, I think, in the late 50’s; that is of the first century. We’re talking about somewhere between 55 and 60 AD during which time Paul is also writing his letters to the Gentile churches, but Peter, James, and John are still dealing with the Jewish element, and oh, if people could only see that.

Now, while we had a break I put the timeline on the board and I’m going to just rehearse it briefly. We come out of the Old Testament to Christ’s earthly ministry and it’s all Jewish. And again, I’m going to use the verse that we’ve used so often. You can turn with me, if you will, to Romans 15 verse 8, and this is for people who do not understand that Christ’s earthly ministry was only to the nation of Israel. Oh, they know the verse in John, *"He came unto His own and His own received Him not."* They know that much, but I guess they think His own rejected Him in the first week of His ministry and then He began ministering to Gentiles. **Nothing could be further from the truth!**

I was reading somebody again just the other day, where this fellow was saying that all those multitudes that Jesus ministered to were Gentile. That’s not what this Book says! Got Romans 15 verse 8? We’ve used it a lot the last year, and I’ll keep using it because it says it all!

**Romans 15:8a**

"*[Now I say, (now this is Paul writing to Gentiles)](now this is Paul writing to Gentiles) that Jesus Christ was a minister of (the whole world? Of Gentiles? But what?) the circumcision…*" Now that’s plain English. Why can’t they see that? He was a minister of the circumcision, Israel,

**Romans 15:8b**

"*[…for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:]*" Well, come back to my timeline, all the way back to Abraham. Promises and prophecy. And as I mentioned, I think in last month’s taping, there were over 350 distinct prophecies concerning His first advent and every one of them were fulfilled to the last jot and tittle. Now, there was also a bunch of them that went on to the end that had not yet been fulfilled, **but they will be!**

Now, back to the timeline. So anyway, He comes out of the Old Testament economy; He begins His earthly ministry, strictly to the nation of Israel, but the Romans and the Jews brought about the crucifixion. He arose from the dead. After forty days with the
All right, now then, if you’ll follow my timeline, Peter, James, and John continue to minister to these Jews who had become believers first in Christ’s earthly ministry. I suppose I could put the three years up there to help identify what I’m talking about. Here we have His three years of earthly ministry, then He goes back to glory and Peter, James, and John continue what was started here. Nothing is different. They perform the miracles. They are still under the signs and wonders, and so they are ministering now still to the "circumcision," to the Jews with the idea that the 7 years of Tribulation is right out in front of them. The whole prophetic program is going to be fulfilled and that it’s going to be followed by the Second Coming and then would come that glorious Kingdom here on earth.

And so, the whole idea was for these believing Jews, and when I speak of a believing Jew, we’re talking about Jews who had embraced Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah! They are not believing in the death, burial, and resurrection as we are, although they certainly know that the One who was killed and rose from the dead, went back to glory and was in a position to come again. But, what they’re looking for is the fulfillment of these promises made to their forefathers. And that had to rest on Christ’s return, but that couldn’t happen until the rest of prophecy concerning the seven years of Tribulation had been fulfilled first.

All right, now a verse just comes to mind. Let’s go back to Matthew chapter 24, verse 13, and I’ve stressed it when we teach these verses in Matthew 24 that this is all Tribulation ground. If you have a red-lettered edition, it’s red. These are the words of the Lord Jesus before He ascends, and in fact, this is even before the crucifixion and the Twelve have just asked Him, what are going to be the signs of your coming and the end of the age?

All right, so He starts unfolding everything that pertains to these seven years of Tribulation, or the wrath and vexation. All right, the only verse I want you to look at right now is verse 13. And this is what Peter, James, and John are admonishing these Jewish believers to look at. If they can just get through the horrors of those seven years they will witness the return of the King. And what does it say?

Matthew 24:13

"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Now, He wasn’t talking about their eternal salvation. They weren’t talking about their spiritual salvation; He was talking about the physical. If you believers can endure these
seven years and come out at the other end still alive, then you'll be able to go into
the Kingdom as flesh and blood. And remember, a remnant of Jews will. A
scattering of Gentiles will. But nevertheless, this is what Jesus is referring to when He
speaks of these things that are right out in front of them.

Now, I guess I also have to make note of the fact that this timeline, that we’ve been
looking at, especially since we started our study in James, Peter, and John; so far as
these Jewish believers are concerned this was the timeline. They were expecting the
wrath and vexation to come in and then would come the Second Coming, and then
would come the Kingdom, and then Israel could be the evangelists of the world. Now,
of course, we understand that from our vantage point, God stopped this whole
shebang right here shortly before the Tribulation came in and instead of bringing in
wrath, He opens up the timeline with the grace of God, or what we call the out-
calling of the Body of Christ, which puts all this out into the future.

