

Gloryland's New Christian Series

Doctrinal Studies for New Believers

Lesson Nine

Gloryland's New Christian Series Bible course may be copied freely, but must not be sold except to recover the cost of copying or printing. We only ask that proper credit be given and that you notify us if you are copying or distributing the course or making links to it on the Internet. Please let us know if you translate the course into another language, or if you wish to have it translated into another language. © Copyright 1994 Linton M. Smith Jr.

Introduction

This is a study of *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, Lesson #9 in the *New Christian Series*.

Our key verse is:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." — II Timothy 2:15

The "word of truth" we are to "rightly divide" is the written word of God, the Holy Bible (cf. John 17:17). In order to do this we must have a thorough understanding of what is in the word of God. This comes first of all by READING the word of God regularly. It is good to follow a regular daily plan, and complete a certain number of chapters or pages every day. This will help us become familiar with the stories and characters in the Bible, and we will get an understanding of God's dealings with man throughout history.

It is equally important to set aside time for the careful STUDY of the word of God. There is a difference between reading and study. One way to study the Bible is to select a particular subject or certain passage of scripture and try to learn everything possible about it by studying related verses. These verses can be found using study helps like the cross references in our Bibles, a Bible concordance, a topical Bible, etc. Comparing these related verses should give us a clear idea of what the Bible teaches about that subject or verse.

Paul writes to the Corinthian Church:

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." — 1 Corinthians 2:12,13

The "*spiritual things*" Paul is talking about is not "*the **words** which man's wisdom teacheth.*" Rather it is the **words** "*which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*" In other words, we teach by comparing scripture with scripture. That is the only way to learn what the Bible *really* teaches, and that is the method we have used throughout this course. For example, in our study of the believer's promised resurrection body, we made a list of all the scriptures we could find about that subject. Then, we examined each verse closely, noting the context. Then we interpreted the more obscure verses in the light of the clearly understandable ones. Thus we were able to determine what the Bible teaches about our future resurrection body.

The faithful men of Berea, to whom Paul preached (Acts 17:10,11), should be an example to all believers who study the word of God with an earnest desire for the truth.

These men were commended because,

*"[T]hey received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures** daily, whether those things were so."*

— Acts 17:11

Always remember that the FINAL AUTHORITY for our faith is *the scriptures themselves*, and the only *absolutely reliable* commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. Learn to study the word of God by comparing scripture with scripture, and be careful to bathe your study in prayer.

As we undertake a sincere, in-depth study of the scriptures, we should be mindful that there are dangers. It is *interesting* to study about Bible history and to learn new doctrines, but that alone is not our goal. Instead, each believer should do all he can to DISCOVER the will of God for his life. Furthermore, he should strive to APPLY the things he learns to his daily life.

We read in the wisdom of the Proverbs:

*"A **false balance** is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight." — Proverbs 11:1*

We must strive for *balance* in our Christian life.

For example:

- What we learn from the Bible about prayer, we should put into practice as we pray.

- What we learn about holiness should help us live clean, holy lives that are unspotted by the world.
- What we learn about soul winning should be used to win others to Christ. (Remember the words of Christ: "*freely ye have received, freely give*" (Matthew 10:8).

Let's not spend so much time *studying*, that we hinder the Holy Spirit from molding our lives according to the truths we have learned.

James says it very well:

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." — James 1:22-24

James likens the Bible to a *looking glass* (a mirror). When we read the word of God, we see ourselves as God sees us— the Bible tells us about ourselves. The Holy Spirit will bear witness to the words of scripture, and HE, who moved holy men of God to speak, will drive its words home to our hearts and minds. But WE must decide if we will believe and obey the scriptures, or reject them in unbelief. WE must decide if we will follow God or pursue our own interests. Millions of Christians around the world take great pleasure in studying the Holy Bible. However, we must maintain a balance between studying the Bible and living a life that reflects the truths we have learned.

Andrew Murray said much the same thing:

"You have Christians who devote themselves most diligently to the study of God's word, who are delighted with every new truth they discover, or every new light in which an old truth is set before them, and who yet scarce ever meet the one Divine Word, who speaks in power within them."

J. Sidlow Baxter also touched on this:

"In our study of the Bible, also, we need to guard against becoming so engrossed in the fascination of the *subject* that we lose sight of the *object*. As we have said, in these studies we want to get hold of the big, broad meanings in the wonderful old Book: but unless the meanings get hold of *us* our study will have failed of its vital objective. Our Lord Jesus Himself has taught us that HE is the focal theme of all the Scriptures; and everywhere, therefore, we want to see beyond the **written word**, to Him who is the **living Word**."

Beware Of Extremes

So we see that even a good thing like studying the Bible can be taken to the extreme. As a matter of fact, there are two potential pitfalls for the student of the word of God that should be mentioned.

I. The First Is Intellectual Christianity.

In contrast to the noble Bereans (already mentioned), is another group to whom Paul preached, who "*spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing*" (Acts 17:21). Their *motive* for studying was not to discover the will of God, or how to live a life more pleasing to God. *Their* motive was to show how well-read they were, and what great *authorities* they were on the Bible and all literature.

These Christians tend to overemphasize the value of *knowledge* to the neglect of *love*. They usually do little more than *discuss* doctrine, forgetting to *live* the doctrines they believe. Often they develop some *pet doctrine* that becomes their *hobbyhorse*. This is what we might call *intellectual Christianity*— all knowledge and no love.

We never want to become such *bookworms* that we do nothing but sit at home all the time, studying the Bible. Paul's admonition to the Corinthian church is still true.

"Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."

— I Corinthians 8:1

Soulwinning, daily prayer, and clean holy living— each of these endeavors is just as important as study. But any one of them, pursued to the neglect of the others, will create a FALSE BALANCE. If you know the Bible well, perhaps the Lord will give you an opportunity to teach the Bible to others in a Sunday school class or home Bible study, even as Paul instructed Timothy to do.

*"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same **commit thou to faithful men**, who shall be able to teach others also."* — II Timothy 2:2

When the Holy Spirit teaches us the Bible, He does not intend for us to become a puffed up *know-it-all*. He wants us to actively minister to others, and to *apply* what we have *learned* from the word of God to our daily lives as the good Samaritan did.

"And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead."

*And by chance there came down **a certain priest** that way: and when he **saw him**, he passed by on the other side.*

*And likewise **a Levite**, when he was at the place, came and **looked on him**, and passed by on the other side.*

*But **a certain Samaritan**, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, **he had compassion on him**,*

And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was a neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?

*And he said, He that showed **mercy** on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." — Luke 10:30-37*

The priest "SAW" the man, and the Levite "LOOKED ON HIM," but neither of them took the time to HELP him. These *religious* men were absorbed in conducting ceremonies, spending time in prayer and teaching the scriptures, but they had no *compassion* on this poor man, nor did they show him *mercy*. When no one was watching, they failed the test of real Christianity. Sometimes we, too, get so caught up in being *religious* that we forget to have compassion. Being *religious* costs us nothing, but being the servant of the Lord will cost us everything. It means that we put the needs of others before our own needs, even as Christ did.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

— Matthew 20:28

Have you ever felt led of the Lord to witness to some soul the Lord pointed out to you, only to think you were too busy to stop RIGHT THEN and show compassion? I am sure each of us has done this very thing at one time or another, and have quenched the Spirit of God. We should be careful to take advantage of every opportunity to minister to those about us as their needs are made known to us by the Lord.

As the Bible says,

"Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.

Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and tomorrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee." — Proverbs 3:27-28

Every sincere believer wants to delve into the deeper things of God, and get hold of the meat of the word of God— that's normal. But we must be mindful of the warning given in the book of Hebrews.

*"Be not **carried about** with **divers and strange doctrines**. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been **occupied** therein." — Hebrews 13:9*

We know the word of God gives us a balanced diet for our spiritual growth. It provides *milk* (simple things), and it provides *strong meat* (deep things— Hebrews 5:12-14).

The main theme of Hebrews is "*something better*"— the New Testament in contrast to the Old Testament. Hebrews 13 contains a warning that has to do with doctrine, especially regarding "*meats*" (those things allowed or forbidden under the Jewish law). They are warned not to be "*carried about*" by these relatively unimportant things (*meats*— the ceremonial things— the *letter* of the law), but to let their hearts be established with *grace* (spiritual things— the *spirit* of the law). It is not only a warning about *false doctrines*, but also about *unusual doctrines* of the word of God— it is not profitable to become "*occupied*" with those things. Through diligent study we *can* learn about the deep things of God, but we must guard against developing such a *fascination* for study that we neglect witnessing, ministering to others, worshipping, and praising God as we should. (It is even possible to spend so much time in the word of God that we neglect to spend time with God himself!) The most important thing in our Christian life is our relationship with our heavenly Father. The Lord does not look at the outward appearance— He looks at the inward heart motives (1 Samuel 16:7). **Always remember it is our hearts that are important!** That will be the key factor at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. Time spent studying the word of God is always time well spent, and we should try to learn all we can. But we must be careful not to become so occupied with dispensationalism, prophecy, the Great Tribulation, or the Antichrist, etc. that we forget to witness and minister to others.

- We should seek **charity first, then knowledge**.

Keep in mind that, "*Knowledge puffeth up, but **charity** edifieth*" (1 Corinthians 8:1). To be an expert on the Bible, but not to have *charity* (love in action), is to miss the whole purpose of studying the Scriptures. In 1 Corinthians there is a whole chapter about this kind of love (1 Corinthians 13) which we need to read again and again, lest we forget the importance of *charity*. We must feed our *minds* with the strong meat of the word of God, but our *hearts* need to be "*established with grace*" (Hebrews 13:9).

In his first epistle to the young Timothy, Paul writes about some believers who had *gotten off the track* when they left off *charity* and *faith* in their desire to be teachers. (That is what happens to those who put an *overemphasis* on study.) These "*teachers*" Paul wrote about had become legalistic. "*Desiring to be teachers of the law,*" they wanted to be recognized and followed as teachers. They wanted to show how much they knew, but were really only showing how little they knew (1 Corinthians 8:2). Knowledge is a wonderful thing, but it only generates *pride* when that wonderful ingredient *charity* is missing.

