

Through

The Bible

in

Seven

Hours

*A Strategic Grasp of the Bible*

With Richard Jordan

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a growth resource of **Grace Impact Ministries**

Copyright 2011 by C. Richard Jordan

ISBN 978-0-615-46812-9

Third Printing  
December 2014

PUBLISHED BY:  
*Grace Impact Ministries*  
P. O. Box 97  
Bloomington, IL 60108  
888.535.2300

GraceImpact.org

Cover design by  
mdwpublishing  
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Printed In U.S.A.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the *Authorized Version*, commonly known as the *King James Bible*. Any deviations therefrom are not intentional.

# Welcome!

We are glad you are accompanying us as we journey through the world's most fascinating and important book. Nothing is as exciting as getting a firm grasp on God's word—and having it get a lasting grip on you!

Our goal is “*to help you understand and enjoy the Bible.*” This study will equip you to do just that. We trust having a study guide to accompany the television programs will enhance your comprehension.

A great deal more material is included in these printed outlines than there was time to cover in the broadcasts. Numerous references and expansions are included for your further study. Hopefully this will motivate you to learn on your own. Remember: *don't take it from me, search and see!*

Thanks for taking this adventure with us. Let us hear from you if you have questions or want to go further in your studies. The simple approach to understanding God's word presented here has helped many to obtain a strategic grasp of the Scriptures. We pray it does the same for you.

Maranatha!

Richard Jordan  
Philippians 1:21

*FIRST HOUR:*

# *The Four Keys to Bible Understanding*

## **SESSION I: The Tools**

### **A. THE FIRST KEY—*The Student:***

What tools are required for Bible study? Most will answer: Bible concordance, Greek/English dictionary, commentaries by Bible authorities, the “clergy” or those with a special “calling” of God. Others would say that no one could really understand the Bible, so why even bother. After all, look at all the denominations and Christian sects who say they believe the Bible.

However, God requires only ONE tool to understand His Word: *His Spirit*.

### **I Corinthians 2:9-14**

So, we need to be confident we have God’s Spirit. How does one receive God’s Spirit? How can I be sure that I have Him as my *personal* teacher?

## **Ephesians 1:13, 14**

1. First you must **hear** “the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.”
2. Then you must personally **believe** that truth.
3. That is when you receive the Holy Spirit

as the **Seal** of God, and

as the **Earnest** of your heavenly inheritance.

What is “*the gospel of your salvation*” that must be heard and believed?

## **I Corinthians 15:3,4**

1. Christ ***died for our sins***

and was

***buried***

and

***rose again.***

2. *Why* did Christ die for our sins?

**Romans 6:23**

**Romans 5:8**

3. What does **Romans 4:25** say is the significance of Christ's resurrection?

So, what is God's first requirement for understanding His Word?

- ✓ Acknowledge that you are a sinner, and cannot save yourself.
- ✓ Realize that full payment must be made for your sins and that Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your sins with His blood on the cross.
- ✓ Rely *exclusively* on the Lord Jesus Christ to be the Savior He died, was buried and rose again to be for you as your only hope for eternal life.

Once you have done this, God gives you His Spirit to indwell you and to help you to understand His Word.

## **B. THE SECOND KEY—*The Scripture:***

We need to be confident that we have *in our hands* the Book that the Spirit of God authored for our study.

## II Timothy 3:14-17

### 1. Inspiration:

The **words** are inspired, not the writers.

- Matthew 4:4
- Mark 12:36
- Acts 1:16
- Acts 28:25
- II Peter 1:21

### 2. Preservation:

II Timothy 3:15 tells us that “from a child” Timothy had known

*“the holy Scriptures.”*

- Did Timothy have the “originals?”

It is not enough that God wrote His words in a book, He has *also* preserved them through history so all ages can have them.

- Matthew 22:31
- Isaiah 30:8
- Psalm 12:6,7
- Psalm 119:89, 111, 160
- I Peter 1:23-25 (Isa. 40:8)
- Matthew 5:17, 18
- See Deut. 17:14-18 – They were to make ***copies*** of God’s word for distribution and preservation.

### 3. Identification:

II Corinthians 2:17 warns that there are “many which **corrupt** the Word of God.”

How are we to know which Bible version is the one God has preserved? Examine the evidence!

- Mark 1:2 – Who really wrote this?
- II Samuel 21:19 – Who really killed Goliath?
- Matthew 5:22 with Mark 3:5 – Did Jesus violate His own command?
- Matthew 17:21 – Is this verse really there?
- Mark 9:44, 46, 48 – Are these verses really there?
- Luke 2:33 – Who is Jesus’ “father”?
- Acts 8:37 – Is this verse really there?
- Romans 9:5 – Is Jesus God?

- Ephesians 3:9 – Were all things created “by Jesus Christ”?
- Revelation 1:11 – Is Jesus “*the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last*”?

The evidence is clear that when we hold a *King James Bible* in our hands we have the very word of God in our possession, in our own language!

- **Does it matter?**

- Nehemiah 9:5 – God’s Name is above all
- Psalm 138:1,2 – God has placed His Word above His Name
- Psalm 19:7-10 – The Perfect Word
- I Thessalonians 2:13 – The Word works when believed

## **SESSION II: The Mechanics**

### **C. THE THIRD KEY—*The Study*:**

Study implies work. We can gain some knowledge from simply reading, but to really understand what the Lord has given us requires study.

#### **1. The Three Golden Questions:**

When we read the Bible the first three things we should try to identify are:

*a. Who is speaking?*

- Matthew 4:4
- Genesis 3:4
- Romans 11:13

b. **To whom** are the words written or spoken—what group or people is being addressed?

- II Chronicles 7:14
- Ephesians 1:3
- I Corinthians 10:31

c. **When** were the words spoken or written?

- Luke 9:6 and 44-45  
(cf. 18:31-34)
- Matthew 10:5-7; 15:24
- Romans 6:14

## 2. **The Three Guiding Principles:**

With the above answers in hand we are ready to delve into exactly what the writers/speakers are talking about. There are three common sense principles to remember:

### a. **The Literal Principle:**

*“When the normal sense makes sense, seek no other sense.”*

- Nehemiah 8:8
- Luke 1:30-33
- Matthew 16:18
- John 1:29
- Revelation 1:20

**b. Comparative Principle:**

1) Scriptures are best interpreted by  
the Scriptures themselves:

- II Peter 1:20
- I Corinthians 2:13

2) Context:

*“A text without a context  
is a pretext.”*

- Matthew 24:13
- Exodus 35:1-3
- Daniel 7:1-13 (see v. 17)

3) Remoter Context:

- Acts 1:8 – see Matthew  
10:23 and Psalm 2:8

**c. Dispensational Principle:**

- II Timothy 2:15 – Divide Truth from Truth
- A Dispensation is a particular program that God administers or dispenses (“administration”).
- Compare Genesis 1:29 with Genesis 9:3 with Leviticus 11:4-10 with I Timothy 4:4
- Compare Acts 3:21 with Romans 16:25
- Compare James 2:24 with Romans 4:3-5
- God Himself never changes, but His dealings with man have changed—*this* is the issue in dispensational study.

### **D. THE FOURTH KEY—*The Secret:***

The final “key” is the “*preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of **the mystery**, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest...*” (Rom. 16:25,26).

We will be studying each of our lessons with this key in mind!

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### **REVIEW AND STUDY QUESTIONS:**

1. Please explain when and how you came to know for sure that you have eternal life and that you have the Holy Spirit as your teacher of His Word.
2. How do you personally know that the Bible you are using is trustworthy?
3. Identify and give an example of the Three Golden Questions.

4. What is the most important division in the Bible?
5. Give an example to demonstrate that the Bible should be studied literally.
6. Give two Scriptures to prove that God has preserved His Word.
7. What Scripture passage explains the gospel Paul preached?
8. Explain the one most important tool to understand God's Word.
9. The writers as well as the words of the Bible were inspired. True or False?
10. What do you hope to get out of this series of study?

PERSONAL NOTES:

## SECOND HOUR:

### *A Strategic Grasp of*

# *Getting Started Right*

We have a lot of ground to cover, but first let's review a bit from our last lesson:

- Three Golden Questions:
- Three Guiding Principles:
- Four Essential Tools:

Man's greatest possession is the Bible. Our Creator has spoken and His words are recorded in a book He has preserved for us. Through His book we can know the truth about His plan and purpose for His creation.

God has placed great and profitable things for us in His book! But in order to get the profit out of God's Word that He has put into His Word, we must study it *God's way*. We must discover and follow the divinely established design for studying God's Word.



## **Session I: The *WHAT* of Dispensational Bible Study: *Why* study the Bible this way?**

A. **II Timothy 2:15** sets the pattern for proper study.

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

- Our one great *Aim*: God's approval
- Our one great *Duty*: Study
- Our one great *Goal*: To be a workman that need not be ashamed
- Our one great *Requirement*: Rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

### **Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth:**

- ✓ Is NOT chopping up ~ destroying the Bible: John 10:30
- ✓ Is NOT simply separating Truth from Error: "properly handling"
- ✓ IS to separate Truth from Truth ~ "to cut straight"

“Recognize the divisions and distinctions in God’s word that He Himself has placed there.”