And so we are now in the 1900 and some year period of time where all of this has
been put on hold, but these Jews that Peter, James, and John are ministering to don’t
know that. This is what I always have to stress. There’s nothing in these letters,
there’s nothing in the book of Revelation to indicate that the timeline is going to be
interrupted.

Now, the only place in Scripture where we have an indication of that timeline being
interrupted is in Luke 4, and we’re not going to look at that now, but you remember in
Luke 4 when Jesus stopped in the middle of Isaiah chapter 60 verse 2, when He
said, "And today this has been fulfilled in your ears." Well, He stopped just ahead of
the description of the Tribulation. But no one else had any clue that this was going
to be interrupted and that these things were not going to be finished. All right, so
back to Revelation chapter 2 and verse 18. He’s speaking of judgment.

Revelation 2:18b

"...who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine
brass." Brass always throughout the Old Testament spoke of judgment.

Revelation 2:19

'I know thy works, (again, see the emphasis) and charity, (love) and service, and
faith, (yes, there were some good people in these assemblies) and thy patience, (and
then He comes back and emphasizes what for the second time?) and thy
works; (Works. Works. Works) and the last to be more than the first." So there was
good element in every one of these assemblies. And even Thyatira, but along with the
good element what do we have? A Jezebel!
Now, I usually like to just tantalize people’s thinking. Does any sane woman name her daughter Jezebel? Do you? Have you ever heard of one? I haven’t. Why? Because she was the epitome of wickedness. The gal knew nothing but sexual immorality. That was her thing. All right, now that was back in the Old Testament, but here to point out the Jewishness of it all, the Lord refers to this woman who was doing the same thing within this Jewish believing community – another Jezebel. Not the same one that you’ve got back there in the book of Kings, but she was a Jezebel because she was promoting sexual immorality amongst these Jewish congregations.

**Revelation 2:20a**

"Notwithstanding (in spite of all their works) I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest (permit) that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess,…" Now, I don’t want to give people the impression that I’m anti-woman, or anti-female, but when you look a the New Age movement today, or when you look at the pagan, mythological religions of ancient history, who was usually the promoter of it? Women.

Look at your New Age movement, who are your greatest promoters of the New Age? Who are the ones most likely to succumb to it? The women and the same way in mythology. It was those goddesses that hooked the masses of people. Well, it’s the same way here. Here she had come into this Jewish assembly and called herself a prophetess. Now, how did she get away with it? Well, the element that should have known better condoned it. They said, oh well, she’s not going to do that much harm, let’s not cause a big division. Am I making my point? This is what’s happening today. This is exactly what happens today. An element comes into a local church and even though most of the people know it’s dead wrong they don’t want to cause any waves, they don’t want to cause any problems so they condone it. And that’s exactly what the Lord warns against. And what does she begin to do?

**Revelation 2:20b**

"...to teach and to seduce my servants (and for what purpose?) to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." Much different than what you had in Pergamus? Huh-uh. Much different than what we see today? Huh-uh. It’s just over and over throughout human history. This has been the thing that has plagued the human race, especially when you get into the realm of religion. Okay, take warning. She has been dealt with by the Lord evidently, because He says in the first person:

**Revelation 2:21**
"And I gave her space (or I gave her time) to repent of her fornication; (her immorality) and she repented not." She wouldn’t have a thing to do with the Lord’s pleading.

Revelation 2:22a

"Behold, (the Lord says) I will (What is that? That’s a promise. And here comes the prophecy) cast her into a bed,..." Now, let’s compare the two Jezebel’s for just a moment. If you know anything about Jezebel, the queen wife of King Ahab, what was her end? They threw her down didn’t they? And she was killed in the process, just utterly thrown down and destroyed. But see, this Jezebel, God is going to cast into a "bed" but it’s going to be a bed of judgment.

Revelation 2:22b

"...and them that commit adultery with her (and they’re going to go) into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." Now, Jezebel back in the Old Testament had an untimely end, no doubt about it, and for all her beauty and all of her abilities to seduce, she still had a rather horrible ending, but it was rather quick. But this Jezebel, it’s going to be a seven-year period of tribulation and judgment.

And again, I don’t want people to think that I’m a fear-monger, but listen, these seven years are going to be beyond comprehension. And again, I’m going to take you back to Matthew 24, the words of the Lord Jesus Himself, concerning this seven-year period. Now, I know He’s referring specifically here in this verse we’re going to read to the last half. But as I’ve stressed over the years, remember the first half is not going to be a Sunday school picnic by any stretch, because one fourth of the world’s population will lose their lives in the first half.