*"Now the end of the commandment is **charity** out of a **pure heart**, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:*

From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." — 1 Timothy 1:5-7

Notice that when Paul speaks of his salvation, he recalls the grace and the love of God he experienced.

"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." — 1 Timothy 1:14

Our heart's desire should be to develop such a deep personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ that His love will be manifested toward others in our daily lives. We must have a love for God, a love for God's people, and a love for lost souls!

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." — John 13:35

"[T]he love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." — Romans 5:5

"But if any man love God, the same is known of him."

— 1 Corinthians 8:3

The Second Is Emotional Christianity.

The second extreme is *emotional Christianity*, which overemphasizes LOVE to the neglect of KNOWLEDGE. Folks in this group usually have little *systematic* understanding of doctrine since they do not *rightly divide the word*. Therefore, they develop a definite imbalance in their Christian lives. Having little understanding of the *mind of God* from their study of the scriptures, they know little about the *heart of God* (His will). Since they do not walk in the Spirit, they walk in the flesh (Romans 8:1-4; Galatians 5:16) and become worldly Christians.

The Bible warns us:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." — I John 2:15-17

These worldly believers' spiritual walk is revealed by their dress and their music. For example, so-called "*gospel rock*" is popularly approved by this crowd. What is *gospel rock*? This is like saying there is a holy devil—the two words just do not go together. Gospel rock is nothing more than *secular* rock music with enough *gospel* words in the lyrics to give it a religious sound. It is still the same satanic music written and played by today's popular God-rejecting, dope dealing, reprobate musicians. The only difference is the words, and even those usually present worldly thoughts and ambitions. Unfortunately, there are many worldly Christians (Revelation 3:14-19) who love that kind of *slop*, so they keep trying to mix the things of Satan's world system with the things of God.

Because these believers exhibit *too much love and too little knowledge*, they teach heresies from the Bible. They often take scriptures out of context, and take doctrine from other dispensations to apply it to New Testament Christians. That is what happened in the Corinthian church, and that was much of the problem addressed in the book of Hebrews. Remember, love must be *tempered* with knowledge. However, this group places little emphasis on knowledge, except their *pet* doctrines. While we know that God is love, He still seems to think doctrine is quite important also.

Notice what the Bible says:

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."

— I Timothy 5:17

And again Paul tells Timothy:

"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine;"

— I Timothy 4:13,16

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;" — II Timothy 4:3

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:"

— Titus 2:1

The Bible puts great emphasis upon the study and teaching of *doctrine*, properly balanced with *the love of God*. That is what the Lord wants us to do.

LET'S REVIEW

Introduction (pp. 1-3)

1. According to II Timothy 2:15, the *written* word of God is called the _____.
2. In this same verse, the Christian is told to _____ so he can show himself approved of God.
3. A Christian must do this to understand the Bible. _____.
4. The only way to learn what the Bible really teaches is to compare scripture with _____.
5. The _____ are the final authority for a Christian.
6. By studying the scriptures a believer can discover _____ for his life.
7. James 1:22 teaches us not only to STUDY the word of God, but to _____ what we learn.

Beware of Extremes (pp. 4-9)

8. Intellectual Christians tend to overemphasize the value of _____ to the neglect of _____.
9. The overemphasis of any one aspect of Christianity creates a _____.
10. We learn from the story of the Good Samaritan, that *religious* people often get so caught up in their *religious duties* that they forget to show _____ and _____.

11. Christians must be careful to guard against developing such a _____ for study that they neglect witnessing, ministering to others, worshipping and praising God as they should.
12. We should seek _____ *first*, then knowledge.
13. While in our minds we may desire the strong meat of God's word, still, our hearts require _____.
14. Knowledge only generates _____ when that wonderful ingredient _____ is missing.
15. _____ Christianity is the opposite of intellectual Christianity.
16. It overemphasizes _____ to the neglect of knowledge.
17. Because they do not _____ the word of God, they know little of the mind of God
18. Having little understanding of the will of God, they cannot walk in the _____.
19. Walking in the flesh, they become _____ Christians.
20. Having embraced the world's system in the name of _____ they begin to teach heresies from the Bible.
21. We know that *God is love*, but He is also *the Truth* and He desires that we establish a proper _____ between that divine love, and the study and teaching of doctrine.

Understanding divisions

We read in our King James Bible, how the Psalmist honors the Lord saying,

"[I] love thy commandments above gold." — Psalm 119:127

We should certainly love God's commandments the way David did, and one of the most important commandments in the Bible for a Christian is found in Paul's letter to Timothy.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." — II Timothy 2:15

Disobedience to that command is the cause of almost all doctrinal strife among believers today. The words *"rightly dividing"* are the key to understanding the word of God. Misunderstanding, confusion and heresy result when we fail to note proper divisions in God's dealings with man. Not every verse in the Bible can be applied *doctrinally* to the born again Christian in the Church Age. Only by rightly dividing the scriptures can we know which parts apply to believers today. We will begin by looking at three of the most apparent divisions in the Old Testament.

1. Before the law

2. Under the law

3. After the law

- For example, we read in Genesis 20:12 that Abraham married Sarah with the Lord's blessing (even though they had the same father). Yet we read in Leviticus 18:6 that an Israelite *under the law* is forbidden to marry close kin.
- For another example, we read in Genesis 9:3 that Noah could eat anything he desired, while in Leviticus 11 the Lord instructed the Israelites not to eat pork or shellfish. Then in the New Testament, Paul teaches that the believer is free to eat "*every creature*" (I Timothy 4:1-5).

God told Noah:

"Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." — Genesis 9:3

He also told Moses and the Jews:

"And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them,

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth.

Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.

Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you."

— *Leviticus 11:1-4*

But then He told Paul:

"[E]very creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:" — I Timothy 4:4

Here we have three commandments from God regarding eating. Which one should *we obey today*? Looking at these examples, it is evident that either the Bible contradicts itself, or God has changed His manner of dealing with man regarding these things. Because *we know* the scriptures *are not* contradictory, it is clear that something has changed. While God never changes, regarding His person or attributes, He does change His *manner* of dealing with people and nations in different dispensations. If we do not obey God's command to "*rightly divide*" the word, we are confronted with a host of scriptures that appear to contradict one another. To understand what is happening, we must note the beginning and end of each division.

- It is easy to see that since the law was not given until Moses received it from the Lord, Noah did not and could not follow the instructions *not* to eat certain meats.
- However, the law was very much in force for the Jews after Moses led the nation of Israel out of Egypt.
- But now, God has given different instructions to the New Testament Church under grace. Now we are saved by grace through faith, and the New Testament is established in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today there are some (especially a sect called *Seventh-Day Adventists*) who teach that New Testament Christians are still required to keep the Old Testament law. Furthermore, they say that many different kinds of meats are still forbidden, as the law says in Leviticus. Not understanding the proper divisions in the Bible, these false teachers are living in direct opposition to the clear instruction of the New Testament. As we read in 1 Timothy 4:4, the New Testament says that **AFTER THE DEATH OF CHRIST**, we CAN eat those meats formerly forbidden by the law, as long as we give thanks unto the Lord for them.

This is but one example of "*rightly dividing the word of God.*" There are many other examples like this throughout the Bible. For instance, in Exodus 20:8-11, God tells those Jews (under the law), "*Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*" Furthermore, He tells them not to do any kind of work on the Sabbath day (Saturday, the 7th day of the week). Yet, when we look at the New Testament scriptures, we find something completely different being taught about the Sabbath and other holy days.

Paul says:

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:"

— *Colossians 2:16*

Another passage in the book of Romans says:

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?..."

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." — Romans 14:4-7

Of course, it is true that Old Testament believers were UNDER THE LAW and therefore forbidden to eat certain foods, or to do any work on the *Sabbath Day*. But in the New Testament, where believers are UNDER GRACE, no day is distinguished from another and believers are free to observe these days, or not to observe them, as they wish. It is clear, then, that there has been a change in God's dealings with man regarding *holy* days after the death of Christ. The only way to note and understand such changes is by rightly dividing the word.

Certainly, most Christians have been taught to make at least the one division that distinguishes the Old Testament from the New Testament. That division marks the *end* of God's dealing with man under the Law (before Christ's death), and the *beginning* of God's dealing with man by grace after the Lord's death. However, as we have seen, there are several other divisions in the Old Testament, and still more divisions in the New Testament. For the remainder of this lesson, we are going to study some things in the word of God that can only be properly understood and applied when the word of God is rightly divided.

Understanding Divisions (pp. 15-19)

1. The real **key** to understanding the word of God is _____ .
2. List the three most apparent divisions of the Old Testament.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
3. If we do not rightly divide our Bible there will be a host of scriptures that appear to _____ one another.

Three classes of people

The first division essential to our study of the Bible, deals with three classes of people. Paul mentions all three of them in his first letter to the Church at Corinth.

*"Give none offence, neither to **the Jews**, nor to **the Gentiles**, nor to **the church of God:**" — I Corinthians 10:32*

The three classes of people mentioned are:

- The Jews
- The Gentiles
- The Church of God

Although the Bible is written to these three classes of people, the greatest part of it is addressed to the Jews (Israel) as a nation. Other parts are only for Gentiles and others for the Church. We will see from the Bible what God has to say about each of these people, and learn their distinguishing characteristics.

I quote at length from Dr. C.I. Scofield's book *Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth*.

I. The Jews.

"Whoever reads the Bible with any attention cannot fail to perceive that more than half of the contents relate to one nation— the Israelites. He perceives, too, that they have a very distinct place in the dealings and counsels of God. Separated from the mass of mankind, they are taken into covenant with Jehovah, who gives them specific promises not given to any other nation. Their history alone is told in Old Testament narrative and prophecy, other nations being mentioned only as they touch the Jew. It appears, also, that all the communications of Jehovah to Israel as a nation relates to the earth. If faithful and obedient, they are promised earthly greatness, riches and power; if unfaithful and disobedient, they are to be scattered *'among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other'* (Deuteronomy 28:64). Even the promise of the Messiah is of blessing to *'all the families of the Earth.'*"

In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel was given specific promises and covenants. It is evident that they have not yet received ALL of them; but we know they WILL receive them in full one day, because God does not lie (Numbers 23:19). They will not receive them now, during the Church Age, but later when the Lord returns to establish His earthly kingdom. Some Bible teachers claim that the Church has replaced the Jew, and that the Church will now receive the promises made to the Jew. They believe that God has finished dealing with the nation of Israel, but that is simply not true. The Bible tells us in Romans 11:25-26 that such teachers are ignorant and conceited. While God has *temporarily* set them aside, He will resume His dealings with Israel *as a nation, after* the body of Christ is taken to Heaven in the rapture.