**These divisions are called “dispensations”**

Ephesians 1:10; 3:2, Colossians 1:25,  
I Corinthians 9:17

**A. Luke 4:16-21 demonstrates the vital importance of recognizing dispensational distinctions!**

See if you can find the “gap” or “parenthesis” where the current dispensation of grace is missing in some other verses: Isa. 9:6,7, Psa. 118:22, Isa. 53:10,11, Zech. 9:9,10, Luke 1:31, 32, etc.

*Dispensational Bible Study is the Divinely Prescribed Method of Studying God’s word.*

## **B. What is a “dispensation”?**

“A dispensation is a particular program that God administers or dispenses for man’s obedience.”

“An administration in the outworking of the purpose and plan of God.”

**See Luke 12:42**

## **C. What is the Difference?**

It is abundantly apparent that God’s program has not always been the same. Of course, God *Himself* never changes (Heb. 13:8, Mal. 3:6). He is always perfectly holy, righteous, just, etc. But His *program* for man has changed from time to time.

- Notice the following Scriptural examples and consider whether or not they are for our obedience today:
  1. Ex. 31:15, Num. 15:36—People who break the Sabbath should be killed.

2. Lev. 4:27,28—Believers should offer animal sacrifices when they commit sin.
3. Lev. 11:7,8—It is wrong to eat ham.
4. Acts 2:38—The Holy Spirit is received by water baptism.
5. Mark 16:18—Believers are able to drink poison and not die.
6. Mark. 16:18—Believers are able to handle poisonous snakes.
7. Luke 12:33, Acts 2:44,45—Believers should sell their property and have one common treasury.
8. Matt. 10:5,6—The gospel should be preached to Jews only.

➤ Which of the following instructions do you follow today:

- Acts 10:35 or Titus 3:5
- Gen. 17:10,14 or Gal. 5:2,6
- Ex. 20:8 or Col 2:16
- Deut. 6:25 or Rom.3:21; Phil. 3:9
- Psa. 51:11 or Eph. 1:13; 4:30
- Matt. 6:14, 15 or Eph. 4:32
- Mark 16:15,16 or I Cor. 1:17
- Luke 14:15 or Rom. 14:17
- John 4:22 or Rom. 10:12

- Question: Who gave you the right to choose the verses you follow?

The study of the Bible can only result in hopeless confusion if you fail to recognize the necessity of rightly dividing the Word of Truth!

#### **D. The Great Division:**

Prophecy  
(Acts 3:21)

Mystery  
(Rom. 16:25)

Israel  
(John 4:22)

Body of Christ  
(Eph. 3:6)

Earth  
(Matt. 5:5; 6:10)

Heavenly Places  
(Eph. 1:3; Phil. 3:20)

Law  
(Deut. 6:24;  
Matt. 5:19)

Grace  
(Rom. 6:14)

**Session II: The *HOW* of  
Dispensational Bible Study: *How to  
study the Bible God's Way.***

**A. "It is really only a system"**

*Try this exercise:*

1. Pick a number from 1 to 10:  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. *Multiply* that number by 9:  
\_\_\_\_\_.
3. *Add* the two digits together and  
then *subtract* 5:  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Assign a *letter* to the answer (e.g.,  
1=A; 2=B, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_.
5. Pick a *country* that starts with that  
letter:  
\_\_\_\_\_.

6. Now pick an *animal* that begins with the second letter of the country:

\_\_\_\_\_.

7. Let's see if you got the mystery answer!  
(see page 35 for most common answer)

### **B. Letting God's Word Be our Guide:**

Since God through the Apostle Paul tells us to "rightly divide" His Word, it would certainly be appropriate to allow God through Paul to tell us how this should be done.

Look at Paul's own divinely inspired understanding of just how God's dealings have been laid out:

### **A Three-Fold Division:**

- ✓ Ephesians 2:11,12 ~ "**Time Past**"
- ✓ Ephesians 2:13 ~ "**But Now**"
- ✓ Ephesians 2:7 ~ "**The Ages to Come**"

**(see the chart at the end of chapter)**







REMEMBER that it is crucial to know where *you* are in God's program as you study the Bible. Keeping the right Scriptures for the right time is essential.

This has been a LOT of information! We will begin to take it piece by piece next hour. But isn't it exciting that you can actually see (and believe!) the overview of God's word and how it all fits together in a meaningful way—all from God's word itself! There is simply nothing more rewarding than to have God's word *"working effectually in you that believe"* (I Thess. 2:13)!!

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## **SECOND HOUR REVIEW QUESTIONS:**

You will have to think about what you have learned to answer some of these. You can do it!

1. How would you explain the different instructions in Lev. 11:7,8 and I Tim. 4:4?

2. Give three examples of dispensational distinctions that must be observed in order to understand God's Word.
3. What verse tells us how we are to study God's Word?
4. Give the definition of a dispensation.
5. What is the basic characteristic of "Time Past"?
6. What is the basic characteristic of "But Now"?
7. What books of the Bible fit into the "But Now" section?
8. Explain the hope of a believer in "Time Past" and be sure to give at least two verses to support your answer.

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A SPECIAL WORD: Next hour you are going to discover that *"much study is a weariness of the flesh"* (Eccl. 12:12). It is always that way. Your flesh—your "old man"—will allow the Satanic policy of evil aimed at stopping your growth in spiritual understanding to begin to take hold. Circumstances, events, people, problems, blessings will all begin to try to crowd out your study time and our next 5 Hours together. Don't let it happen! The first line of defense is to determine now to see this project through to the end: study and master the material each session and be ready to *"get some more"* next time!

ANSWER TO RIDDLE on page 30: Almost everyone gets "elephant." Can you figure out why? It truly is *"only a system!"*



*THIRD HOUR:*

*A Strategic Grasp of*

## *Time Past and the Goal of Prophecy*

The most important division in the Bible is that between *prophecy* and the great *mystery* proclaimed by the Apostle Paul.

**Cf. Luke 1:70 and Acts 3:21, 24  
With  
Romans 16:25, Ephesians 3:9 and  
Colossians 1:25**

Manifestly there is a great difference between that which was “*spoken by the mouth of all [God’s] holy prophets since the world began*” and that which was “*kept secret since the world began.*”

- It is important to notice that the common assumption that the “Old Testament” begins in Genesis 1 is not actually correct. Rather the Covenant of the Law was given to the nation Israel through Moses and went into effect in Exodus 24 (cf. John 1:17; Gal. 3:19). This means that the Book of Genesis and the first 20+ chapters of Exodus are not “in the O.T.” We need to be careful with “common assumptions!”

- It is also striking that the very opening words of the Bible declare: “In the beginning God created the *heaven* and the *earth*.” It does not say that He created the universe, but *the heaven* and *the earth*. This is because He had a purpose for the *earth* quite distinct from His purpose concerning *heaven*. His purpose concerning the *earth* and Christ’s reign upon it is the subject of *prophecy* (II Pet. 1:16-19). His purpose concerning *heaven* and our exaltation there with Christ is the subject of “*the mystery*” (Eph. 2:4-10; 3:1-11).

## **Session I: The Middle Wall of Partition**

The basic characteristic of “*Time Past*” is the great distinction between the *Circumcision* and the *Uncircumcision*, between Israel and the Gentiles.

### **Ephesians 2:11, 12**

Israel had a clear advantage while the Gentiles were at an equally distinct disadvantage. Place Romans 9:4,5 alongside Ephesians 2:11,12 and this is set forth in bold relief:

#### **ISRAEL'S ADVANTAGE** (Rom. 9:4,5)

1. **Who** are Israelites+
2. **The** adoption+
3. **To** whom Christ came+
4. **Whose** are the fathers+
5. **Covenants** and the Law+
6. **The** service of God+
7. **The** promises+

#### **GENTILE DISADVANTAGE** (Eph. 2:11,12)

1. **Gentiles**+
2. **Uncircumcised**+
3. **Without** Christ+
4. **Aliens** from Israel+
5. **Strangers** from covenants+
6. **Without** God+
7. **Having** no hope+

This “*middle wall of partition*” (Eph. 2:14) that God Himself erected between the nation Israel and the Gentiles was contained in “the circumcision in the flesh made by hands.”

Romans 1 succinctly demonstrates the Gentile’s alienation was their own doing. Paul presents the sad history of rebellion, evil thinking and self-will that resulted in the three-fold declaration:

%W/herefore God gave them up+(v. 24)  
 %F/or this cause God gave them up+(v. 26)  
 %G/od gave them over+(v. 28)

**See Acts 14:16 and Acts 17:30**

(Historically this took place in Genesis 11.)

In *Time Past* the Gentiles were genuinely “*washed up,*” as it were, being:

- **W**ithout Christ
- **A**liens from the commonwealth of Israel
- **S**trangers from the covenants of promise
- **H**opeless—and thus utterly lost in a world without God.

**BUT GOD**—While the nations of the earth were allowed to “walk in their own ways,” God turned to one solitary figure:

**Genesis 12:1-3**

Abram obeyed God and when he was 99 years old, God changed his name to Abraham and erected His “middle wall of partition.”

**Genesis 17:4-14**

Now there were to be two people in the world: the *Circumcision* and the *Uncircumcision*.

**Numbers 23:9**

**I Kings 8:53**

The covenant God made with Abraham is called

*“The Covenant of Circumcision”*  
(Acts 7:8)

When God gave the Law to the nation Israel, it was “*added*” (Gal. 3:19) to the Covenant of Circumcision and strengthened and fortified the middle wall of partition.