The other three-fourths in the last half, but nevertheless it’s going to be a horrible seven-year period and this is what this Jezebel and her followers are being warned of, that they would be going into the horrors of the Tribulation. All right, Matthew 24 verse 21, and remember this is from the lips of the Lord Jesus Himself. The Creator of everything. The Author of this Book. The One who controls the future.

Matthew 24:21

"For then (especially the last half of the seven years) shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." And you know I’ve always reminded people since I’ve taught these things, He’s going clear back to the Noahic Flood, and it was awful. He comes on up through the various times of judging the nation of Israel and some of those times were awful. But then He
comes on and looks into the future from the time of 30-32 AD and He looks down the corridors of time all the way up to this seven-year period and he said, **even that which is in between, there would be nothing to compare with this period of time.**

Now, if you know anything about recent history, what is He looking past? The Holocaust; Hitler’s death ovens. Even they could not compare with the horrors of these final three and a half years. And when you see the human race behaving themselves as they are lately, can you say, "No wonder." It’s no wonder. **I’m surprised God hasn’t already moved.**

You know, I remember way back, I think probably in the 80’s, Billy Graham made the statement that if God does not judge America, Sodom and Gomorrah will scream "**You’re not fair.**" Well, if Billy Graham thought it was that bad in the 80’s, then what in the world must God think today. And it’s getting worse by the week. All right, so these judgments are coming and God’s wrath is suddenly going to be released. So again, here is the judgment that’s going to befall this unbelieving, immoral segment of even the Jewish people.

**Revelation 2:22**

"**Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation,** (but He always gives them the loophole and what was it?) **except they repent of their deeds.**" God would still forgive. Never forget, how does Romans 5 put it? "**That where sin abounds Grace doeth much more abound.**" And here it is, even this wicked woman who was leading people into gross immorality, God was ready to forgive her. God’s grace was ready to bring her back, if she would repent. But she would not, and if she would not, God says:

**Revelation 2:23**

"**And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches** (assemblies. All seven of them, now don’t forget we’re talking about seven assemblies) **shall know that I am he who searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto you every one of you according to your works.**" They’re going to get what they deserve.

**Revelation 2:24**

"**But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira as many as have not this doctrine,** (you have not followed Jezebel) **and which have not know the depths of Satan, as they speak;** (Now stop a minute. What does that mean? For those who had followed Jezebel, who were they really kowtowing to? Satan. And the depths of it.) **I will put upon you no other burden.**" In other words, for those that were keeping
themselves free of the influence of Jezebel and the immorality, God was still going to protect them in a special way.

Revelation 2:25

"But that which ye have already hold fast (how long?) till I come." Now, you see, they were looking for this timeline on top. They were still expecting all these events to be fulfilled according to the Old Testament promises and so the Lord is telling them, if you can just bear up, and as we say in Matthew 24, if they could endure these things until the end, then they would enjoy the blessings of the Kingdom.

Revelation 2:26

"And he that overcometh, (in other words can resist the temptations of even the influence of a Jezebel, if they can hold fast and overcome) and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:" Now, we’ll pick this up in our next program. I haven’t got time and I want to take you back to Deuteronomy and see how the nation of Israel is indeed going to be the number one nation in the Kingdom economy.
Now, let’s just pick up where we left off in the last lesson and that would be in Revelation 2:26

_Revelation 2:26_

_And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations;"_ Now, let’s go back to Deuteronomy chapter 28, and I think we get the explanation of that. How are the Jews going to have that kind of power? Well, since He is their King and they are finally going to come into all of the promised blessings of finally being the head rather than the tail. Let’s just drop in at verse 9 where the Lord is speaking to the nation back here through Moses.

_Deuteronomy 28:9-10_

"_The LORD shall establish thee as an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God and walk in his ways._ (Now, here’s where it’s going to spread out to) **10. And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD and they shall be afraid of thee._" In other words, they’re going to have that power that He spoke of back here in Revelation.

_Deuteronomy 28:11_

"_And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee._ (They are finally going to enjoy all these promised blessings when the King and the Kingdom are brought in.) **12. The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in its season, and to bless all the work of thy hand: and thou shalt lend to many nations, and thou shalt not borrow._" Israel is going to be what ‘Uncle Sam’ has been. Israel is the one that’s going to have the capital. "_And you’ll lend to many nations. Thou shalt not borrow._" See, now tonight it’s just the opposite. Israel could not survive without the financial help of America, and to a certain degree, Western Europe.