*"I say then, **Hath God cast away his people? God forbid.** For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*

I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that **blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.***

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:"

— *Romans 11:1,11,24-26*

II. The Church Of God.

"Continuing his researches, the student finds large mention in scripture of another body, which is called the Church. This body also has a peculiar relation to God, and, like Israel, has received from Him specific promises. But the similarity ends there, and the most striking contrast begins. Instead of being formed of the natural descendants of Abraham alone, it is a body in which the distinction of Jew and Gentile is lost. Instead of the relation being one of mere covenant, it is one of birth. Instead of obedience bringing the reward of earthly greatness and wealth, the Church is taught to be content with food and raiment, and to expect persecution and hatred, and it is perceived that just as distinctly as Israel stands connected with temporal and earthly things, so distinctly does the Church stand connected with spiritual and heavenly things.

In the appointments for worship we still find contrast. Israel could worship in but one place, and at a distance from God— only approaching Him through a priest. The Church worships wherever two or three are gathered, has boldness to enter into the holiest, and is composed of priests.

Compare the instructions found in the following references:

- Leviticus 17:8,9 with Matthew 18:2
- Luke 1:10 with Hebrews 10:19,20
- Numbers 3:10 with I Peter 2:5

In the predictions concerning the future of Israel and the Church, the distinction is still more startling. The Church will be taken away from the earth entirely, but restored Israel is yet to have her greatest earthly splendor and power.

Comparing, then, what is said in scripture concerning Israel and the Church, he finds that in origin, calling, promise, worship, principles of conduct, and future destiny— all is contrast.

Instead of pursuing her appointed path of separation from the world and following the Lord in her heavenly calling, she (the Church) has used Jewish scriptures to justify herself in lowering her purpose to the civilization of the world, the acquisition of wealth, the use of imposing ritual, the erection of magnificent churches, the invocation of God's blessing upon the conflicts of armies, and the division of an equal brotherhood into '*clergy*' and '*laity*.'"

We may also note that, while *Israel is a physical body* of men and women who compose a nation, *the Church is a spiritual body* of the souls of men and women who make up the bride of Christ. The Church has a *spiritual* priesthood (I Peter 2:5,9), while Israel had a *physical* Levitical priesthood. They are not the same.

III. The Gentiles.

Another class of people mentioned in the Bible is the *Gentiles* (referred to as "*dogs*" in the scriptures — Mark 7:28, 29). They are rarely mentioned, except in distinction to the Church or the Jew. In the New Testament, *a Gentile is one who is neither a Jew nor a Christian* (Ephesians 2:11,12; 4:17,18). Of course, when a Gentile gets saved, he is no longer considered a Gentile in God's eyes, but a Christian, and part of the body of Christ, the Church. Likewise, *a Jew in this dispensation is an unsaved man who is born of the nation of Israel, and is not a Gentile*. So, when a Jew gets saved (by believing the gospel), he is no longer considered a Jew in God's eyes: he is a Christian also. In Christ, all racial distinctions are lost.

Determining Doctrinal Applications

We must realize the bearing these three different classes of people have on our understanding of the scriptures. When studying the Bible, we must be careful to note who is speaking, and to whom. Then, we can determine, by the context, whether the verse is only *for the Jews*, only *for the Gentiles*, *for lost people in general*, or *for the body of Christ (the Church)*. Many times a verse will apply to all three classes.

For example:

"Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it." — Isaiah 34:1

This verse clearly gives us the context of those following it. They are applicable to the Jews, the Gentiles *and* the Church of God— they are for everyone in the whole world, everywhere. But how can we know what scriptures specifically apply to the born again believer today, doctrinally? Of course, as we have said before, the answer lies in marking the proper divisions in scripture.

- The writings of Paul are the *plumb-line* for the Christian in the Church Age. That is, they are the standard by which all other doctrinal truth must be compared to determine its accuracy and application for believers today.

If the teachings of other scripture agree with Paul's teachings, they can be applied to the believer in the Church Age. If not, they must apply to someone else in a time when God is dealing with another group, and must not be taught nor applied as doctrine for *today*.

See what the apostle Paul says:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." — I Timothy 3:16

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition..." — I Corinthians 10:11

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were for our learning." — Romans 15:4

- It is true that *"All scripture... is profitable"* for believers **today** *"for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."*
- But while *"all scripture is profitable for **doctrine**"* not all doctrine is profitable for believers **today** .

However, we can use *any* scripture in the Bible for *doctrine today* as long as it does not contradict doctrine taught in Paul's epistles to the Church.

Paul instructs the Church:

*"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to **my gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to **the revelation of the mystery**, which was kept secret since the world began," — Romans 16:25*

So, all *doctrine for the Church*, must be in harmony with the doctrine Paul preached, "*according to the revelation of the mystery*" of the body of Christ.

Of course, that means we can also apply scripture from the Old Testament, the book of Acts, the four Gospels and other books of the Bible to our life *today* as long as it corresponds with the *Pauline revelation for the Church*. *That is the real test.*

Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles

In the book of Acts, we see how the Apostle Paul was saved and called to preach, and that while his own heart's desire was to see Israel saved, God gave him a *new* ministry to the Gentiles.

*"And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth **I will go unto the Gentiles.**" — Acts 18:8*

In his epistle to the Galatians, Paul says:

"But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)" — Galatians 2:7,8

In this verse, "*the uncircumcision*" means the Gentiles, while "*the circumcision*" means the Jews.

- Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles.

*"For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as **I am the apostle of the Gentiles**, I magnify mine office:" — Romans 11:13*

You will notice that most of *Paul's* epistles are addressed to *the Church* (all *born again* believers since Acts 2). The question may arise, "*Then what about all the other scriptures— are they no longer of use to us?*" Of course they are! But, during the "*times of the Gentiles*," believers are to follow the **doctrine** of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (in distinction from the Jews). And Paul himself tells us,

*"Be ye followers of **me**, even as I also am of Christ."*

— I Corinthians 11:1

Paul was specially chosen by the Lord to reveal a new doctrine previously *hidden* from believers. The Lord showed Paul that the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, could be saved by the gospel of salvation by faith alone.

"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

*How that by revelation he made known unto me **the mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words,*

Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

*Which **in other ages was not made known** unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;*

That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

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

*And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, **which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God**, who created all things by Jesus Christ:"* —

Ephesians 3:1-9

When he wrote to the Romans, Paul called it "my gospel," and a "mystery."

*"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to **my gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of **the mystery**, which was **kept secret since the world began**,"* — Romans 16:25

It was certainly a surprise to all of the apostles who gathered together for this official meeting to determine its validity.

"And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." — Acts 14:27

- As we study the scriptures, we can see plainly that Paul's epistles are written to **the Gentiles** . Right up through the book of Philemon, Paul is giving the Church instruction in doctrine.
- Following Philemon is the epistle to the **Hebrews**,
- And after Hebrews is the book of James, written "to **the twelve tribes**, which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1).

If there seem to be "contradictions" between the books written to the Jews and Paul's epistles to the Church, then the Bible division can be drawn between Philemon and Hebrews.

- Note that **most** of the Bible is written to **Israel** !

Now, that does not mean there is no **spiritual** truth found there that can be applied to the Christian today. But, just as a Christian is not to take the *Jewish* dietary laws recorded in the book of Leviticus as **doctrine** , neither is he to look to any *Jewish* epistles for **doctrine** .

The first thing to be considered when studying a verse of scripture is its doctrinal content. That is the only way to make proper application of scripture. People get caught up in false teaching when they try to apply passages of scripture to themselves, which are not intended for them *doctrinally*. (Every false teacher can quote *some* scripture to justify his position.) We read in Matthew 4 that even the devil quoted scripture, when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness. Of course, the Devil took scripture out of context. The temptation before Jesus was to apply the *right* scripture at the *wrong* time. To do so would have been a serious offense to God.

- Today, all heresies come from attempts to apply a scriptural truth given for one of the three specific classes of people at a specific time, to another of the three classes of people at the another time.

Three Classes of People (pp. 21-30)

1. List the three classes of people mentioned in I Corinthians 10:32.
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
2. Most the Bible is written to the _____ .
3. God has temporarily set aside the nation of _____ but will resume his dealings with them after the _____ of the Church.
4. Israel is a _____ body of men and women who compose a nation, while the Church is a _____ body of the souls of men and women who make up the bride of Christ.
5. In the New Testament a _____ is a person who is neither a Jew or a Christian.
6. When studying the Bible we must determine _____ is speaking and to whom.
7. Paul's writings are the standard by which all _____ truth must be compared to determine its application for the believer today.
8. "**All** scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for _____ , for _____ , for _____ , for _____ in righteousness." — II Timothy 3:16
9. But NOT ALL scripture is *profitable* for believers _____ .
10. All doctrine for the _____ must be in harmony with the doctrine Paul preached.
11. Paul (the apostle to the _____) said, "*Be ye followers of _____ , even as I also am of Christ.*" — I Corinthians 11:1.
12. All _____ come from attempts to apply scriptural truth given for one of the three specific classes of people at a specific time, to another of the three classes of people at another time.

three applications of scripture

Here is the second thing we must note in rightly dividing the scriptures:

- Every verse of scripture in the Bible has **three** applications.

1. The **historical** application.

2. The **doctrinal** application.
3. The **spiritual** or devotional application.

Now, we will take a closer look at these three applications so we will be able to identify them.

I. The Historical Application.

When I say "*historical application*," I mean that the verse is talking about something that actually happened in history (or will happen in the future). For example, we read about the birth of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the destruction of Jerusalem, etc. All of those things happened sometime in the past. That is the historical application of the verse.