**Ephesians 2:14, 15**

**Romans 2:14**

**Psalms 147:19, 20**

**Deuteronomy 4:5-8**

**Leviticus 20:20-24**

Now God had an agency in the earth through which He would accomplish His purpose and plan of making Jesus Christ ruler of the earth He created.

**Exodus 19:3-6    Exodus 15:17-19**

**Genesis 28:17**

The nation Israel was created to be God's earthly, kingdom people.

God's *earthly* purpose is to make Jesus Christ the head over things in the earth through the instrumentality of a kingdom vested in the nation Israel.

Thus it would be through this favored nation that God would bless all the nations of the earth. The nation Israel was to be His *channel of blessing* for all the other nations.

**Genesis 12:3,4    Genesis 22:18**

**Isaiah 60:1-3**

**Zechariah 8:13, 20-22**

In *Time Past*, Gentile salvation came *through* the nation Israel. There were two “doors” available to Gentiles who came to recognize their gods were false and that Israel had the one true and living God.

- ✓ A Gentile could become a *proselyte*:  
Esther 8:17, Exodus 12:48,  
Isaiah 56, etc.
- ✓ A Gentile could put himself in the place of blessing by *blessing Israel*:  
Genesis 12:3, I Kings 17:10-15,  
Joshua 2:9-11, II Kings 5:15,17, etc.

We have learned that:

1. God chose the Nation Israel as His earthly nation/agency.
2. God gave the Nation Israel the Law.
3. Gentile salvation was available only through the Nation Israel.

## **Session II: The Goal of Prophecy**

The specific goal of the prophetic program is *the coming of Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom on earth.*

**Daniel 2:28-45    Hosea 3:4,5  
Micah 4:1,2**

In *Time Past* the hope of the nation Israel was to be “*a Kingdom of Priests.*”

**Exodus 19:3-6  
Isaiah 61:4-6  
Zechariah 8:13, 20-23**

This hope is to be realized on *earth.*

**Genesis 13:14-18  
Genesis 15:13-21  
Genesis 17:6-8  
Job 19:25-26  
Isaiah 11:6-8  
Daniel 2:28-44**

This earthly kingdom will be the fulfillment of the *Davidic Covenant*:

**II Samuel 7:12-14    I Chronicles 17:4-15**  
**Psalm 89:34-37**

Some of the details to be noted about this kingdom are:

1. It will be set up upon earth:  
Jeremiah 23:5, Daniel 2:44, Psalm 2:8, Isaiah 11:9, Luke 2:14, Matthew 5:5; 6:10; 19:28.
2. It will be centered at Jerusalem (Davidic):  
Isaiah 2:3; 24:23, Jeremiah 3:17, Micah 5:2, Matthew 5:35, Luke 1:32,33.
3. It will extend to all the earth:  
Psalm 72:11, Daniel 2:45; 7:12, Psalm 2:8.
4. Israel will become a blessing to the Gentiles: Isaiah 60:1-3, Zechariah 8:13, 20-23, Genesis 22:17,18.

5. Government will be purified:  
Isaiah 11:4; 61:11, Jeremiah 23:5.
6. War and bloodshed will be abolished:  
Isaiah 9:6; 2:4.
7. Health and long life will be restored:  
Isaiah 33:24; 35:5,6,10; 65:20,  
Ezekiel 47.
8. The animal creation will be tamed:  
Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25.
9. The curse will be removed from the  
vegetable creation: Isaiah 35:1,2,6,7.
10. In that day, all Israel shall be saved:  
Romans 11:26,27, Jeremiah 31:31-34,  
Ezekiel 36:24-28.

It will be through *Redeemed Israel* that God will send blessings and salvation to the nations.

Thus God gave Israel a Prophetic Time Schedule for accomplishing the cleansing of the nation:

### **Daniel 9:24-27**

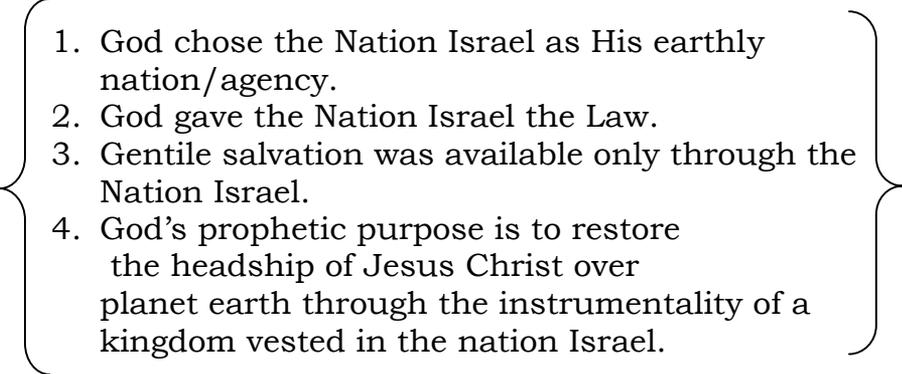
This is the most important time schedule in the Bible. Note the 400 years of “silence,” as Israel awaits the arrival of “the voice crying in the wilderness.”

See **Mark 1:14-15**—the “days of Messiah” had arrived right on schedule!

**REMEMBER:** Just as the “Old Testament” did not begin in Genesis, so it is that the “New Testament” does not begin with Matthew 1. See Hebrews 9:17.

Thus John the Baptist calls Israel to repentance. His message of “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,*” is exactly what was needed in order for that favored nation to prepare for her Messiah’s arrival.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT TIME PAST:

- 
1. God chose the Nation Israel as His earthly nation/agency.
  2. God gave the Nation Israel the Law.
  3. Gentile salvation was available only through the Nation Israel.
  4. God's prophetic purpose is to restore the headship of Jesus Christ over planet earth through the instrumentality of a kingdom vested in the nation Israel.

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### REVIEW QUIZ FOR HOUR 3:

1. When and through whom was the old covenant (testament) made?
2. What is the main subject of prophecy?
3. Where will the kingdom be set up? Give two proof verses.
4. What was the relationship between Jews and Gentiles in *Time Past*?
5. Explain what Paul means by the term "the middle wall of partition."
6. What was the status of Gentiles in *Time Past*?

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7. What two means were available to Gentiles in *Time Past* to receive salvation and blessing from God?
8. The covenant made with Abraham is called what?
9. Explain God's purpose in creating the nation Israel and her role in His plan for the earth.
10. Give a verse that demonstrates that the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are actually still "Old Testament" ground.

[Type text]

*FOURTH HOUR:*

## *Matthew thru John*

The Lord Jesus Christ is the most unique and important person ever to have lived on this earth. The so-called “*Four Gospels*”—that is, the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—set forth His earthly life and ministry. We are, naturally, vitally interested in this information. Remember, however, that our Lord lived and ministered in *Time Past*—else you will soon be confused and discouraged by what you find in these records.

### **Session I: The THEME of Matthew thru John:**

#### **A. They are still in *Time Past*:**

- The “*Middle Wall of Partition*” that God Himself erected between the nation Israel and the Gentiles is still “up.”

**Matthew 10:5,6    Matthew 15:24  
John 4:22    Romans 15:8**

- They were still *under the Law of Moses*.

**Matthew 5:17-24    Mark 1:44**  
**Matthew 23:2,3    Hebrews 9:17**

- Salvation was *still through Israel*.

**Mark 7:24-30    Luke 19:9,10**

**Compare:**

**John 3:16 with  
 Matthew 10:5,6 and 15:24**

**John 4:22 with John 4:41**

How can this obvious difference be explained? The answer is a dispensational one for it is found in the Covenant made with Abraham.

Remember Genesis 12:3,4 and 22:15-18. The Scriptures had long predicted that *salvation was to go to the Gentiles THROUGH redeemed Israel* (Isa. 60:1-3; 61:4-6; Zech. 8:20-23, etc.). This is the reason Christ confined His earthly ministry to Israel (Rom. 15:8-12)—salvation and blessing were to go to the world through Israel! In fact, John 3:16 was a stinging rebuke to Israel for actually hindering the sending of salvation to the world by their own unbelief!

- They were preaching “*the Gospel of the Kingdom*”

**Matthew 4:23    Matthew 9:35  
Matthew 24:14**

The four things we learned about *Time Past* are all still true during the earthly ministry of Christ:

1. Israel is still God’s chosen nation in the earth.
2. The Law of Moses is still the operating system.
3. Gentile salvation was still available only through Israel.
4. The goal is still the establishment of the earthly Kingdom promised and prophesied in Scripture.

## **2. A “New Phase” of Israel’s program had begun:**

- The N.T. (like the O.T.) begins with a very interesting verse:

### **Matthew 1:1**

- Matthew is the 40<sup>th</sup> book of the Bible (*“Probation”*)
  - It is the first book of the N.T.—yet still in *Time Past*: thus a *Transitional book*.
  - The 14<sup>th</sup> occurrence of a book of *“generations”*—13 previous (rebellion) and now a final 14<sup>th</sup> (a final, completely different one). See Genesis 5:1. Restores position of Gen. 1:26-28.
  - This is the first time the name “Jesus Christ” appears in Scripture and He is introduced as *The Son of David ~ The Son of Abraham*
- The long promised Kingdom was now **“at hand.”**

**Matthew 3:2**

**Mark 1:14,15**

**REMEMBER**

the *Prophetic Time Schedule* of **Daniel 9:24-27**.