_Deuteronomy 28:13a_
"And the LORD shall make you the head, (that is of the nations) and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath, if thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God...." And so on and so forth. All right, now just to see how even in the four gospel accounts we have that same promise. Luke chapter 1; we may have looked at this a few tapings back. But here we have Zacharias the priest, who was also the father of John the Baptist. **John the Baptist’s appearance was one of the prophecies that would bring in the coming of the Messiah and the Messiah would bring in the promised Kingdom.**

All right, now look how Zacharias puts that, and this is so plain. I can’t understand how anybody can miss it.

**Luke 1:67-71**

"'And his father (that is John the Baptist’s father) Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying. (Now look what the Spirit has him to say) 68. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, (Israel). 69. And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; (see how plain all this is?) 70. As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71. That we (the nation of Israel) should be saved from our enemies, and the hand of all that hate us;" You know, I always stop and ask people, who were Israel’s enemies then? The same ones that are there tonight. They are no different. The Arab world has always been their enemy.

**Luke 1:72**

"To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;" Remember what Romans 15:8 said?

**Romans 15:8**

"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers:" Well, here Zacharias is repeating the same thing. Now, continuing on in Luke, verse 73.

**Luke 1:73-75**

"The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, 74. That he would grant unto us, (the nation of Israel) that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, 75. In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." See, that was all the prospect of this Kingdom economy that was
right out in front of them if they could survive and come under the rule and reign of Christ at His Second Coming.

All right, now come back with me again to Revelation chapter 2, verse 26.

**Revelation 2:26-29**

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, (that is to the end of the Tribulation, the horrors that were out in front of them) then to them he will give power over the nations (because Israel is going to be, like we saw in Deuteronomy, the top nation of the nations.) 27. And he (Israel’s Messiah, the Son of God) shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers. (that is, in the judgment of the Tribulation) even as I received of my Father. 28. And I will give him (that is the Son) the morning star. 29. He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." (or the assemblies) Well this is all so appropriate for these Jews that so far as they knew the wrath and vexation are now right out in front of them. Here they are. Back in the late 50’s (AD) and they’re looking for the Tribulation to be followed by the Second Coming with no idea that God was now already, while they are writing these letters, calling out a Gentile body of Christ through the Apostle Paul. But, you see, they don’t have an understanding of that at all since they were not part of the body of Christ.

All they’re concerned about is their own promises and prophecies. Now, let’s go right on into chapter 3. We have that same line of thought to the next letter, to the next congregation, and it’s to Sardis. This is another one of the little cities in that circle of seven congregations - verse 1.

**Revelation 3:1a**

"And unto the angel (or the leader or the minister) of the church (or the assembly) in Sardis write; These things saith he who has the seven Spirits of God,..." Now, that question comes in on the phone constantly. What are the seven Spirits of God? Go back with me to Isaiah chapter 11, and I think this is the best definition that I can find anywhere in Scripture.

**Isaiah 11:1**

"And there shall come forth (Now this is prophecy. This is way back 700 BC) out of the stem of Jesse, (who was the father of King David) and a Branch (that’s a term assigned to the Messiah. It’s capitalized.) shall grow out of his roots: (That is Jesse’s. Now here come the seven Spirits of God) 2. And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of counsel,
spirit of might, the spirit of knowledge and the spirit of the fear of the LORD." See how plain that is? Those are the seven Spirits that comprise the make-up of God the Son. So, we see this especially in the book of Revelation where He’s referred to as the seven Spirits. There’s more than one time it’s referred to as such.

Revelation 3:1b

"...that hath the seven Spirits of God, (God the Son, Jesus of Nazareth) and the seven stars; (He’s the One who’s in control of these Jewish congregations. And He says,) "I know thy works, (See how it’s all the same to these Jewish assemblies?) that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." (spiritually) Now, stop and think a minute. What was the spiritual status of the temple worship during Christ’s earthly ministry? Dead! My, He chased out the merchandisers. He said you’ve made it a house of thieves. Well, it had no spiritual life left in it. But was it religious? Oh, were they ever! My, I think Josephus wrote, if I’m not mistaken, that they would kill as many as a million animals a year. Now, that almost seems preposterous, but they were constantly sacrificing. A religious system that was just almost non-stop. But it was spiritually dead.

Well, where are we today? Same place. Oh, there are all kinds of activity. Huge mega-churches, but I wonder how much spiritual life is in them. I’ve got to be careful how I say this or I’ll have them all on my case. But, I think if you could just take the temperature of these huge congregations, spiritually, they’re dead. They’ve got a lot of activity but they have no love for the Word. They have no love for the Lord of the Word. Most are just simply religious activity.