II. The Doctrinal Application.

The doctrinal application is the most important, because it reveals the exact meaning. Every verse in the Bible is aimed at a specific person or group of persons living in a certain time period. We must know the true doctrinal application of a verse in order to interpret it correctly. In order to determine the correct doctrinal application of a verse we must answer the following questions:

1. Is the verse aimed at the Jews, the Gentiles or the Church?
2. Is the verse speaking to someone living *before Calvary* or *after Calvary*, before or after the rapture, etc.?

If we follow these simple guidelines we can be confident that we are making the proper doctrinal application of scripture.

III. The Spiritual Application.

Another important application of scripture is its spiritual (or devotional) application— that is the practical application of the passage to the life and conduct of the believer. God uses His word in this way to speak to us personally concerning His will for our lives. We must always remember that every verse in the Bible can be used "*for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*" The spiritual application of *any* verse can be made *today*, regardless of its doctrinal application.

Remember what Paul wrote:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." — II Timothy 3:16

Here are four examples:

1. Paul used several verses from the Old Testament to instruct Church Age saints. These Old Testament verses had nothing to do with the Church doctrinally.

In his letter to the Church at Corinth, Paul wrote:

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." — II Corinthians 6:16

Paul quoted Leviticus 26:12 (Old Testament), and applied it to New Testament Christians. Studying that verse in its context, we find it is a reference to the Jew entering the *Millennium*. But Paul is not making a *doctrinal* application, as is made in Leviticus, nor is he using the *historical* application, also found there. No, Paul is making a practical, *spiritual* application of the passage to Christians in this Church Age. That is perfectly acceptable, because it doesn't contradict anything that the Lord revealed to Paul.

2. Another example is found in Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

"As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack." — II Corinthians 8:15

The context of II Corinthians is *giving* (tithing). Notice that in verses 12, 13, and 14, Paul is talking about giving *money* in the Church Age. But the Old Testament verse he quotes (Exodus 16:18) is talking about the Jews going out and gathering up the *manna* that God fed them in the wilderness. So he is making a practical, spiritual application of a verse from the Book of Exodus to believers today.

3. One more example is found in Acts 13.

Paul writes:

"Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;

Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." — Acts 13:40,41

Preaching to the men in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia, Paul quoted the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk (Habakkuk 1:5). We see that, in its context, the original statement is a reference to the invasion of the Chaldeans. Doctrinally, that had nothing to do with those to whom Paul was speaking in Acts 13; but that is an example of how we can make spiritual application of scripture to ourselves, even when it has nothing to do with us *doctrinally*. Proper *spiritual* application of every verse in the Bible *can* be made to the Church Age, but the *doctrinal* application of every verse *cannot* be made to the Church today.

Remember, all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for:

- Doctrine,
- Reproof, correction and
- Instruction in righteousness.

4. Now, let's compare Hosea 11:1 with Matthew 2:15, and make all three applications to one verse.

Matthew says:

"And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son."

— Matthew 2:15

Matthew is referring to Christ. Joseph and Mary took Jesus down to Egypt to escape Herod, and then they came back *"out of Egypt."* Matthew is saying that the Old Testament prophet, Hosea, spoke of this when he said, *"out of Egypt have I called my son."*

Now, turn back to the book of Hosea:

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." — Hosea 11:1

In Hosea, *"my son"* is a reference to the nation of Israel. We know this, because we read in Exodus 4:22 that God had already used this term *"my son"* in speaking of them. Hosea was speaking of the past deliverance of Israel out of Egypt under Moses.

- Now, looking at all these together, we see in Hosea 11:1 a perfect example of the three applications of scripture from one verse.
- The **historical** application of that verse and the one in Hosea, is Israel coming out of Egypt.
- The **doctrinal** application of Hosea 11:1 is a future reference to Jesus Christ coming out of Egypt. We know that from reading Matthew 2:15.
- The **spiritual** (practical) application can be made to the believer in the Church Age. We could liken *"my son"* to the Christian who has become a son of God (John 1:12; Galatians 4:5,6), and is called out of *"Egypt"* (the world system and worldliness— Egypt is a type of the world).

Seeing these *three applications* of Hosea 11:1, you can understand how important the proper application of scripture is in determining Bible doctrine for us today.

Three Application Of Scripture (pp. 33-37)

1. List the three applications of scriptures.

- a. _____ b. _____
c. _____ or _____.

2. The first application is that the verse is talking about something that actually happened in _____.
3. The second application reveals the exact _____.
4. The third is the _____ application of the passage in the life and conduct of the believer.
5. Paul often used historical references from the Old Testament to make _____ application to those he was addressing.

dispensations

This third guide for making proper divisions in scripture is *dispensations*.

On page 5 of the Scofield Reference Bible, we find a good definition of the word "dispensation":

"A dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God."

Dr. Peter Ruckman adds:

The Greek word for *dispensation* is 'oikonomia' (oikonomia)." It "...does not mean a 'period of time' at all; it means 'the laws by which a household is operated, or the way the master of a house arranges his household.' Our word 'ecumenical' comes from this word. Still, this word has been used, ever since 1700, to mean 'a period of time.' This, of course, is due to the fact that as the Master of the house (Hebrews 3:2; Ephesians 2:19), God, sets up different ways of running His 'family' at different times, according to His own wisdom. TIME BRACKETS show up where alterations in method and protocol take place. Clarence Larkin's *Dispensational Truth* is the real granddaddy of all the work done since 1929. It is a superb, scriptural work; but, in constructing the charts, the time element is very conspicuous; it has to be. The law was given at a certain time, in a certain place. Christ died on the cross at a certain time, in a certain place, etc. Larkin's charts are well done; they are excellently drawn, and everything in them, that is true, scripturally, can be found in ANY edition of a *King James Bible*. No knowledge of Greek or Hebrew is necessary to understand one '*dispensational teaching*' in the entire book of over four hundred regular pages. Before Larkin (Scofield, 1909, for example), a number of dispensations were listed and commented on with several hundred scriptural cross references (see p. 6).

- Dr. C.I. Scofield lists *seven dispensations* in his notes. We will divide it just a little further, and show *ten dispensations*.

Now, anyone can pick up a King James Bible and see immediately that there are at least two different dispensations: the Old Testament and the New Testament. But with more study, we see that there are

other divisions as well. For example, when we look more closely, we see that the Old Testament and the New Testament each have *five dispensational divisions*.

I quote from Dr. C.I. Scofield's excellent booklet *Rightly Dividing the Word*.

"The scriptures divide time (by which is meant the entire period from the creation of Adam to the 'new heaven and new earth' of Revelation 21:1) into seven unequal periods, usually called 'Dispensations' (Ephesians 3:2), although these periods are also called 'ages' (Ephesians 2:7) and 'days'— as 'day of the Lord,' etc.

These periods are marked off in scripture by some change in God's method of dealing with mankind, or a portion of mankind, in respect of the two questions: of SIN, and of MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY. Each of the dispensations may be regarded as a new test of the natural man, and each ends in judgment— marking his utter failure in every dispensation."

The purpose of this lesson is to merely survey the main elements by which right divisions can be made in our Bible. Now, here are the ten dispensations as they are found in the King James Bible.

I. **The Dispensation Of Innocence.**

(Sometimes called *The Edenic Dispensation*)

"Man Innocent— This dispensation extends from the creation of Adam, Genesis 2:7, to the expulsion from Eden. Adam, created innocent, and ignorant of good and evil, was placed in the garden of Eden with his wife, Eve, and put under responsibility to abstain from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Dispensation of Innocence resulted in the first failure of man, and in its far-reaching effects, the most disastrous. It closed in judgment; *'So he drove out the man.'* See: Genesis 1:26; 2:16,17; 3:6; and 3:22-24."

II. **The Dispensation of Conscience**

(Sometimes called *The Adamic Dispensation*— Genesis 3:22-8:19)

"Man Under Conscience— By the fall, Adam and Eve acquired, and transmitted to the race, the knowledge of good and evil. This gave conscience a basis for right moral judgment, and hence the race came under this measure of responsibility— *to do good and eschew evil*. The result of the Dispensation of Conscience, from Eden to the Flood (while there was no institution of government and of law), was that *'all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth'*; that *'the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually'*; and God closed the second testing of the natural man with judgment— the flood (Genesis 3:7,22; 6:5,11,12; 7:11,12,23)."

III. **The Dispensation Of Human Government.**

(Sometimes known as *The Noahic Dispensation*, this period begins with Noah's commission to replenish the earth and ends with the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel— Genesis 8:20-11:32.)

"Man in Authority Over the Earth— Out of the fearful judgment of the Flood God saved eight persons, to whom, after the waters were assuaged, He gave the purified earth with ample power to govern it. This, Noah and his descendants were responsible to do. The Dispensation of Human Government resulted, upon the plain of Shinar, in the impious attempt to become independent of God and closed in judgment— the Confusion of Tongues. See: Genesis 9:1,2; 11:1-4; 11:5-8."

IV. **The Dispensation Of Promise.**

(Sometimes called *The Abrahamic Dispensation*— Genesis 12:1 through Exodus 20— this period begins with the calling out of Abraham and ends with deliverance from bondage in Egypt.)

"Man Under Promise— Out of the dispersed descendants of the builders of Babel, God now calls one man, Abram, with whom He enters into covenant. Some of the promises to Abram and his descendants were purely gracious and unconditional. These either have been, or will be, literally fulfilled. Other promises were conditional upon the faithfulness and obedience of the Israelites. Every one of these conditions was violated, and the Dispensation of Promise resulted in the failure of Israel and closed in the judgment of Bondage in Egypt."

The book of Genesis which opens with the sublime words, *'In the beginning God created,'* closes with, *'In a coffin in Egypt.'* See: Genesis 12:1-3; 15:5; 26:2; 28:12,13; 31:14-17; Exodus 1:13,14."