Seventy weeks (i.e., weeks of years, as in Lev. 25:3,4) are determined upon Israel and Jerusalem (490 years). First, there is a seven-week period (49 years) and then a sixty-two week period (434 years), *after* which Messiah would be cut off (Isa. 53:8) and the sanctuary (temple) destroyed. Then there would be yet one last week (7 years) during which the abomination (which Christ identified with the Anti-Christ and the Great Tribulation, Matt. 24:15,21 cf. II Thess. 2:3,4) will take place.



- A **new stage** in God's program with Israel had begun:

**Luke 16:16**

The ministry of John the Baptist marks a new beginning in the national life of Israel. The law and prophets prophesied *exclusively* until John, but with John the announcement that the Kingdom was “at hand” officially began. This “good news” became the pressing issue.

- **The THEME of the message:**  
 “Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

**Matthew 3:2 ~ 4:17 ~ 4:23 ~ 10:5-7**

- ❖ *“The Gospel of the Kingdom”*

**Matthew 4:23    Matthew 9:35  
 Matthew 24:14**

**See Luke 9:6 and 18:31-34  
 (cf. I Cor. 15:3,4)**

- ❖ *Identifying the Believing  
 Remnant in the Apostate Nation*

**Cf. Matthew 21:43  
 with Luke 12:31,32**

Forming His “*Little Flock*”

**See Luke 19:11-27 ~ Matthew 19:28**  
 Gathering the governmental  
 structure of His Kingdom

❖ Hence the importance of *Water Baptism*

**Mark 1:4 ~ Luke 7:29, 30**

**See Acts 13:24**

John preached a “*national baptism*” as a means of a *National Repentance*.

**See John 1:30-34**

John’s baptism was the means of *identifying Messiah to Israel* (see 10:1-5).

**See Exodus 19:5,6 and Exodus 29:1,4, 7**

This is a *National Cleansing* (Ezek. 36:25-28) so they could function in their role as a *Kingdom of Priests* (Isa. 61:6, I Pet. 2:9).

❖ Also, notice *the THREE baptisms* of Matthew 3:11

1. *Water*: Ezek. 36:25, John 1:31-34
2. *Spirit*: Acts 1:4,5
3. *Fire*: v. 12 (“the wrath to come” of v. 7).

### 3. “His own received Him not” stage:

#### **John 1:11, 12**

- “*He came unto His Own*”—the nation Israel (Isa. 9:6; Rom. 15:8)
- “*His own received Him not*”—the nation rejected Him
  - Matthew 12:14-16 = De-emphasis on Public *Ministry*
  - Matthew 16:20 = De-emphasis on His Messianic *Office*
  - Matthew 17:9 = De-emphasis on His Messianic *Glory*
- “*As Many as Received Him*”—He trained the “*Little Flock*” for the ministry they would have during His coming absence.

#### **John 17:4**

The “*work*” of training the Little Flock  
(vs. 2,6,8,9,11,12,24)

- “*Gave He power to become*”—The early Acts period will continue the ministry He had committed to them.

## **See Hebrews 2:3,4**

At the conclusion of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John the *Little Flock* is poised to continue the ministry Christ had trained them to perform, and extend to the nation Israel a *renewed opportunity of Repentance and Salvation*—the opportunity to at last be the blessing to the world they were created to be.

## **Session II: Why “FOUR” Gospel Records?**

An important question to consider is just *why* is it there are *four* Gospel records? Would not just one have been simpler? Or wouldn't a dozen have been more complete? But the Holy Spirit chose to record *four* accounts for a *specific purpose*. Four is the number of the *earth*, and this four-fold picture of our Lord's earthly life and ministry is the unveiling of a *four-fold prophetic portrait* of "the most wonderful life ever spent on earth."

A. They are **not** a complete biography: cf. John 21:25 -- one or two would be too few; thousands not enough!

B. They are four **inspired prophetic portraits**--each written with a distinct design according to a principle of *selection*.

**Matthew:**

*The Royal Ruler -- The King of Israel*

**Mark:**

*The Wonderful Worker -- The Servant of Jehovah*

**Luke:**

*The Magnificent Man --The Perfect Son of Man*

**John:**

*Demonstrated Deity -- The Eternal God*

C. This four-fold presentation of Christ was **specifically indicated** in the Scriptures:

1. The four "**Behold**" prophecies:
  - a. "**Behold THY KING**"(Zech. 9:9)
  - b. "**Behold...MY SERVANT**"  
(Zech. 3:8)

c. "**Behold THE MAN**"  
(Zech. 6:12,13)

d. "**Behold YOUR GOD**"  
(Isa. 40:9).

2. The four prophetic "**Branch**" titles:

a. "A Righteous Branch....**A KING**" (Jer. 23:5)

b. "**MY SERVANT** the Branch"  
(Zech. 3:8)

c. "**THE MAN** whose name is the Branch" (Zech. 6:12)

d. "The Branch of **THE LORD**"  
(Isa. 4:2).

3. The four **faces of the Cherubim**:

**a. Ezek. 1:10; 10:14 and Rev. 4:7**

<b>Lion</b>	--	<b>Ox</b>	--	<b>Man</b>	--	<b>Eagle</b>
(Matt.)		(Mark)		(Luke)		(John)

[Being the closest creatures to the Throne of God they most accurately portray the likeness of the Divine nature.]

b. See **Exodus 26:31-32**

Note the "*Four Pillars*" on which the Cherubim-embroidered veil hung. Heb. 10:19,20 shows the veil pictures "*His flesh*" (also: *wood* = humanity; *gold* = deity)

As the "*four pillars*" serve to display the beautiful veil, so the *Four Gospels* manifest the perfection of God the Son tabernacled among men.

c. Notice how **Rev. 4:6,7** *authenticates the order* of the Four Gospel records!

D. Although each writer presents the Lord Jesus in all four ways, the **specific focus of each** is too obvious to overlook—or to be accidental. Notice these few illustrations:

## 1. The Genealogies:

➤ **Matthew: Establishes His Royal Rights to the Throne of David.**

a. Traces genealogy *back to David and Abraham* (1:1)

*David* = The Throne

*Abraham* = *The Nation and Land*

- b. Notice the *reversed order* to emphasize

*“David the King”* (vs. 6)

- c. His *Royal Genealogy* (1:2-17)

- Only *back to Abraham*
- Through *Royal Tribe of Judah* (not Rueben) (v. 2)  
and the kingly line of *Solomon* (v. 6)
- Note the *women* included (vs. 3,5,6)  
= reminds Israel of her need for her Redeemer-King and the goal of His kingdom.
- Three Divisions (v. 17):  
14 generations selected in each  
(2x7 = *Perfect Testimony*)  
42 total (7x6 = *The Perfect Man* for the Job)

- d. Traces *through Joseph* a “son of *David*” (1:18-25)

- Joseph is the *legal father of record* through whom Christ can acquire the right to the title “son of David”
- *Virgin Birth* is protected and proclaimed:  
1:16 = “*Born*” NOT “*begat*”

- e. Matthew places the genealogy at *the very beginning* because it is important to establish His Royal Rights to the Throne. His purpose is to demonstrate that the covenants made with Abraham and David are vested in Jesus Christ.

➤ **Luke: Establishes His Full Human Rights and Natural Lineage.**

- a. Traces genealogy *back to Adam*—the first man (3:38).
- b. Traces *through Nathan* (3:31) and thus solves the problem of Matthew 1:11 (see Jer. 22:24,30) so Psa. 132:11 is safe.
- c. This is “*Mary’s Genealogy*” (2:23). See 1:30-35, Gen. 3:15.

See Numbers 26:33; 27:1-11; 36:2-11 = “*The daughters of Zelophehad.*” Inheritance goes through daughters if no son available...Son-in-law is adopted by the father of the bride.

- d. Luke places it after His baptism at the *beginning of His ministry* (3:23). He is first concerned with His birth, growth to manhood, etc.
- e. Luke wants to show Him *overflowing to all mankind*—the *larger purpose* in Israel’s Kingdom.
- **Mark: No Genealogy** (not an issue with a Servant)
  - **John: No Genealogy** (traces back to “*from everlasting*”—John 8:58)

## 2. His Conception:

- **Matthew** focuses on *Joseph*—“the son of David”
- **Mark** omits
- **Luke** focuses on *Mary*—“the seed of the woman”
- **John** omits (but declares Him “the Word made flesh”)

### 3. His Birth:

- **Matthew** focuses on Herod, Jerusalem, the “King of the Jews,” the star, the Wise Men, their gifts, etc.
- **Luke** focuses on Caesar, “all the world,” “all people” and a Savior.

### 4. The Ministry of John the Baptist:

- **Matthew** 3:1-7 = Identified simply as “the Voice” preaching a national opportunity of repentance.
- **Mark** 1:4-8 = Notice v.8 omits the “fire” baptism (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16) for judgment is not a servant’s task.
- **Luke** 3:1-6 = Identified as preaching “*remission of sins*”—a more personal need. Notice how verse 6 includes the extended quote from Isaiah 40 so as to include “*all flesh.*”
- **John** 1:15-34 = identifies Messiah to Israel as Him who was “*before me.*”

## 5. The Temptation:

- **Matthew** 4 follows the *Dispensational* order:  
Bread ~ Display ~ Kingdoms
- **Mark** omits the details (except about the “wild beasts” being present) and simply reports His victory (1:12, 13).
- **Luke** 4 follows the *Human* order of I John 2:16  
  
~ Lust of Flesh/Eyes/Pride.  
See Genesis 3:6.
- **John** has no temptation record for the reason stated in James 1:13.