All right, so that’s what he’s stressing here. You are alive, you’ve got all these works, but you are spiritually dead.

Revelation 3:2A

"Be watchful, strengthen the things which remain,..." Like I said a couple of programs back, in all these congregations there is usually a small group of real true believers and they get frustrated because the whole thinks they’ve lost a cog someplace. But the problem is, the majority have no hunger for the Word of God. It’s meaningless to them. And so they just simply practice a dead religion. All right, so here’s the admonition.

Revelations 3:2-3a

"Be watchful, strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: (for their faith. They’re going to suffer intense persecution when the Tribulation would
come) *for I have not found thy works perfect* (or complete) *before God.* 3. 
*Remember therefore, how thou hast received,…*" Well, received what? The Word of God! They’d heard it. They’d received it. But what were they doing with it? Well, I guess we could safely say they were sitting on it. They weren’t doing anything about it.

*Revelation 3:3b*"...*and heard, and hold fast, and repent,…*" Now, that’s a typical Jewish term, of course, that they were used to beginning with John the Baptist; that they were to change directions. Change their mental attitude. All right, reading on in verse 3.

*Revelation 3:3c*

"...*If therefore thou shalt not watch.* (If you will not stay spiritually alert) *I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*" Now, let’s go back and see how the Apostle Paul warns the Church Age believer in much the same way. Let’s go back to I Thessalonians chapter 5. Now, this is the Apostle Paul writing to a group of Gentiles and this is what’s appropriate for us today.

*I Thessalonians 5:1-2*

"*But, of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.* 2. *For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord* (that doesn’t mean Sunday, but rather the Tribulation) *cometh as a* (what?) *thief in the night.*" Same language and so for even the Gentile believers, we are to be aware that this thing is going to happen when it’s least expected.

*I Thessalonians 5:3a*

"*For when they shall say,* (that is the unbelieving world) *Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them,…*" Now listen, has the world ever been more prone to want peace than we are tonight? My, the whole world wants peace. One of my callers the other day was an airline pilot. He flies to most of the major cities in South America and he said the whole continent is in turmoil. There is not a city that he flies to that he and his fellow pilots can just be comfortable and leave the hotel and go out for dinner. He said, *"It’s like that all over."

Well, I don’t have to tell you what the Middle East is. We know what the Orient, the Philippines, and Indonesia are like: in fact the whole world tonight is in constant turmoil and nobody likes war. Nobody likes all the suffering that war brings, so what are people anxious for? **Peace.**
Oh, if only the world could settle down and have peace, and so that’s what the anti-Christ is going to capitalize on. He’s going to come in and he’s going to promise peace and prosperity. Daniel tells of that as plain as day. And the world will fall for it because they’re so hungry for it. But, they’re going to be fooled. For when he says, I’m giving you peace, **he’s really going to bring in the most horrible seven years the world has ever known.**

*Revelation 3:3*

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." All right, back to Revelation again and pick up the words of the Lord Jesus Himself as He is now speaking to these seven Jewish congregations.

*Revelation 3:4a*

"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments;..." Now what does the "few" always imply? Just that small little remnant and that’s the way it’s always been through Israel’s history. It’s the way it’s been through church history. **It’s the way it is today.** It’s not the many, it’s the few. And be aware of that, that on all these Jewish congregations it’s the same way. There were some that were faithful. There were some that were hanging tough, **but only a few.**

*Revelation 3:4b*

"...a few names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments (in other words, they had not become victims of Jezebel and her ilk) and they shall walk with me in white for they are worthy." They had maintained their faith. They had maintained their testimony. They did not fall into the trap of doing what the rest of the congregation was doing. Now remember, he’s talking to a whole church or the whole assembly, but it’s only the few that can respond.

*Revelation 3:5a*

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life..." Now, that’s a controversial statement isn’t it? Does God possibly blot people out of the book of life? Well, I haven’t got time here to discuss it, but it seems like it’s a possibility, but I’m not saying that it happens that true believers are in the book of life and taken out. Moses and Paul both made the suggestion that if God would spare Israel, He could blot their names out, but of course, we know it didn’t happen.
Revelation 3:5b

"...but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." In other words, the whole heavenly host will be aware of this little remnant of believers. Then again in verse 6, the admonition is the same as in all the other letters,

Revelation 3:6

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (or, assemblies) Now, we’ve got a few minutes left, just go right on into verse 7 and it’s the next letter to the church at Philadelphia. Now, if I understand Scripture correctly, there is no condemnation to the Philadelphian church. It is all commendation and there is nothing that He picks apart as part of their shortcomings. So, be aware of that as we read it.