V. **The Dispensation Of The Law.**

(Sometimes referred to as *The Mosaic Dispensation*— Exodus 20 through John 1:6— it begins with the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai and ends with the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist)

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

— Luke 16:16

(This is a variation from the Scofield notes; He ends the law with Calvary. There's nothing wrong with ending it at Calvary, but I make a further division here, because the Bible does say that "*The law and the prophets were until John.*")

"**Man Under Law**— Again the grace of God came to the help of helpless man and redeemed the chosen people out of the hand of the oppressor. In the wilderness of Sinai He proposed to them the Covenant of Law. Instead of humbly pleading for a continued relation of grace, they presumptuously answered: '*All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.*' The history of Israel in the wilderness and in the Land is one long record of flagrant, persistent violation of the Law, and at last after multiplied warnings, God closed the testing of man by Law in judgment: first Israel, and then Judah, were driven out of the Land into a dispersion which still continues. A feeble remnant returned under Ezra and Nehemiah, of which, in due time, Christ came: '*Born of a woman— made under the law.*' Him both Jews and Gentiles conspired to crucify. See: Exodus 19:1-8; II Kings 25:1-11 Romans 3:19, 20; 10:5; Acts 2:22,23; 7:51,52; Gal. 3:10."

VI. **The Dispensation Of Jesus' Earthly Ministry.**

[Sometimes called *The Intermediate Dispensation*— it begins with John the Baptist (John 1:6) and ends with the Day of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2).]

This is another dispensation that Dr. Scofield doesn't recognize. We will study it more thoroughly later.

VII. **The Church Age.**

(Sometimes referred to as *The Dispensation of Grace*— it begins with the descent of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, and ends with the rapture of the Church. We are NOW living in this period of time.)

"**Man Under Grace**— The sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ introduced the dispensation of pure grace— which means undeserved favor, or God giving righteousness, instead of God **requiring** righteousness, as under the Law.

Salvation, perfect and eternal, is now freely offered to Jew and Gentile upon the acknowledgment of sin, or repentance, faith in Christ.

*'Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye **believe** on Him whom he hath sent' — John 6:29*

(cf. John 5:24; 6:47; 10:27,28; Ephesians 2:8,9.)

The predicted result of this testing of man under grace is judgment upon an unbelieving world and an apostate Church. See: Luke 17:26-30; 18:8; II Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 3:15,16.

The first event in the closing of this dispensation will be the descent of the Lord from heaven, when sleeping saints will be raised and, together with believers then living, caught up *'to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'* (ii Thessalonians 4:16,17.)"

VIII. The Great Tribulation.

(Also called *The Time of Jacob's Trouble*, or *Daniel's 70th Week*.)

We read about this time of tribulation in many places in the Bible. Revelation 6-19 gives us a detailed account of the Tribulation Period. Matthew 24 is also about this terrible time of trial upon the earth that begins after the rapture of the Church and lasts for 7 years. It ends with Christ's second coming and the Battle of Armageddon.

IX. The Millennium.

(Also referred to as *Christ's kingdom upon the Earth*, this period begins with the Judgment of the Nations found in Matthew 25, after the Second Advent and after the Battle of Armageddon. It lasts for one thousand years.)

You will find the Millennium mentioned in Revelation 11:15; 20:1-6 and hundreds of other places in the Bible. It ends with the release of Satan from the bottomless pit. Then follows the rebellion of Christ's enemies. Finally, following the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:7-15), this present Heaven and earth will be destroyed and a new universe created for eternity.

"Man Under The Personal Reign Of Christ — After purifying judgments which attend the personal return of Christ to the earth, He will reign over restored Israel and over the earth for one thousand years. This is the period commonly called the Millennium. The seat of His power will be Jerusalem, and the saints, including the saved of the Dispensation of Grace, viz., the Church, will be associated with Him in His glory. See: Acts 15:14-17; Isaiah 2:1-4; the whole chapter of Isaiah 11; Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-6.

But when Satan is *'loosed a little season,'* he finds the natural heart as prone to evil as ever, and easily gathers the nations to battle against the Lord and His saints, and this last dispensation closes, like all the others, in judgment."

X. The Dispensation of the Fullness of Times.

[(Ephesians 1:10; I Corinthians 15:24-28) This final period begins with the creation of a new Heaven and new earth (Revelation 21 and 22) and goes on into never-ending eternity.] *The 'great white throne' is set, the wicked dead are raised and finally judged, and then come the 'new heaven and a new earth'— eternity is begun. See: Revelation 20:3, 7-15 and 21:1-22.*

There are many good works available on dispensations. Below is a list of some that I have profited by. Beginning from the simplest to the more advanced:

- *God's Plan of the Ages*, by Louis Talbot
- *The Scofield Reference Bible*, by Dr. C.I. Scofield
- *The Salem Kirban Reference Bible*, by Salem Kirban
- *How To Teach Dispensational Truth* by Dr. Peter S. Ruckman
- *Systematic Theology* by Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer
- *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, by Clarence Larkin
- *Dispensational Truth*, the classic work by Clarence Larkin

Dispensations (pp. 39-47)

1. Define the word "*dispensation*."

2. List the ten dispensations in the order given in the text.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

- Match each dispensation above with the correct characteristic of that dispensation given below.
 - a. _____ Kingdom of Heaven established on earth
 - b. _____ Tower of Babel built
 - c. _____ Sermon on the Mount preached

- d. _____ Adam walked with God
- e. _____ Israel chosen as God's nation
- f. _____ Noah builds the Ark
- g. _____ Ten Commandments given
- h. _____ Paul converted
- i. _____ Time of Jacob's trouble
- j. _____ White Throne Judgment
- k. _____ Crucifixion
- l. _____ Ethiopian eunuch is saved
- m. _____ The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is forbidden
- n. _____ New heavens and new earth are created
- o. _____ Birth of John the Baptist
- p. _____ Daniel's 70th week
- q. _____ Abraham receives his covenant
- r. _____ All flesh is corrupt
- s. _____ Satan is loosed for a season
- t. _____ Races were supposed to separate

Examples of Dispensational Differences

From Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22, Bible dispensations cover all of human history. It is not written to the Church *only*. In fact, *most of the Bible is written to the nation of Israel.*

When the saints are called out at the rapture, the Bible will still be here, so those left behind can know how to be saved. While the plan of salvation varies from one dispensation to the next, it is always based on *obeying what God said*. *Doctrinally*, every verse in the Bible falls into one of the ten divisions we have just looked at, and is aimed at *the Jews, the Gentiles, the church of God*, or all three. A knowledge of dispensations is absolutely necessary to understand the scriptures. We must recognize these proper divisions, because God deals differently with people in various dispensations. If we fail to make these distinctions, the Bible becomes a book of confusion, filled with apparent contradictions. The following examples should make this plain.

The Gospel

The word "*gospel*" simply means "*good news*." The *good news* the nation of Israel was looking for was the coming of the promised Messiah to establish His kingdom on earth. Study the scriptures below and see what the Bible says about the gospel.

1. When John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness, he preached "*the gospel of the kingdom*."

*"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,
And saying, Repent ye: for **the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**" — Matthew 3:1,2*

2. When Jesus Christ was on earth, he preached "*the gospel of the kingdom.*"

*"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching **the gospel of the kingdom...**" — Matthew 4:23*

This "*gospel of the kingdom*" was to Israel only:

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

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

— Matthew 10:5-7

Jesus commanded his disciples **not** to go to the Gentiles, but only to preach "*the gospel of the kingdom*" to "*the lost house of Israel.*" Paul was commissioned to preach a *new gospel* to all alike in the Church Age, rather than "*the gospel of the kingdom*" to the Jews.

In Acts 20, Paul says:

*"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify **the gospel of the grace of God.**" — Acts 20:24*

Here is Paul's definition of "*the gospel of the grace of God:*"

*"[H]ow that **Christ died for our sins** according to the scriptures;*

*And that he **was buried,** and that he **rose again** the third day **according to the scriptures.**" — I Corinthians 15:3,4*

Paul's gospel was that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again— according to the scriptures. He preached this gospel because the Lord Jesus Christ *told* him to preach this gospel.

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

*For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but **by the revelation of Jesus Christ.**" — Galatians 1:11,12*

He was not taught this gospel by Peter, the apostles or any *man*: it was revealed to him directly by the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Paul **never** preached "*the gospel of the kingdom.*"

In his letter to the Galatians he makes a strong statement:

*"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel** unto you than that which we have preached unto you, **let him be accursed.***

As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." — Galatians 1:8,9

When the Holy Spirit says anything twice it is significant. He led Paul to repeat himself in these two verses to emphasize that there is more than one gospel, and that the man who does not preach the right gospel at the right time is accursed. Now if we fail to rightly divide the word of God here, we have Paul calling Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, and all of the disciples "*accursed,*" because the gospel they preached is *not* the same gospel preached by the apostle Paul. Every one of them preached "*the gospel of the kingdom,*" but Paul preached "*the gospel of the grace of God.*" It should be obvious then, that verses 8 and 9 must refer to those who preach "*another gospel*" in this present dispensation of grace. (He clearly instructs believers about this in Galatians 1:6.) Being *the apostle to the Gentiles*, Paul wrote to the *Church*. If we do not make that distinction we will not be able to completely understand the word of God.

3. The plan of salvation in effect during the Tribulation contradicts Church Age doctrine. It is different from the clear plan of salvation by grace, through faith alone. For example, look at Matthew 24 where Christ is preaching the "*the gospel of the kingdom*" for those in the Great Tribulation.

*"But he that shall endure unto **the end**, the same shall be saved." — Matthew 24:13*

How do we know that this verse applies to the period of time called the *Great Tribulation*? It is simple, just look at the context.

- First, Jesus is speaking to His disciples about *the rebuilding of the Jewish temple*:

*"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be **the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?**" — Matthew 24:3*

- Second, the disciples are asking Jesus about *the time of His second coming and the end of the world*. (This term is used again in verse 14, having to do with the prophecies of Daniel. We find the same expression used by Daniel himself when speaking of the vision given him regarding the Tribulation. Note that the Tribulation is mentioned in Matthew 24:29.)
- Third, it is a time when *the gospel of the kingdom will be preached*. Because of what we have already read, we know that this gospel cannot be preached during the Church Age.

Despite the evident application of these verses, many still teach Matthew 24:13 as a plan of salvation for today. But read what Paul, *the apostle to the Gentiles*, writes to *the Church* at Corinth.