## 6. Opening of Christ’s Ministry:

- **Matthew** begins with a focus on the *King and His credentials* (Matt. 4:17, 23). The first recorded miracle sees Him healing a leper with a “touch”—which would have defiled another (8:1-4).

- **Mark** begins with a *whirlwind of activity* (1:12, 21, 28, 31, 34, 39, 42, etc.). His first recorded miracles are manifestations of His Power (1:21-31).
- **Luke** uses the opportunity to remind his readers that the *Gentiles were also to have a place* in Israel's Kingdom (4:18, 25-27).
- **John** records His first miracle as a "*manifestation of His glory*" (2:11).

## **7. Numerics:**

### ➤ **Matthew:**

- a. 40<sup>th</sup> book of Bible
- b. 1<sup>st</sup> book of N.T.—yet still under the Law and thus a transition book
- c. 28 chapters: 4x7 (4 = earth; 7 = perfection) = perfection of the earth/the gospel of the kingdom!

➤ **Mark:**

- a. 16 chapters:
  - $4 \times 4$  = God's purpose in the earth (service of sonship—Psa. 8).
  - $2 \times 8$  (2 = witness; 8 = new beginning) = Testimony to a new beginning for Israel/mankind (1:15).
- b. 2<sup>nd</sup> book of N.T. = Witness

➤ **Luke:**

- a. 42<sup>nd</sup> book of Bible:  $6 \times 7$  = Perfect Man (Psa.45:2).
- b. 3<sup>rd</sup> book of N.T. = God manifest in the flesh
- c. 24 chapters:
  - $2 \times 12$  = Governmental Perfection brought by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Man
  - $4 \times 6$  = The 2<sup>nd</sup> Man in the earth
  - $3 \times 8$  = God's new beginning

➤ **John:**

- a. 43<sup>rd</sup> book of Bible = indivisible!  
(John 10:30)
- b. 4<sup>th</sup> book of N.T. = “sent into the world”
- c. 21 chapters: 3x7 = Perfection of God

**8. Style of Writer:**

- **Matthew:** *A government official* (9:9) interest in official things (1:22; 2:17; 3:1,2; 4:17,23; 5:1,2; 8:1,2, etc.).
- **Mark:** *A servant* to an apostle (II Tim. 4:11) interested in action and performance (notice the “helping hands” only recorded by Mark in 1:31, 41, 5:41, 9:27, 36, 10:16, 21). Notice also Mark 13:32’s unique “*neither the Son*” (see John 15:15 for the explanation!).
- **Luke:** The “*beloved physician*” (Col. 4:14) interested in the human touches (1:35; 2:7, 18, etc.).
- **John:** The apostle *nearest to Christ* (13:23) who knew best who He really was.

## 9. Their Closing Order:

- **Matthew 28**—The *Resurrection* of Christ
- **Mark 16**—The *Ascension* of Christ
- **Luke 24**—The *Coming* of the Holy Spirit
- **John 21**—The *Second Coming* of Christ

## 10. Their Commissions:

- **Matthew 28:** The *King with them* reigning over the nations.
- **Mark 16:** The *Servant working* with them still.
- **Luke 24:** Their *dependence* on the enduement of the Spirit.
- **John 20:** Their *God-given authority* to forgive sins.
- **Acts 1:** Their execution of the *prophetic order*.

This is a fascinating study that will reward you greatly for your effort as you pursue it! What a wonderful Saviour and how rightly dividing His Word shows forth His glories!!!

## **HOMEWORK:**

1. What is the primary theme of our Lord's earthly ministry?
2. Explain the seeming contradiction between the commission in Matt. 10:5-7 and our Lord's statement in John 3:16.
3. How does Matt. 1:1 introduce us to the Lord Jesus Christ?
4. Why is the prophecy of Dan. 9:24-27 of importance in understanding the setting of Matt. thru John?
5. How did a believer in Israel become a member of the "little flock"?
6. What Scripture indicates that Christ's own apostles, after preaching "the gospel" for some time, did not even know He was going to die?
7. Explain the three baptisms of Matt. 3:11.
8. In what capacity did each of the Four Gospels present Christ?
9. Which account matches each of the faces of Ezek. 1:10 and Rev. 4:7?
10. Explain why Matthew and Luke record the *order* of Christ's temptation differently?

## *HOUR FIVE:*

# *The Book of Acts*

The Book of Acts is one of the great battlegrounds of Scriptural debate. This is due to its *transitional* nature, a feature that is too often overlooked.

Rather than being (as is generally supposed) a pattern for us to follow in this Dispensation of Grace, the Book of Acts is a record of the *fall* of Israel and God's reason for sending salvation to the Gentiles *apart* from that favored nation.

The Book of Acts provides the explanation as to why the program found in its early chapters has passed away and confirms the declaration of the epistles of Paul that the fulfillment of the *prophetic* program has, for the present, given way to the unfolding of the *mystery* program.

## **Session I: Getting Our Bearings**

### **A. The Book of Acts is a book of *Continuation:***

- Acts begins with the *continuation* of the ministry found in Matthew thru John.

**Hebrews 2:3,4**

- Comparing **Acts 1 and Luke 24** demonstrates that Acts continues where Luke left off:

Acts 1 summarizes Luke 24

Acts 1:3 *Infallible proofs* Luke 24:36-42

Acts 1:3 *Speaking of Kingdom of God* Lk 24:44,45

Acts 1:4, 5, 8 *Waiting for power* Luke 24:49

Acts 1:8 *Order of ministry* Luke 24:46,47

Acts 1:9 *Ascension* Luke 24:50,51

Acts 1:12 *Return to Jerusalem* Luke 24:52,53

- Early Acts is still in *Time Past*.

**REMEMBER** the four things we learned about *Time Past*:

1. Israel is *still* God's chosen agency on the earth: 1:6, 21-26; 2:14,22,36; 3:25,26; 5:32; 11:19.
2. They are *still* under the law: Luke 24:53, Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:42; 21:20.
3. Gentile salvation was *still* through Israel: Acts 1:8; 3:24-26.
4. The establishment of the earthly, Davidic kingdom was *still* the issue: 1:6, 3:19-21.

**See Luke 13:6-9**

A “one year” extension of mercy was *added* to Israel’s time schedule.

**Cf. Luke 23:34 and Acts 3:17**

Their minds were blinded in unbelief (John 12:37-41). This is no excuse but it does make a difference in the penalty: God Himself uses a legal technicality to express His tender mercies to His favored people as He claims for them this *renewed opportunity of repentance*.

- This clearly defines the *nature* of the opening of the Book of Acts as *an extension of mercy to the Nation Israel*.

**B. The Book of Acts is a book of Transition:**

- While Acts *opens* with a *renewed opportunity of repentance* extended to the nation Israel...It *concludes* with salvation sent to the Gentiles *apart from and in spite of* that once favored nation.

**Compare:**

**Acts 1:6** with **Acts 13:46; 28:28**

**Acts 2:38** with **Acts 10:44-47**  
with **Acts 16:31**

**Acts 2:14,22,36** with **11:19** with  
**13:46; 18:6; 28:28**

**Acts 3:19-21** with **20:24**  
(see Eph. 3:1-9)

- The Book of Acts naturally divides into two sections and demonstrates that Paul was the perfect *replacement* for Peter and the Twelve.

<b>Time Past</b>	<b>~</b>	<b>But Now</b>
Peter (1-12)	<i>Central figure</i>	Paul (13-28)
Acts 2	<i>First sermon</i>	Acts 13
Acts 3	<i>First miracle a dispensational foreshadowing</i>	Acts 13
Acts 8	<i>Condemns sorcerer</i>	Acts 13
Acts 9	<i>Raises dead</i>	Acts 20
Acts 5	<i>Special miracles</i>	Acts 19
Acts 8	<i>Lay on Hands to give Spirit</i>	Acts 19
Acts 4&12	<i>Imprisoned</i>	Acts 21,23,28

- *The Salvation and Commissioning of the Apostle Paul* marks a **dispensational boundary line** of supreme importance.

**Romans 11:11-13      Romans 15:15,16**  
**Ephesians 3:1-9**

**Galatians 1:1, 11,12    Galatians 2:7-9**  
**Romans 16:25,26**

**Colossians 1:24-27    I Timothy 2:4-7**  
**Titus 1:1-3**

**C. The Book of Acts is a book with *Three Pivotal Points*:**

- ✓ *The Outpouring of the Spirit*
- ✓ *The Outbreak against Stephen*
- ✓ *The Outgoing to the Gentiles*

## 1. **The Outpouring of the Spirit:**

### **Acts 2:14-21**

Note the two “*I will*” statements – verses 17 and 19. Plainly the Spirit *has been* poured out and the *wrath is on the way!*

In *Time Past* the coming of the Holy Spirit was a National Promise which held the prospect of Kingdom blessing. It was associated with Israel’s coming Kingdom (Isa. 44:2-8; 32:1, 15, Joel 2:28-32) and the inauguration of her New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34, Ezek. 36:24-28; 37:14; 39:25-29; Zech. 12:10-13:1, etc.).

### **Acts 2:4**

See Zechariah 8:20-23 for the reason for “*tongues*” (cf. Acts 2:5-11)

[This is the Divine reversal of Genesis 11:7-9!]

### **Acts 2:30-33**

The pouring out of the Spirit is proof that Jesus Christ has been exalted by the Father as His King and that His kingdom is ready to be established.