Revelation 3:7

"And to the angel (or the leader) of the church (or the assembly) in Philadelphia (now remember it’s all part and parcel of these seven cities) write;
These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;" In other words, He is absolute in His Sovereign power. He does what He wants to do, which is more than anyone else can ever do. All right, now verse 8, this same Son of God, the Son of Man, can tell this congregation exactly what He told all the others.

Revelation 3:8

"I know your (what?) works: behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Now, we’ve got to remember that the traditional view of all these letters are various segments of church history. And I don’t throw it out completely. It may have some value, but I can’t really reconcile it with these things.

But, you see, the traditional view then of the Philadelphian church is that it was the opening of world missions and that’s where they get it from - the open door and the closed door. And I used to teach it that way myself. But this is not as I see it now, what Jesus is really referring to; He’s talking about the possibility of this congregation to maintain their faith and their works and they’re not going to succumb to persecution and deny the name of Christ and so they are an open door.

Revelation 3:9a
"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan,…" Does that sound like church language to you? Well, it doesn’t to me. The church is never referred to as a "synagogue".  

But here He’s telling these Jewish believers that those who cannot stay true to the faith, they cannot continue to recognize who Jesus of Nazareth was, they are of the "synagogue of Satan." Why?  

Revelation 3b  

"...which say they are Jews, (Church language? Hardly!) and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." Now again, I’ve got some other references I’d like to hit but I’m afraid I’m going to run out of time, so we’ll just have to go on into verse 10 and in our next half-hour we’ll come back.  

Revelation 3:10a  

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from..." Now, one of my commentaries that I respect, puts it this way, "I will keep thee out of the hour of temptation." Doesn’t mean that they’re not going to experience it? No, they are. But He’s going to protect them through it and they’re going to be able to survive it because of His protecting power. So He says:  

Revelation 3:10b  

"...I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" So, the whole world will come under this horrible judgment of the final seven years.
Okay, let’s go back where we left off in Revelation chapter 3, and we’re dealing with the letter to the Philadelphian church, which doesn’t have any real condemnation like all the others and consequently I kind of like to tie it in with Paul’s letter to the Philippian church. The same way, Paul never has one word of condemnation to the Philippian church. It was a letter that just spoke of their faith and of their joy, and so I like to kind of draw a parallel between these two. The church at Philadelphia was much the same as the church of Philippians in Paul’s letters. In the last lesson we left off with a unique verse, so let’s just pick it up there.

Revelation 3:9

"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but they do lie: behold, (now here’s the prophecy) I will make them (these liars) to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." Come back with me to Isaiah chapter 49, and I think this is probably the prophecy that would be fulfilled in that.

Isaiah 49:22-23

"Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. 23. And kings shall be their nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face to the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." And this is exactly, I think, what the Lord is referring to. Now, if you’ll come back with me a minute to Revelation chapter 3 and we’ll go on. And so to those that have loved Him and stayed true to Him they are going to be exalted.

Revelation 3:10

"Because thou has kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from (or like I said in the last half-hour, I will keep thee out of - or at least not that it’s going to be totally untouched, but they are going to be spared through it and they’re going to survive it) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try (or
test) them that dwell upon the earth." Now, you see, that’s a promise of the coming Tribulation, that it’s going to be worldwide.

Now, I’m going to take a chance and repeat something that I’ve used over and over. Come back with me to Jeremiah chapter 25. Now this, of course, is graphic language, but in light of our television news lately, we’re getting accustomed to the things that are graphic. And it’s just all a little foretaste of what the world has coming at them. Now this is the testing that will come upon all the world. Now, there are scads of these references throughout the Old Testament, but this one is probably the most clearly understood and it’s the easiest for me to remember where it is, so I’m going to use it. Jeremiah 25 dropping down to verse 29. This is prophecy. Now, this is written about 600 years before Christ but it is just as appropriate today as it was when it was written.

**Jeremiah 25:29**

"For lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called of my name, (that is Jerusalem) and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished; for I will call for a sword (now a sword speaks of death) upon all the inhabitants (not just of Jerusalem, but what?) of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts." The whole earth is going to come under this wrath and vexation.

**Jeremiah 25:30**

"Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, (that is the people of the world) The LORD shall roar from on high, (Now, this is at the end of the Tribulation; this is accompanying His Second Coming and following that He will set up the Kingdom.) and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes against all the inhabitants of the earth." I think we used these verses in our last taping, three or four programs back.