*"**Unto the Church** of God which is at Corinth...*

Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

*Who shall also confirm you **unto the end**, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."* — I Corinthians 1:2,6-8

This verse, which is clearly written to Church Age saints, says that Christ will confirm us to *"the end."* But, Matthew 24:13 says that only those who *"endure to the end,"* will be saved (Matthew 24 applies to the Jews during the *Tribulation*, and *"the end"* refers to the end of the seven-year tribulation period they will go through).

"[T]he end" Christ is speaking of is plainly *the end of the Great Tribulation*. It is easy to see that there is a difference between these two passages of scripture. They clearly teach two different plans of salvation, for two different periods of time.

4. Look now in Paul's letter to the Hebrews. Doctrinally, this book is for the Jew, one of the three classes of people to whom the Bible is written.

*"But Christ as a son over **his own house**; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm **unto the end.**" — Hebrews 3:6*

"[H]is own house" refers to *the house of Israel*. Furthermore, "if" means that there are certain conditions to be met. The *condition* is that they remain faithful to "the end."

Notice again in Hebrews 3, Paul says:

*"For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence **stedfast unto the end;**" — Hebrews 3:14*

This book is written for the *Hebrews*. It says that *someone* (those Jews) will be made partakers of Christ "if" (there is a *condition*) they hold out "**stedfast unto the end**" (*the end* of the Tribulation). This verse is commonly used to teach that a believer can lose his salvation. Indeed, it is true, **but not in the Church Age**. The *doctrinal* application is for a Hebrew **during the Great Tribulation**. Church Age believers are eternally secure in Christ.

Church Age believers are **already** —

- Part of His household (I Timothy 3:14-15; Ephesians 2:19-22).
- Confirmed to the end (I Corinthians 1:6-8).
- Partakers of Christ (Ephesians 5:30).
- Overcomers of the world through Jesus Christ (I John 4:4; I John 5:4 and John 17:33).

Now, let's look at the epistle to the Philippians, written to Christians (in the body of Christ) by Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. Then we will compare this with Matthew 24:13 and Hebrews 3:6.

*"**Being confident** of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it **until the day of Jesus Christ.**" — Philippians 1:6*

This verse in Philippians is clearly different from those in Matthew and Hebrews. Paul tells the Philippians that Jesus Christ *will* perform the good work He has begun in them, "*until the day of*

Jesus Christ." What a contrast to the verses in Matthew and Hebrews, where those believers must "*endure until the end*" to be saved. (They will be in jeopardy of losing their salvation.) This hardly gives one the *confidence* that Paul speaks in Philippians 1:6.

5. Another prime example is found in the epistle of James. This is one of the most misapplied verses in the word of God. (Many erroneously use this verse to teach that a New Testament Christian is saved by faith *plus* works.)

He says in Verse 24,

"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." — James 2:24

We can see from James 1:1 that the book of James is addressed to *the twelve tribes of Israel*— the Jews. *It is not doctrine for the New Testament Christian.* So, it is not surprising that James 2:24 directly contradicts verses in Romans 3 and 5, and Ephesians 2, which are definitely written to Church Age believers.

For example:

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:" — Romans 3:23,24

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" — Romans 5:1

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast." — Ephesians 2:8,9

You can see the confusion that can come from trying to apply *all* the scriptures, *doctrinally*, to a Christian in the Church Age. If we select scriptures directed at other people in other times, and try to use them as a plan of salvation today, we will find contradictions with other scriptures where the *true* plan of salvation is given for *our* dispensation. (To intentionally misapply scripture is heresy and sin.) In the Church Age, we are saved by grace through faith, *plus nothing*; and we *cannot* lose our salvation, for we are *kept* by the power of God (ii Timothy 1:12; I Peter 1:5).

- However, during the time of the Great Tribulation, salvation will be by faith *plus* works.

Remember James 2:24, Matthew 24:13 and Hebrews 3:6,14? They teach that believers could only be saved by *enduring to the end*, and by *refusing to take the mark* of the beast (Revelation 14:9-11). Those scriptures cannot possibly apply to believers today, for Paul says, "*by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Although those who believe *during* the time of the seven year Tribulation will be saved, none of them will be *born again*. None of them will become part of *the body* of Christ, because *the body of Christ will be in Heaven* at that time. Like the Old Testament saints, those saved during the Tribulation will not be forgotten. They will merely have a different relation to Christ in eternity from those who make up His bride. For example, John the Baptist, who was saved before the New Testament was established, refers to himself as a "**friend of the bridegroom**" — not part of the bride (John 3:29).

Of course, salvation by faith plus works is a true doctrine. However, it is only true *before Calvary* and *after the rapture*— **not now** . Salvation *always* has an element of works, but *now* it is by **Christ's work for us** at Calvary. Before Calvary and after the rapture, believers *can lose* their salvation. Furthermore, during the Tribulation, *it is impossible for anyone who loses their salvation to regain it* (Hebrews 6:4-6). Isn't it strange that those who teach that believers *today* can lose their salvation, also believe *they* can get it back. This is the sort of error that naturally follows when scripture is used to justify someone's preconceived doctrine.

Every heresy in this age is taught by taking verses that apply to the Tribulation, the Millennium, or Jesus' earthly ministry to Israel, and misapplying them to the Church Age. Those who do so are presenting a false plan of salvation— they are sending people to Hell. So we need to correct these people, rebuke them, and try to help them to rightly divide the word of truth.

Why is it that even many Baptists have such a hard time accepting dispensational divisions? It is because they are always preaching salvation by grace through faith and contending with those teaching false doctrines of salvation for today. After a while they just develop a blind spot in this area. They err in teaching that salvation by grace through faith alone is the plan of salvation throughout the entire Bible: that just isn't true. Others err by teaching *faith and works* as a plan of salvation for believers *today*. They are trying to make the entire Bible teach that doctrine for all periods when it does not. We must never attempt to make the Bible line up with our denominational beliefs, or twist the Bible to make it agree with our own preconceived doctrinal position. Rather, we must always be prepared to receive new light from the word of God and, if necessary, change our beliefs so that they line up with what the Bible says. If we do this, we will be able to rightly divide the word of truth, and will not end up teaching heresy. In summary, notice the progression of dispensations in the New Testament.

The First: The first dispensation found in the gospels is merely a continuation of the Old Testament dispensation of the law, during which God dealt exclusively with the nation of Israel under the law.

The Second: When God temporarily displaced Israel, the second dispensation began. From then on, He ceased dealing with the nation of Israel under

d: the law. We are now living in the Church Age, during which both Jews and Gentiles are made partakers of Christ by grace.

The Third Another dispensation of time (still future) during which God will once again deal with Israel as a *nation*.

:

Dispensational Differences (pp. 50-58)

1. The plan of salvation varies from one dispensation to the next, but it is always based on _____ what God said.
2. If we fail to make dispensational _____ the Bible becomes filled with apparent contradictions.
3. John the Baptist and Jesus preached the gospel of the _____ .
4. Paul preached the gospel of the _____ .
5. John the Baptist and Jesus preached only to the _____ .
6. Paul preached to the _____ .
7. The *gospel of the kingdom* will be preached again in the future during the _____ .
8. I Corinthians 15:3,4 defines the gospel of the _____ of _____ .
9. Read the following passages of scripture, then write the proper verse references under the correctly related heading.

Matthew 3:1,2 Matthew 4:23 Matthew 10:5-7

Acts 20:24 Matthew 24:13 Philippians 1:6

Ephesians 5:30 Hebrews 3:6 Romans 3:23,24

Hebrews 3:14 James 2:24 I Timothy 3:14,15

I Corinthians 1:6-8

I Corinthians 15:3,4

Gospel of the Kingdom Gospel of the Grace of God

Four forms of the gospel

Our fourth guideline for marking divisions in the Bible is the distinction between four forms of the gospel.

I. The Gospel of the Grace of God

(Acts 20:25; I Corinthians 15:1-4) In the previous section, under the heading *Examples of Dispensations* we discussed the revelation of this gospel to Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

II. The Gospel of the Kingdom

Mentioned in Matthew 24:14 and Matthew 4:23, the *gospel of the kingdom* was preached to the *Jews only*. It was the good news that the promised Messiah had come to establish His kingdom on this earth. This was the prophecy given to Mary in the gospel of Luke.

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." — Luke 1:31-33

This was the gospel preached by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ, and all His disciples. It ended with the death of Stephen when he was stoned in Acts 7:59. Notice that Saul (who became Paul the apostle) was present at Stephen's death (Acts 8:1; 22:20). Later, in Acts 9, he was saved by grace through faith.

Now, we will review the *progression* of the gospel message in the book of Acts beginning with the death of Stephen.

In Chapter Seven: The nation rejects their Messiah.

In Chapter Eight: A black Gentile (a proselyte to Judaism) becomes the first man to be saved by grace through faith in the Church Age period.

In Chapter Nine: The apostle to the Gentiles is saved.

In Chapter Ten: The revelation is given to Peter that Gentiles are no longer unclean, and even they can be saved.

That new revelation was especially important, because it verified the fact that, before that time, God was *not* dealing with the Gentiles *as a group*. By a dream, the Lord gave Peter this *new* revelation, which was a change from the past. He used the *sign* of tongues to convince those Jews accompanying Peter to Cornelius' house (Acts 10:45).

In Chapter Eleven: Returning to Jerusalem, Peter had to go over the whole matter before the brethren, to answer their accusations and persuade them of this new doctrine.

In Chapter Fifteen: Doctrine is settled for the Church Age.

The "*gospel of the kingdom*" will be preached again during the Great Tribulation, *after* the Church is taken out in the rapture (fulfilling of Christ's prophecy in Matthew 24:14).

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." — Matthew 24:14

This "*gospel of the kingdom*" as a witness to the nations is very different from the gospel of the grace of God that we preach to the nations today. To confuse these gospels is to misapply scripture. Many erroneously try to teach this as the doctrine of salvation for today, but the kingdom message of faith plus works is not the right gospel for this present Church Age we live in.

III. The Gospel Paul Calls "My Gospel."

Mentioned in Romans 2:16 and Romans 16:25, this is the "*gospel of the grace of God*" with the additional truths concerning *the mystery of the body* as revealed to Paul. It is defined in I Corinthians 15:1-4 as belief in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is by grace, through faith in the shed blood of Jesus, plus nothing.