**Acts 2:34-36**

The time for the arrival of “*the wrath to come*” (Matt. 3:7) and the establishing of Messiah’s kingdom has arrived.

**Acts 2:37-40 Acts 3:19-23**

The question for Israel is simple: Will you be a part of the believing remnant or not? The official *offer of the kingdom* has arrived!

**Acts 2: 42-47**

The lifestyle of the Kingdom put on display. Fulfillment of Ezekiel 36:27 (spontaneously living for one another) in obedience to **Luke 12:32,33**, etc.

**2. The Outcry Against Stephen:**

Crunch time for  
“*all the senate of the children of Israel.*”

**Acts 6:15**

Special message from God to confront the nation’s leadership.

[Cf. Moses’ shining face when giving the Law.]

**Acts 7:51-53**

Israel commits the “*unpardonable sin.*” See

**Matthew 12:31, 32.**

Note the progression of Israel’s guilt in response to God’s threefold call to repentance:

- She *permitted* the murder of John the Baptist.
- She *demande*d the murder of Jesus Christ.
- She *committed* the murder of Stephen.

**Acts 7:54-56**

Acts 2:34-36 (quoting Psa. 110:1) makes it clear that there is only one reason for Christ to be “*standing*”—and that is to initiate His “day of wrath.” See Isaiah 3:13. Zechariah 2:13-3:1. Psalms 2:1-5; 7:6; 9:19; etc.

**3. The *Outgoing* to the Gentiles:**

See **I Timothy 1:12-16** and **Ephesians 3:1-9** for the reason the prophesied “*day of wrath*” did *not* arrive.

**Romans 11:11-13    Acts 9:15**  
**Acts 26:15-18**

**Acts 13:46    Acts 18:5,6**  
**Acts 28:28**

Things have changed – *But Now* has arrived!

## **Session II:    An Outline That Works:**

The Scriptures themselves, through Paul, provide us an outline of the events covered in the Book of Acts:

### **Romans 11:11-13**

1. Israel “*stumbled*” but did not fall.
2. Israel does “*fall*” and this results in salvation going to the Gentiles.
3. Israel’s “*diminishing*” phase follows through to the end of Acts.

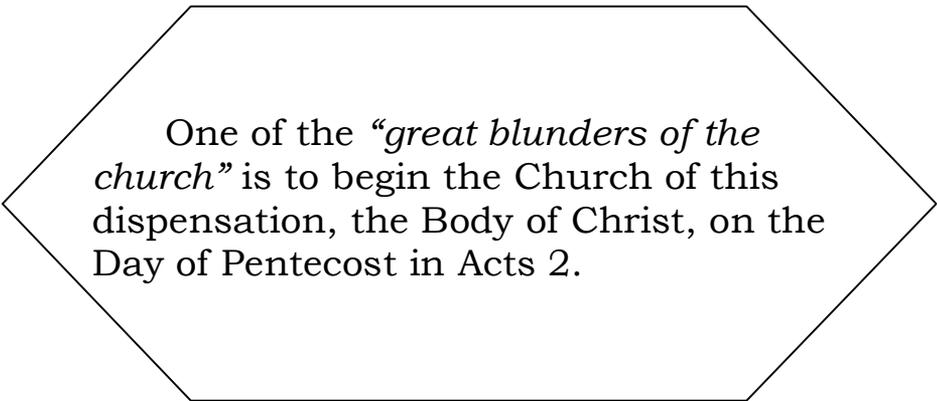
## 1. **Stumbling:**

- Notice that Israel “*stumbled*” but did *not* “fall.”

### **Roman 9:33**

Because Israel was not walking by faith, she failed to recognize Christ as her Messiah and “stumbled”—a *reference to her rejection and crucifixion of Christ*. Yet, although Israel stumbled she was *not* set aside at the cross.

- Clearly Pentecost and the early Acts period are neither in *But Now* nor a record of the beginning of the Body of Christ.



One of the “*great blunders of the church*” is to begin the Church of this dispensation, the Body of Christ, on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

1. Pentecost was *no secret*, but rather the definite *fulfillment of prophecy*.

- **Acts 2:16** with **Ephesians 3:5**
- **Acts 3:21** with **Romans 16:25**
- **Acts 3:24** with **Colossians 1:26**
- **Acts 3:25** with **Romans 5:11**

2. Pentecost is a Jewish Feast associated with Israel's Redemption and Kingdom Calendar.

**Leviticus 23:15-21      Deuteronomy 16:16**

3. At Pentecost, Israel was not yet set aside and was thus still God's channel of blessing to the nations.

**Acts 2:14, 22,36      Acts 3:25,26**  
**Acts 5:32**

**Cf. Gal. 3:28      Ephesians 2:13-18**

4. Israel's promised Kingdom was being offered during the Pentecostal era.

**Acts 2:36-40      Acts 3:18-26**

5. Pentecost is said to be Israel's "*last days*"—not the Body of Christ's "first day."

**Acts 2:17**

6. There was already a church in existence on the day of Pentecost—a prophesied church.

**Acts 2:47**

(*"added to"* means something was already there)

**Matthew 16:18,19    Hebrews 2:12  
Psalms 22:22**

7. The Pentecostal program is not the program for the Body of Christ or the dispensation of grace.
- ✓ Different *Spirit baptisms*: Acts 1:5 versus I Cor. 12:13
  - ✓ Different *views of the Cross*: Acts 2:36; 3:13-15; 4:23-28 versus Gal. 6:14
  - ✓ Different *salvation messages*: Acts 2:38 versus Acts 16:31
  - ✓ Different *Economic orders*: Acts 2:44,45 versus I Tim. 5:8
  - ✓ Different *Religious orders*: Acts 2:1,42,46; 3:1; 5:42 versus Col. 2:16, Gal. 4:8-11

❖ Early Acts is a record of the “*Pentecostal Era.*”

- ❖ Pentecost *experienced* (Acts 2:1-11)
- ❖ Pentecost *explained* (Acts 2:12-47)
- ❖ Pentecost *pictured* (Acts 3:1-11)
- ❖ Pentecost *presented* (Acts 3:12-4:22)
- ❖ Pentecost *repeated* (Acts 4:23-5:11)
- ❖ Pentecost *withstood* (Acts 5:12-42)
- ❖ Pentecost *extended* (Acts 6:1-7)
- ❖ Pentecost *rejected* (Acts 6:8-8:1)

## 2. Fall:

Although Israel did *not* fall at the cross, she *did* subsequently fall. This took place in **Acts 7** when her blasphemy against the Holy Spirit culminated in the stoning of Stephen. This declaration of Israel’s leaders in Jerusalem is recognized as official.

**Acts 7:51     Acts 22:17-22**  
**I Thessalonians 2:14-16**

**Romans 11:25-32**

### 3. Diminishing:

From Acts 8 onward, the Book of Acts demonstrates that Israel's program is *no longer continuing* on as it once did, but rather is being replaced by "the reconciling of the world" (Rom. 11:15).

While the Fall of Israel meant that God would no longer deal with the world **through** Israel, He did continue to deal **with** her in such a manner as to "provoke" lost Jews to be saved into the new program being introduced through the ministry committed to Paul (Rom 11:13-14).

- ❖ This explains the presence in Paul's ministry of some of Israel's formerly exclusive possessions (e.g., Tongues, water baptism, healing).

**I Corinthians 1:22    I Corinthians 14:22**  
**I Corinthians 13:8-10**

Cf. **I Cor. 12:30** with **I Cor. 14:23-37**

Cf. **I Cor. 1:14-17** with **Matt. 28:19**  
 and **Mark 16:15,16**

Cf. **II Cor. 12:7-10** with **Mark 16:17,18**  
 and **Matt. 10:1, 8**

With the ministry committed to the Apostle Paul by our risen Lord from heaven's glory we have reached *But Now*. Next hour we will survey "our mail" in detail!

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## QUIZ YOURSELF:

1. The opening chapters of the Book of Acts set forth the program for the Church today. True or False?
2. How did the Father answer Christ's prayer in Luke 23:34?
3. Give two verses that demonstrate the *transition nature* of the Book of Acts.
4. Explain the significance of the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.
5. Explain the "unpardonable sin" of Matt. 12:31,32 and how it was committed in the book of Acts.
6. What is the significance of Christ "standing" in Acts 7:54,55? Give at least one supporting verse.
7. When did Israel "stumble"?
8. When did Israel "fall"?
9. Did the Body of Christ begin on the day of Pentecost? Give at least three reasons for your answer.
10. Explain the difference between the baptisms in Acts 1:5 and I Corinthians 12:13.

STUDY NOTES:

**HOUR SIX:**

*A Strategic Grasp of*

## *The Pauline Epistles*

When we come to Paul's epistles we have arrived at what is uniquely "*our mail*." The entire Bible is *for* us—"for our admonition and learning"—but all Scripture is not *about* us. Since we, as members of the Body of Christ, are not the only people God has in His plans and purpose, we must never be so selfish as to think "every promise in the Book is mine."

Rather we must "*rightly divide the Word of truth*" so we can have a genuine appreciation for God's Word to us. There is nothing more exciting than to have God's word working effectually in you that believe (I Thess. 2:13). It's our faith, resting in an intelligent understanding of God's Word to us, that liberates its power into the details of our lives.

### **Session I: "The Mutual Faith"**

- A. Paul is "our apostle" and as such he is God's spokesman for today.