**Jeremiah 25:31-33**

"A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth, for the LORD has a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; (not just Israel, now, we’re talking about the nations of the world) he will give them that are wicked to the sword saith the LORD. 32. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, this evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the borders of the earth. 33. And the slain of the LORD, (those that shall be put to death) shall be at that day from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be as dung upon the
ground." And so that’s just one of the many prophecies that speak of this coming holocaust on the whole planet.

Now, come back to Revelation if you will and we’ll just jump ahead a few chapters and go to chapter 6. This is in the first half of the Tribulation; this is the opening three and a half years. What we just read in Jeremiah is the finality of it. But, look what happens in the meantime, verse 8.

**Revelation 6:8**

"And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power (now watch this) was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, (that is population-wise) to kill with the sword, with hunger, with death and with the beasts of the earth." In other words, even those first three and a half years are going to bring in a devastation that will take out one fourth of the world’s population. Right now that would be over 2 billion people, so even the first half will be terrible. Judgment is coming and as we said in our last program, the way that wickedness is coming across the planet and the rebellion, the hatefulness, it’s no wonder.

**Revelation 3:10-11**

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to test them that dwell upon the earth. 11. Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." See now, there’s no condemnation here; this is all a commending from the Lord for this particular congregation.

**Revelation 3:12**

"Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from God: and I will write upon him my new name." All right, now let’s go all the way back to Ezekiel and, if I’m not mistaken, it’s the last verse of the last chapter of the book of Ezekiel, chapter 48. Here we have the city described back here in the Old Testament prophet and then we come down to the verse 35.

**Ezekiel 48:35**

"It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and (here we come now, this is the part that I wanted you to compare with Revelation) the name of the city from that
day shall be The LORD is there.'" Now, in the original Hebrew its Jehovah-Shammah, for the Lord is there. And that will be the name of God. It will be the name of the city. And it is the finality of God’s dealing with the earth as we know it even today.

Revelation 3:13

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (or these assemblies). All right now, hopefully, we can wind up book 59 with this lesson, and hopefully I can finish these first three chapters of Revelation because I checked on our book 11 this morning and we started back in Revelation at that time in chapter 4. So, if I can finish chapter 3, then I’ve got the book of Revelation taught from start to finish.

Revelation 3:14

"And unto the angel (or the leader or the minister) of the church (assembly) of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, (which is another one of the terms associated with God the Son) the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." In other words, He’s the Alpha and the Omega, He is without beginning, He is without end, He’s from eternity past, He is the Creator of everything. All right, now we’ve all heard about the Laodicean church haven’t we? And it’s always associated with the "lukewarm" or the end-time church. Well, I’m not going to throw that out completely because it certainly has some application. But, I prefer to leave it where we’ve got all the other six; its part of these seven Jewish congregations, but it is a congregation that is so parallel with the church in our present day.

All right, now let’s read verse 15. Again, the Lord speaks of knowing their works. So, in that regard it’s no different. They were active, they were busy. And he says:

Revelation 3:15

"I know your works that thou art neither cold or hot: (they were lukewarm.) I would thou were cold or hot." Now, you’ve all heard sermons on this Laodicean church; how that since they’re lukewarm and lukewarm water cannot slake the thirst, nor is it hot. It’s just putrid. And so it’s something that can rather be spit out.

Revelation 3:16-17a

"So then because thou art lukewarm and neither hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. (Now, here was their condition.) 17. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and
increased with goods,…" In other words, they were the epitome of materialism. They were probably more concerned with the beauty of their synagogue than they were with the spiritual condition of their members. And so they had ample funds in the treasury. "Increased with goods," the need of nothing - that is materially. The Lord continues:

Revelation 3:17b

"...and knowest thou not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Spiritually. Oh, materially they probably dressed in the finest clothes available. They had all kinds of material wealth, but they were destitute spiritually. And again, that certainly is the church today.

Revelation 3:18-19

"I counsel thee (or I advise thee) to buy of me gold, tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich: and a white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear: (That is the spiritual; this is what Jesus is talking about. They were spiritually poor. They were spiritually without a clothing and because of their spiritual nakedness, the Lord says) anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. 19. And as many as I love, I rebuke, and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Now, let’s go back and see how Paul uses comparative language for the end-time church. The Christendom, I’m not talking about the true church necessarily, but how he can speak of the so-called Christian community. Come with me to II Timothy chapter 3 and just make the comparisons; the same description of the Laodicean Jewish congregation just before the Tribulation was to come, just before their opportunity for service would come to an end. Now, look how Paul makes the same kind of comparison with the Church Age, and how we, too, are just as destitute, for the most part, as the Laodiceans were.