IV. The "Everlasting Gospel."

This is the gospel that *an angel* will preach for a very brief time at the end of the tribulation (Revelation 14:6-7). It is a warning for people to *fear God* because He is about to have His revenge at the Second Advent when He returns to destroy the Antichrist, His armies and the present world.

You will recall what Paul wrote to the Galatians:

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." — Galatians 1:8,9

Paul said that if any man, or even *an angel*, preached any gospel other than that revealed to him, they were accursed. Yet, the *"everlasting gospel"* of Revelation 14 is proclaimed by an angel and it is different from the gospel of the grace of God preached by Paul. Why isn't this angel accursed, then? Because the gospel he is preaching is during a *different dispensation* and to a *different class of people*. If any angel preached that gospel today, he would be accursed and we would be compelled by the scripture to reject him and his message.

V. Another Gospel.

There is also mention in the scriptures of *"another gospel"* (which is not the gospel at all). It is a *false gospel* that adds works to the gospel of the grace of God. Again, this is a truth misplaced, and therefore heresy *for this age*. Once more we see the importance of making the right divisions in the word of God.

LET'S REVIEW

Four Forms of the Gospel (pp. 61-64)

1. List the four forms of the gospel.

a. _____ c. _____

b. _____ d. _____

2. To which of the four gospels do the statements or verses below apply? Indicate by writing the correct letter of the alphabet from the question above in the proper blank.
3. _____ Preached by John the Baptist.
4. _____ Truths concerning the mystery of the body.
5. _____ Preached by an angel.
6. _____ Preached immediately before the Second Advent.
7. _____ I Corinthians 15:1-4.
8. _____ Preached to Jews only.
9. _____ Revelation 14:6-7
10. _____ Preached by Jesus.

The two kingdoms

This is the fifth division that will help us in our study of the Bible. It is a complete study in itself, but we covered much of the material in our study of *the four gospels* and the *dispensations*.

Let it be noted that:

- The *Kingdom of Heaven* is a literal, visible, physical kingdom spoken of in the gospel of Luke.

"[A]nd the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

— Luke 1:32,33

It says that Jesus will reign over *the house of Jacob* (the nation of Israel) *forever*, and there will be *no end* of this kingdom. Is that true today? No! Did Jesus ever sit upon the throne of David, ruling over Israel? No, He did not. Then this prophecy is yet unfulfilled, whereas men are entering "*the kingdom of God*" now.

- The *Kingdom of God* is said to be "*...not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" It is a *spiritual* kingdom that one enters by *the new birth*.

So in John 3 we read:

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." — John 3:5

- Paul never uses the term *"kingdom of heaven."*

Since the Lord Jesus Christ is the King, both kingdoms may be said to be present when He is on earth. Therefore, in the four gospels, the two terms are often used interchangeably.

two advents

The sixth division for rightly dividing the scriptures is the separation of the two advents.

In his book, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, Dr. C.I. Scofield says:

"Whoever carefully considers Old Testament prophecies must be struck by two contrasting, and seemingly contradictory, lines of prediction concerning the coming Messiah.

In due time the fulfillment of Messianic prophecy began with the birth of the Virgin's Son according to Isaiah, in Bethlehem according to Micah, and proceeded with perfect literalness unto the full accomplishment of every prediction of Messiah's humiliation; for sin must first be put away, before the Kingdom could be established. But the Jews would not receive their King in the form in which He was presented, *'meek and sitting upon an ass and a colt the foal of an ass'*; and they crucified Him.

But we must not conclude that the wickedness of man has baffled the deliberate purpose of God, for His counsels include a second advent of His Son, when the predictions concerning Messiah's earthly glory will receive the same precise and literal fulfillment as did those which concerned His earthly sufferings."

The first coming was at the birth of Jesus Christ. The second coming will be at the time of His return to the earth with His saints at the end of the Tribulation.

I. The First Advent

At His birth, the Lord Jesus Christ came as:

- *The meek and lowly "Lamb of God"* to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29; Isaiah 53:7; 1 John 2:2; Hebrews 9:26; Luke 19:10; John 3:16-17).

- *A man of sorrows*, despised and rejected, and acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3).
- *Our substitute*, who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4).

II. The Second Advent

At His first coming, Jesus was like a lamb and a servant, but *at His second coming* He will be like:

- *An angry man and a roaring lion* (Revelation 5:5; Psalms 78:65; Isaiah 42:13-14; Jeremiah 25:37-38; Isaiah 31:4).
- *The Avenger* who tramples the wicked down in His fury, and stains His garments with blood (Isaiah 63:1-6; Revelation 19:11-15; Psalms 68:21-23).
- *The King of Kings and Lord of Lords* who will establish His kingdom, and rule this earth with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:15-16; 20:1-7; Psalms 2).

Charismatics love to quote Hebrews 13:8, "*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and forever*," and of course, it is true— He is the same. However, His dealing with mankind is different during different dispensations.

A. The second advent has *two parts*.

There is a coming of Jesus Christ **FOR** His saints, and there is a coming **WITH** His saints.

1. *The first part:*

The first part takes place when Jesus comes to call the Church (His bride) out of this world to be with Him in Heaven. This is the *rapture*— the coming *for* His saints. (John 14:1-3; Acts 1:10-11; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Titus 2:13; Philippians 3:20-21; I John 3:1-3; Revelation 22:12 and 20— *even so, come Lord Jesus*). At that time, the Lord Jesus will not return all the way to the earth; He will return only as far as the clouds (I Thessalonians 4:17; Acts 1:9-11). Then *the body of Christ* (the Church) will be caught up to meet Him in the air.

2. *The second part:*

The second part of the first advent takes place at least seven years later, at the end of the Great Tribulation. This is the coming *with* His saints, who will make up the armies who fight for Him at Armageddon. These will reign with King Jesus in His kingdom on earth. (cf. Joel 2:1-11, Matthew 24:29-31; II Thessalonians 1:7-8, Jude 14, Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4-5, and scores of other places.) At that time, He *will* come all the way back to the earth (Zechariah 14:1-4), and as He sets foot upon the Mount of Olives, it will split in half.

"The Jews were slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken concerning the suffering of their Messiah, we are slow of heart to believe all that they have spoken concerning His glory. Surely the greater reproach is ours, for it ought to be easier to believe that the Son of God would come 'in clouds of heaven with power and great glory,' than that He would come as the Babe of Bethlehem, and the Carpenter of Nazareth. Indeed, we believe the latter because it has happened, not because the prophets foretold it, and it is time we ceased to reproach the Jews for their unbelief. If it be asked how they could possibly be blinded to the evident meaning of so many and such unequivocal predictions of His earthly glory, viz., by the process of 'spiritualizing' scripture. In other words, the ancient scribes are telling the people that the prophecies of Messiah's sufferings were not to be interpreted literally, just as some modern scribes are telling the people that the prophecies of Messiah's earthly glory are not to be literally interpreted.

But the second advent is a promise to the Church as well as to the Jew. Among the last words of comfort and exhortation addressed by our Lord to His perplexed and sorrowing disciples before He accomplished the sacrifice of the cross were these: *'Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also'* (John 14:1-3)."

two natures

The seventh division we must note is the division between the believer's two natures (ii Corinthians 4:16; Ephesians 4:20-24). We studied that in detail, in lesson two of this series. We review it here as a reminder that it is one of the divisions in the word of God that we must be aware of if we are to correctly understand Bible doctrine.

We learned that the Christian's two natures are:

I. The Old Man, Born Of the Flesh.

- Also known as the *Adamic nature* and "*the flesh.*" It retains its sinful, ungodly character. That old man:
- Has not been redeemed (Romans 8:23)
- Has not been adopted (Romans 8:23)
- Is sinful (Romans 7:18,24; I John 1:6-10)
- Is saved by hope (Romans 8:24)
- Is engaged, but not married to Christ (ii Corinthians 11:2)

Yet there is also another nature inside each believer.

II. The New Man, Born of the Spirit.

The new man cannot be seen, but demonstrates its divine nature when we yield to the Holy Spirit, and bring our flesh in subjection. In contrast to the "*old man*," our "*new man*:"

- Has been redeemed (Ephesians 1:7)
- Has been adopted (Romans 8:15-16)
- Is sinless (1 John 3:6,9)
- Is saved right now, present tense (Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 John 5:11-13; John 3:18; 3:36; 5:24), and
- Is already married to Christ (Ephesians 5:30-32 and 1 Corinthians 6:17).

Those who refuse to recognize that the believer has two natures, always end up teaching the false doctrines of salvation by works, or of sinless perfection in the flesh.

the believer's standing and state

The eighth division we should note relates to the believer's standing and state. We have also studied this in a previous lesson.

- Our *standing* (position) before God as born again believers is that of sinless perfection (1 John 3:6, 9; 3:5; 4:17; Romans 4:1-8; 3:22-25).
- Our *state* (relationship) with God is another matter entirely. It is determined by our *walk* with God, our *submission* to the Holy Spirit, and our *obedience* to the word of God (Romans 6:13; Galatians 5:16).

salvation and inheritance

The ninth division (one that affects the believer *only*) is between the requirements for his salvation and his heavenly inheritance. (See lesson 4, *The Christian's Inheritance*, for a more detailed study.)

First:

- Salvation is God's *free gift* (John 3:16, Romans 5:15-16,18; 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9)

- Our inheritance, on the other hand, is *not free*— it is an *earned reward* (Colossians 3:24)

Second:

- Salvation is a *present possession* (I John 5:12-13; John 3:36)
- Our inheritance is a *future possession*. We learn from reading I Corinthians 15:50 that "*flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God,*" so we know that we cannot inherit it *now*, because we *are* flesh and blood

Third:

- Salvation *cannot be lost* (Ephesians 4:30)
- Our inheritance *can be lost* (Galatians 5:19-21)

two resurrections

The tenth thing we find helpful is the distinction the Bible makes between two resurrections.

First, there is a resurrection **FROM** the dead.

Second, there is a resurrection **OF** the dead.

These two resurrections are separated by 1,000 years in time (Revelation 20:4-6). Now, let's examine them briefly.