**Romans 11:13    Romans 15:15,16**  
**I Corinthians 11:1**

**Galatians 1:11,12    Ephesians 3:1-9**  
**Titus 1:1-3**

**Colossians 1:24-28    I Thessalonians 4:1,2**

- ✓ Compare Moses' status in Israel:

**Deut. 4:1-6    Hebrew 3:2    Mark 1:44**

- ✓ Some things *unique* with Paul:

- ❖ The Body of Christ: Ephesians 3:3-6
- ❖ The Dispensation of Grace:  
Ephesians 3:1,2
- ❖ The Gospel of Grace: Acts 20:24,  
I Corinthians 15:3,4
- ❖ The temporary setting aside of  
Israel: Romans 11:11,25
- ❖ The “no difference between Jew and  
Gentile” status: Romans 10:11,  
Ephesians 2:13-18
- ❖ The “One Baptism:” Ephesians 4:5,  
I Corinthians 12:13
- ❖ A commission you can fulfill:  
II Corinthians 5:14-20,  
Ephesians 3:1-9

- ✓ Paul's ministry is the means whereby our ascended Lord from heaven's glory had made known to us "*the faith.*"

**Titus 1:1-3      Romans 1:11,12**  
**Romans 16:25**

- B. The *reason* "the Mystery" was a mystery:

**I Corinthians 2:6-8**  
**Ephesians 1:3-11    Ephesians 3:7-11**

[The issue is manifesting  
"*the manifold wisdom of God.*"]

See Satan's boast in **Ezekiel 28:1-6**  
(note especially **v. 3**)

- C. The *reason* the Body of Christ was necessary:

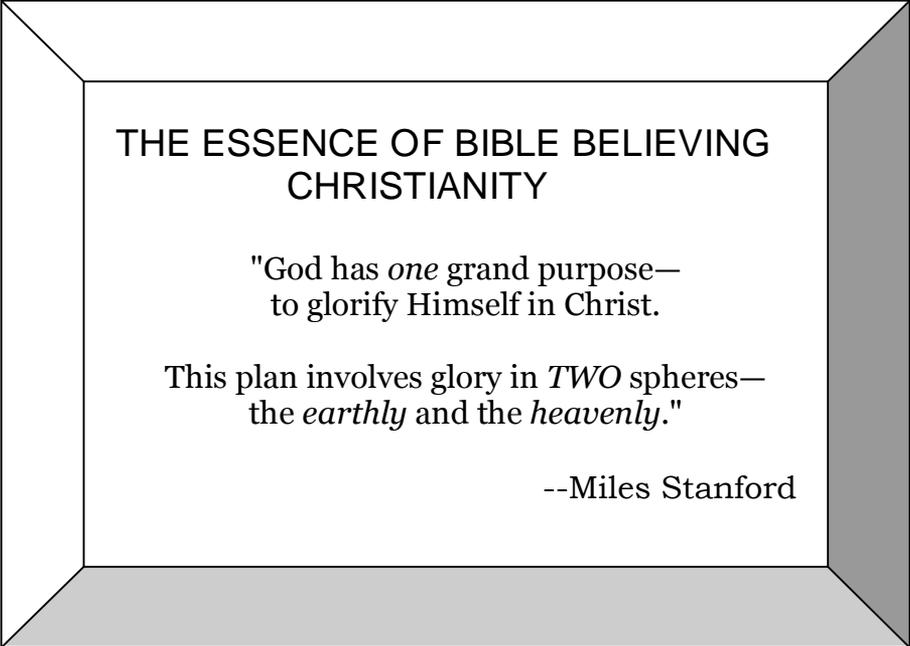
**Isaiah 14:12-15      Genesis 14:19, 22**

**Ezekiel 28:11-19      Matthew 25:41**

**Colossians 1:16-20      Ephesians 1:9, 10**

### *But Now*

1. The *Body of Christ* is God's agency for the *heavenly places*.
2. The operating system today is *Grace*.
3. Salvation and blessing are provided to all people on an *equal* basis—"there is no difference."
4. God's purpose is to exalt Jesus Christ as Head of the *government in the heavenly places* through the instrumentality of the Body of Christ.



THE ESSENCE OF BIBLE BELIEVING  
CHRISTIANITY

"God has *one* grand purpose—  
to glorify Himself in Christ.

This plan involves glory in *TWO* spheres—  
the *earthly* and the *heavenly*."

--Miles Stanford

## **Session II: “The Form of Sound Words”**

- ❖ Paul’s epistles are set forth in a Divinely arranged “*form of sound words*” which are designed to provide “*godly edifying*” which results in true spiritual establishment and maturity (II Tim. 1:3-5).

**I Timothy 1:16    II Timothy 1:13,14**

**Romans 1:11,12    Romans 16:25**

- ❖ The Divinely Designed *procedure* for the edification of the believer:
  - ✓ **I Timothy 1:3,4** = *Edifying* is to build an “edifice”—a house/structure—of sound doctrine in the “inner man.”

**Ephesians 3:16    Acts 20:32**

**Galatians 4:19**

**Colossians 3:16    Ephesians 4:12**

- ✓ The *edification structure* is clearly set forth in **Romans 16:25,26** as a three-fold process:
  1. **“My Gospel”** = Our *Foundation*—orientation to *Grace*
  2. **“The Mystery”** = Our *Fullness*—orientation to the *Goal*
  3. **“The Scriptures of the prophets”** = Our *Future*—orientation to *Glory*
  
- ❖ The nine Pauline church epistles are *arranged* to follow this design in a tri-fold pattern of 4+3+2.
  1. Christ and the *Cross*  
(Romans thru Galatians)
  2. Christ and the *Church*  
(Ephesians thru Colossians)
  3. Christ and the *Coming*  
(I & II Thessalonians)
  
- ❖ The final four Pauline epistles (I Tim. Thru Phile.) are known as the *Pastoral Epistles*. They focus on life in the local

church—that is, living the Grace Life together with others in order to do the work of the ministry.

In these *Pastoral Epistles* we have:

Christ and the *Congregation*:  
Our *Fellowship*—orientation  
to *Godliness*.

- ❖ There is an underlying arrangement in Paul’s epistles *encoded* with the order of “*doctrine, reproof and correction*” exactly according to II Timothy 3:16.

CROSS ~ CHURCH ~ COMING

<b>Doctrine:</b>	Rom.	Eph.	I&II Thess.
<b>Reproof:</b>	I&II Cor.	Phil.	[none needed]
<b>Correction:</b>	Gal.	Col.	[none needed]

➤ **Doctrine: Romans**

Focuses on *The Cross*:  
Our *Foundation of Grace* orientation.

The four foundation principles of Grace:

1. *Romans 1-5: Justification by Grace*

Answers question:  
“*How can a man be just with God?*”

- 1-3: *Condemnation*
- 3: *Justification* thru the  
*Redemption in Christ Jesus*
- 4: *Faith* is the issue
- 5: *Security* is our present  
possession

2. *Romans 6-8: Living Under Grace*

Answers question:  
“*How then shall we live?*”

- 6: Consistent with our *Position*  
in Christ Jesus
- 7: Consistent with the *Program*  
of Grace
- 8: Consistent with the *Power*  
of the Spirit

### 3. Romans 9-11: Dispensation of Grace

Answers question:  
 “What happened to Israel?”

- 9: Their *past*: God is not unrighteous to set Israel aside
- 10: Their *present*: Why Israel fell
- 11: Their *future*: God isn’t through with Israel

### 4. Romans 12-16: Walking By Grace

Answers question:  
 “Any practical advice for daily life?”

#### ▪ **Reproof:** I & II Corinthians

Focuses on *Behavior* disloyal to and unworthy of Roman’s Truth

- Disorder in *practice*: I Corinthians 1:10; 3:3; 5:1,2; 6:15,19-20, 14:23, etc.
- Cross the issue: I Corinthians 1:18; 2:1,2; 15:3, 4, II Corinthians 5:14-21
- *Man* centered ~ Charismatics

▪ **Correction:** Galatians

*Belief* that departs from Romans Truth

- Error in *doctrine*: Galatians 1:6-9; 3:1-3; 5:1-4
- Cross the issue: Galatians 1:4; 2:20; 3:13; 4:4,5; 5:11; 6:14
- *Moses centered* ~ Calvinists

➤ **Doctrine: Ephesians**

Focuses on the *Church*:

Our *Fullness* thru orientation to God's *Goal* in forming the *unprophecied* Body of Christ.

- ❖ The accent is on the "*One Body*" of which Christ is the Head (1:23; 3:6; 4:4,16; 5:23,30).

1. *Ephesians 1-3: Our Wealth In Christ*

Our *Calling* ~ Our *Blessing* ~  
Our *Standing* In Christ

2. *Ephesians 4-6: Our Walk With Christ*

*Our Conduct ~ Our Behavior ~  
Our State in the local church*

3. *Ephesians 6: Our Warfare For Christ*

*Our Conflict ~ Our Battle~  
Our Soldiering*

- **Reproof:** Philippians
  - Disunity in *Behavior*: (1:27; 2:1-4; 4:2)
  - Accent on “*One Mind*” (1:27; 2:2,3,5; 4:2,3)
  
- **Correction:** Colossians
  - Error in *Doctrine*: “*not holding the Head*” (2:19; 2:8,16,18,20-23)
  - Accent on *one “Head*” (1:18; 2:10, 19)

➤ **Doctrine: I & II Thessalonians**

Focus on the *Coming* of Christ:  
Our *Future* and its orientation to our  
participation in manifesting the *Glory* of  
God.