II Timothy 3:1a

"This know also, that in the last days…” Now, again, we’ve got to keep remembering where we are. Here’s where the Lord Jesus is writing through Peter, James, and John and these letters to these 7 assemblies, probably in the late 50’s or 60 AD. They thought, and everything in Scripture indicated, that the wrath, the Tribulation, would be coming and the Second Coming would follow it. And they knew not that God’s timeline was going to be opened up, and we now have had 1900 and some years of the Church Age. They absolutely knew nothing of the Age of Grace.
And so here we are now, and Paul is speaking at the end of the Church Age, this Age of Grace, just like it compared with this up here. And so, as we've pointed out in previous programs, everything has just come full circle, and we find ourselves today in the same political and geographical set of circumstances that was evident when those seven letters were written.

II Timothy 3:1-2a

"This know also, that in the last days (that is in the closing days of the Church Age) perilous times shall come. 2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, (how was it described in Laodicea? You say you’re rich, but you have nothing.) covetous, (well, what makes people covetous? Materialism. You don’t covet something unless you really want it, and you don’t want something unless it had a valid value. And so it all speaks of materialism) boasters, proud, blasphemers,..." You know, in our listening audience of course, we have folks from every walk of life, including some who are in the corporate boardrooms of our various corporations. And one young man told me, "In the last few years the profanity and the filthy language in the boardroom has just compounded." He said, "We never used to hear foul language. We’d have our board meeting and there was never profanity." But he says, "Now it is just saturated with it." Well, it’s all a sign of what Paul calls right here, the end-time, perilous times – blasphemers. They have no compunction about using the name of God in blasphemy and profanity.

II Timothy 3:2b-3a

"...disobedient to parents, (that’s all part of the breakdown when folks get so materialistic that they haven’t even got time to raise their kids) unthankful (they’ve got it so good, they’ve got such big income that they never stop to thank anybody) unholy. 3. Without natural affection,..." Now, I read in the paper again the other day where they found a little infant wrapped in a bath towel and thrown in the garbage can. Whoever heard of such a thing twenty years ago? But, they have no natural affection.

II Timothy 3:3b-5a

"...trucebreakers, (nobody’s word is worth a plug nickel) false accusers, (my, you see that constantly) incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. 4. Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; (Isn’t that true? My, if this isn’t it exactly tonight.) 5. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:..." Where are a lot of these people on Sunday morning at eleven o’clock? Oh, they’re in church. One hour a week. And the rest of the week they have no concern whatsoever. Well, "a form of godliness but no power thereof."
II Timothy 3:5b-8

"...from such turn away. 6. For of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins, (Jezebels, see?) led away with diverse lusts. 7. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (It’s beyond them.) 8. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, (that goes clear back to the death of Moses) so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." They have no idea of the truth of God. All right, now let’s come back to Revelation chapter 3, for the last three or four minutes. So, the admonition was even to these Laodiceans who were careless, they were indifferent, they were materialistic, they had precious little spiritual life, but see, God is still willing to deal with them. He is still willing to accept them if they would change their mind. So he says:

Revelation 3:19

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." Take to heart the things that He’s reminding them of.

All right now, in the last three verses, they, again, are usually pertained to as a salvation message, and of course that is certainly true up to a point, but on the other hand I think it’s more or less a warning of coming judgment than it is an invitation to salvation.

Revelation 3:20-21

"Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him and he with me. 21. To him that overcometh I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne. 21. He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to these churches." (assemblies) Now, what has been the theme of these seven letters? Judgment, chastisement, warning! Wake up and set things straight because the end of this normal lifestyle is about to come, and they would be going into the Tribulation and the wrath and the judgment.

Now, as Christ stands at the door of these seven assemblies, don’t forget that the number one criteria was repent or else. And yet God’s mercy is always available. You know, let’s go back and look at a verse that we have in this Age of Grace in Romans chapter 5, and with this we’ll wind it up. Even to these careless Jews in these congregations there in Asia Minor, the God of Grace is still the same.

Romans 5:20
"Moreover the law entered, that the offence (that is sin, for what it is) might abound. (That is, it might be well known what is right and what’s wrong. That’s why the Law was given. But, here it comes no.) But where sin abounded, (no matter how vile the sin, no matter how much it’s being propagated) grace did much more abound."

Now that’s a promise. There is no sin so vile that God cannot go beneath it with the grace of God and bring them out. And that’s the joy of this Book. Yes, it’s got condemnation. Yes, it has judgment. But far above all of that is the grace of God. And I think it carries off into the life of the believer. We may fail. We may be miserable, but God’s grace never stops operating.