- I Thessalonians references the *Rapture* of the Church in each chapter (1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:15-17; 5:23).
- II Thessalonians focuses on the *Second Coming* of Christ, with one of the Bible's most detailed descriptions of the Anti-Christ in chapter 2.
- **Reproof and Correction:** There will be no need for these after the Rapture so no further Church Epistles follow.

➤ **Pastoral Epistles:**

Focus on the local Congregation:  
Our *Fellowship* and orientation to  
*Godliness* (“*God manifest in the flesh*”).

**I Timothy 3:14-16**

*I Timothy:*     *Protect* the Doctrine  
*II Timothy:*   *Preach* the Doctrine  
*Titus:*         *Practice* the Doctrine  
*Philemon:*     *Personalize* the  
                           Doctrine

- ❖ The *Divine Design for Edification* is so embedded into Paul’s epistles that the only way to miss it is to fail to read them altogether!
  - ❖ *Romans* begins with something “*promised before*” (1:2);
    - *Ephesians* begins with something previously “*hidden*” (3:3-9).
  - ❖ *Romans* ends with its one reference to “the mystery” (16:25);
    - *Ephesians* takes up where *Romans* ends and expounds that “*mystery*” (1:9; 3:5).
  - ❖ *Romans* begins with Man and his plight as a sinner (1-3)—our lowest point.
    - *Ephesians* begins with God and His purpose through the saved (1:1-14)—our highest glory.

- ❖ *Romans* explains Paul's "*My Gospel*,"
  - *Ephesians* expounds the "*Mystery*" program.
  
- ❖ *Spiritual Progress* is demonstrated:
  - ✓ *Romans* builds on our *co-death* and *co-resurrection* with Christ.
  - ✓ *Corinthians* and *Galatians* demonstrate our "*walk in the Spirit*."
  - ✓ *Ephesians* has us "*seated in heavenly places*" (ascension).
  - ✓ *Philippians* reminds us our "*conversation is in heaven*."
  - ✓ *Colossians* has us "*hid with God*."
  - ✓ *Thessalonians* sees us "*caught up together with Him*."

Was it by chance? Can we believe  
 That all these varied pages  
 Just "happened" thus to interweave  
 Progressively through the ages?  
 Is it by chance they blend to show  
 A foreseen destination,  
 And all so obviously grow  
 In God-given revelation?

--J.S. Baxter

## **NOW, SOME QUESTIONS:**

1. Who is “our apostle?” Give a verse for your answer.
2. Explain briefly the *reason* God kept the current dispensation of grace a “mystery.” Give Scripture to support your answer.
3. Give an explanation as to why it was *Necessary* for the Body of Christ to be formed. Scripture please.
4. What is the “essence” of Bible believing Christianity?
5. Where can we find the “sound doctrine” that makes our Christian life healthy and vibrant?
6. Explain the Divine Design for Edification set out in Romans 16:25,26.
7. Outline how Paul’s epistles are arranged to follow the order of II Timothy 3:16.
8. What is the main focus of Romans thru Galatians?
9. What is the main focus of Ephesians thru Colossians?
10. Why are there no further “church epistles” following the Thessalonian letters?

STUDY NOTES:

*HOUR SEVEN:*

*A Strategic Grasp of*

## *The Hebrew Epistles*

The last nine books of the New Testament look toward the “*ages to come*” and focus on the final stage of Israel’s prophetic program. They evidence a continued *divinely arranged design* for the edification and equipping of these “last day” saints.

While containing many fascinating features, we have time to discuss only a few.

### **Session I: The Wisdom of God in writing these books *when and how He did.***

A. These books were *pre-authorized* by the Lord Jesus Christ:

**John 14:25,26**

**John 16:12,13**

**Daniel 12:4**

The body of information He promised would come to equip them to handle the last days of Israel's Fifth Course of judgment.

B. The focus is on *The Ages To Come*:

**Hebrews 2:3-5 James 5:7-11 I Peter 2:9  
(Exodus 19:5,6)**

**II Peter 1:10 II Peter 3:1-4  
Jude 17-18, 24-25**

**Revelation 1:1-3, 9, 10**

Emphasis is on the final fulfillment of Israel's earthly program.

C. The "*Middle Wall*" is back up:

**Hebrews 1:1,2 Hebrews 2:1-4 Hebrews 3:1-6**

**James 1:1 I Peter 1:1 I Peter 2:9-13**

**I John 1:1-3 Revelation 2:2, 9, etc.  
Revelation 7:3-8**

D. Israel is in a parallel situation in Acts and the Tribulation (Jer. 30:7, Dan. 9).

- The Remnant is scattered: (Fifth Course of Judgment on Israel)
  - Acts 2:5, 39; Acts 8:1
  - James 1:1, I Peter 1:1; 5:13, Revelation 2-3
  
- The Nation in an Apostate, Rebellious condition:
  - Acts 4:8-12, Mark 7, Matthew 23
  - II Thessalonians 2:4, Daniel 11:30, 31
  
- The Seductive spirit of Anti-Christ operating to seduce Israel so they do not believe Jesus is the Christ:
  - I John 2:18; 4:1-3
  - Daniel 11:31-36, Mark 13:22
  
- The need to explain the Delay in fulfilling the prophetic program:
  - Acts 10:29; 15:9-14; 18:26-28, II Peter 3:9, 15
  - Isaiah 42:14, Hosea 5:15, Luke 12:45

- Facing the coming destruction of the Temple and City of Jerusalem:
  - Matthew 23:38; 24:1,2,15, Luke 21:20-24, John 4:19-24, Acts 6:7,14
  - Matthew 24:15, II Thessalonians 2:4, Daniel 8:9-12
  
- Israel's confederacy with the Gentiles:
  - Acts 4:27
  - Daniel 9:17, Isaiah 8:12, Daniel 11:22,23

## **Session II: Edification Design**

The underlying *arrangement* of these epistles is encoded with the Edification Design for the Kingdom Saints in *the Ages To Come*.

	CROSS	~ CHURCH	~ COMING
<b>Doctrine:</b>	Heb.	II Pet.	Rev.
<b>Reproof:</b>	Jas.	I,II,III John	[none needed]
<b>Correction:</b>	I Pet.	Jude	[none needed]

✓ **Doctrine:** Hebrews

- Focus on The Cross:  
their foundation of *grace* orientation

**Jeremiah 31:2, 31-34    Hosea 14:1,2**

**I Peter 1:9-13**

- Explains the Cross-work for Israel (as Romans does for the Body of Christ):
  - *Transition* from O.T. to N.T.-  
-7:11-28; 8:6-13; 10:5-21
  - *Motivation* to “go on to  
perfection”—6:1-3; 1:4;  
9:11-14; 10:10-14; 13:10-14
- Faith founded on “*better things*”

✓ **Reproof:** James

Focus on faith producing  
“*the fruits of the kingdom*”

**James 1:1-4, 25,26; 2:14-24**  
**(Matt. 21:43)**

✓ **Correction:** I Peter

Focus on hope looking  
beyond the “*fiery trial*”

**I Peter 1:1-3; 2:19-23; 4:13-19; 5:1, 7**

✓ **Doctrine:** II Peter

Focus on the *Church*:  
*guarding* against the seduction of  
Satan’s Lie program.

**II Peter 2:1-3; 3:1-3**

✓ **Reproof:** I, II, III John

Focus on the tests necessary for *detection* of  
error and *discerning* of truth

**I John 1:5-10; 2:18-22; 4:1-3**

✓ **Correction:** Jude

Focus on “*contending for the faith*”

**Jude 3-4, 24-25**

❖ **Doctrine:** Revelation

Focus on *Coming* of Christ  
and His reign in *Glory*.

**Revelation 1:3, 5, 10; 11:15; 21:1-6**

- Follow the “*doctrinal links*” identify the issue in the following epistle:
- **Hebrews 13:20-22** anticipates putting the doctrine into practice in James.
  - **James 5:7-11** anticipates the persecution and suffering of I Peter.
  - **I Peter 5:8,9** anticipates the activity of the Adversary in their suffering of II Peter.
  - **II Peter 3:17** anticipates the advanced issues of resisting the seduction of the Satanic Policy of Evil of John’s epistles.
  - **I John 5:19-21** anticipates the wickedness engulfing the whole world of Jude.

- **Jude 22-25** anticipates the end result of God's judgment and the glory of Christ's reign of Revelation.
- **Revelation 22:18-19** anticipates that there is nothing more to link to—it is all “done.” God has revealed all He needs to about the future and His purpose to glorify Himself through Jesus Christ in it.



## **FUTURE WORK:**

You are now in possession of the basic tools for a lifetime of profitable study of Scripture. We trust that you will make it a personal goal to have a daily intake of God's word and will continue to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. As you continue to learn and grow, be sure not to forget to pray for us as we too press forward!

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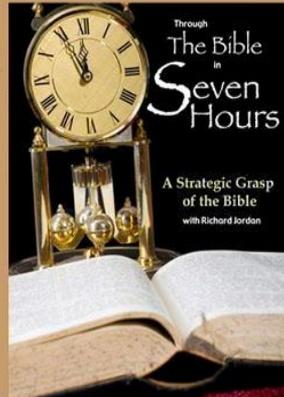
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