- *The first resurrection* (FROM the dead) has three parts, and is not mentioned until the third part has been completed (Revelation 20:5).
 1. Christ and the Old Testament saints rise— Matthew 27:50-53 and Ephesians 4:8-9.
 2. The New Testament saints (you and I) rise— I Corinthians 15:49-53; I Thessalonians 4:13-18.
 3. The Tribulation saints rise— Revelation 7:9,14; 20:4; Psalms 50:45; Isaiah 26:19.

- ***The second resurrection* (OF the dead) takes place at the end of the 1,000 year earthly reign of Christ ((Revelation 20:5). At this time, all that are in the grave hear His voice and come up (John 5:28).**

This is the resurrection of all the unsaved dead from the time of Adam to the end of the Millennium. This also includes the saints who will have died in the Millennium (John 5:28-29; Daniel 12:2).

In Christ's day, people had heard of the resurrection OF the dead, but they did not know what the resurrection FROM the dead was. This can be seen in Mark 9:9-10, John 11:23-26 and Luke 20:35-36.

The Pharisees believed in the resurrection OF the dead (Acts 23:6-8), but they did not believe in the resurrection FROM the dead. They believed there would be only one resurrection and only one judgment at which all (lost and saved) will appear. This false doctrine is still taught by the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church, the Church of Christ, and others. All these groups spiritualize the *first* resurrection, saying that it refers to the new birth. So they teach that Ephesians 2:1 and 2:6, etc. are talking about the first resurrection, which of course it is not. Making no distinction among the different judgments spoken of in the Bible, they teach the same doctrines as the Pharisees, that there will be only one final judgment for all. By doing this, they completely ignore the time, setting, and subjects of these judgments. They teach that no one can know for sure whether or not they are actually saved until the judgment. All this heresy comes from refusal to rightly divide the word of truth.

LET'S REVIEW

_____ (Pages pp. 66-76)

True or False. Consider each statement below, paying special attention to the underlined word or words. If the statement is true, write the word *true* in the blank. If the statement is not true, cross out the incorrect underlined word(s) and write the correct word(s) on the blank.

1. _____ **The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are identical.**
2. _____ **The Kingdom of Heaven is a physical kingdom.**
3. _____ **Luke 1:32,32 refers to the Kingdom of God.**
4. _____ **People are entering the Kingdom of Heaven now.**

5. _____ One enters the Kingdom of Heaven by the new birth.
6. _____ The Kingdom of God is "*righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*"
7. _____ The Kingdom of God prophecy must still be fulfilled.

Circle the references or phrases that refer to the first advent. **Underline** those that refer to the first part of the second advent. Put a *check* next to those that refer to the second part of the second advent.

the rapture Jesus' birth King of Kings
 John 1:29 Act 1:10-11 Revelation 5:5
 Lord of Lords The avenger man of sorrows
 roaring lion our substitute The Lamb of God
 Isaiah 53:3 Isaiah 53:4 coming for his saints
 I Thessalonians 4:16-17 Revelation 19:11-16
 call the Church out

1. List the five characteristics of each of our two natures.

a. The Old Man

b. The New Man

1. A believer's _____ *before* God is that of sinless perfection.
2. A believer's _____ *with* God is determined by his walk with God, his submission to the Holy Spirit, and his obedience to the word of God.
3. Salvation is God's _____.
4. A believer's inheritance is an _____.
5. Salvation is a _____ possession.
6. A believer's inheritance is a _____ possession.
7. Salvation cannot _____ but our inheritance can.
8. The first resurrection is _____ the dead while the second resurrection is _____ the dead.

9. List the three parts of t>

Transfer interrupted!

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

10. Describe the second resurrection.

seven judgments

The eleventh division is the Bible doctrine of seven distinctly different judgments.

In his book *The Seven Judgments*, Dr. Peter S. Ruckman says:

"When we talk about the judgments of God we understand that there are lesser judgments that have fallen upon individuals, nations, or groups of nations at various times. However, there are seven major judgments in the word of God. These judgments are of such a momentous nature that they fall into their own classification. We realize that God judged the world in the days of Noah and drowned them out with a flood; God judged the world in the days of the Tower of Babel and scattered them abroad. We realize that God has judged the Jewish nation under Nebuchadnezzar and Sennacherib and brought judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah and like judgments.

But there are seven main judgments, and they are in a class by themselves. They go beyond the judgment upon Adam when he fell, and they go beyond the judgment upon Lot for his sin and the judgments on other individuals for their sins. These seven judgments have a universal nature."

The expression *general judgment* occurs nowhere in the Bible. It is heresy to teach that all human beings, saints and sinners, Jews and Gentiles, living and dead, will be brought together to be judged in one judgment. Those who believe this teach a doctrine of salvation by works, and say that no one can be sure if they are really saved until they pass this judgment. Of course, that is simply not true.

How clear John is in his first epistle.

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

— I John 5:13

If we study the Bible diligently according to the methods taught therein, we will see clearly that there are seven different judgments, which we will cover briefly here (Also see lesson 5, *Judgment of the Believer.*)

I. Judgment of Sinners.

Subjects: The World (Every Sinner)

Time: 33 A. D.

Place: Calvary

Basis: The Law

Result: 1. The Death of Christ (the full payment of sin)

2. The Justification of the Believer

- **(cf. John 12:31-32; I John 2:2; II Corinthians 5:21)**

The Bible says,

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." — John 3:16

This judgment has already taken place at Calvary. Its result was death for Christ, and justification for the believer. Hanging on the cruel cross of Calvary, the Son of God paid for the sin of the world (John 1:29; Hebrews 2:9; Romans 3:10-23; Isaiah 53:4-12).

The Bible says,

"[T]he wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." — Romans 6:23

Why did Jesus have to die? He had to die because of God's judgment against sin. God's first judgment against sin was carried out at Calvary, where Christ became "*sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*" (II Corinthians 5:21.)

The scriptures tell us:

"[C]hrist also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:" — I Peter 3:18

Isaiah says:

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." — Isaiah 53:5

From Dr. Peter Ruckman's book, *The Seven Judgments* we read:

"What does this mean? This means that when you take Christ as your Saviour, you are standing in a burned-out spot where the lightning has already struck, and it will not strike twice in the same place. Saved people who are always worried about losing their salvation are wasting their time, God's time, and my time. In the old days when a man was going across the prairie and a fire was sweeping across the plains with a thirty mile an hour wind in dry grass, sometimes six feet high, do you think that old prairie dog beat his horse to death trying to outrun that prairie fire? Why, of course not. He got off his horse, struck tinder and flint, and back-fired the grass. He set fire to the grass ahead of him, and as the wind blew that prairie fire ahead of him, he simply took his horse and stepped into the place where it had already burned out. When the fire behind him caught up with him, it couldn't singe a hair on his head. The place had already been burned. Do you understand what I am saying? Judgment can't fall twice in the same place. You can't try a man twice for the same offense: that's double jeopardy. If you come to Calvary, you are safe. The wrath has already fallen.

II. Judgment as Sons.

Subjects: The Saints Themselves

Time: Anytime, Everyday

Place: Anywhere

Basis: Sonship

Result: Forgiveness and Cleansing

- (cf. I Corinthians 11:31-32; Hebrews 12:5-8.)

This is the day by day, moment by moment judgment whereby the believer judges his own sinful acts of disobedience to his Father's word.

We read how that even David cried unto the Lord:

"Judge me, O Lord... Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart." — Psalm 26:1,2

Again Paul warns us, saying:

"[I]f we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

— I Corinthians 11:31

If we refuse to judge ourselves, the Lord will judge us, and chasten us as sons.

"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." — Hebrews 12:6

As the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins, we are to agree with Him and confess those sins as being what they are indeed— *sin* .

John says:

***"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* — I John 1:9**

It should be clear then, how important it is for believers to judge their own sin each day; for if we do not judge ourselves, God *will*. His chastisement is *even unto death*, for those who would ignore the pleading of the Holy Spirit and continue to live in sin. Yes, there is a "*sin unto death*," as seen in passages like I Corinthians 5:1-5 and Acts 5:1-11.

In relation to this, we see the soberness with which we should approach the Lord's Supper. In I Corinthians 11:28, Paul instructs believers to *examine themselves* before partaking thereof. The reason for this holy admonition is to

keep them from partaking *unworthily* (not having judged themselves for sin). Again, if we fail to judge ourselves, the Lord will judge us.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." — I Corinthians 11:29,30

As J.C. Ryle exhorted his own congregation in years past:

"O dearly beloved of the Lord, have you heeded the Holy Spirit as He has convicted you, betimes, of your sin? We are certainly not as those poor Romish slaves who feel they must castigate themselves and flagellate their bodies in penance for sin, but brethren, should we not take time, periodically, to examine ourselves and the path we walk each day? There is no question that because of a neglect of this solemn duty many are sick today, while many have surely met their death."

Thanks be unto God, all this has nothing to do with our eternal, blood bought salvation, but it does involve our precious fellowship with the Lord. As the *sons of God*, do you not find it a precious privilege and duty to judge yourselves?

III. Judgment as Servants.

Subject: The Saints Being Judged for Their Works

Time: After the Rapture

Place: At the Judgment Seat of Christ

Basis: The Believer's Works

Result: Rewards for the Faithful, Loss for the Unfaithful

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." — II Corinthians 5:10

This verse speaks of a judgment for Christians called, "*The Judgment Seat of Christ*," that takes place following the rapture of the Church. While this judgment is being conducted in Heaven, the first half of the Tribulation will be taking place down here on this earth. Then the marriage of the Lamb will take place, followed by the second part of the second advent— the coming of the Lord in His glory.

We know we are not saved or kept by our works. But it is very clear that the works we commit after we are saved will be judged, because the apostle Paul says, "*we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ*" (Romans 14:10,11). We are saved by grace through faith. We don't work to *get* saved, and we don't work to *stay* saved— we work *because we are* saved. Then someday we will be judged to determine the real worth of our works, and our real motives for doing them (I Corinthians 3:11-15).

In his book, *The Judgment Seat of Christ* Dr. Peter Ruckman says:

"The Bible says, '*And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*' (Hebrews 9:2.) Even a saved person doesn't get out of judgment. If you are unsaved, you will die and face the White Throne Judgment; if you are saved, you will die and face the Judgment Seat of Christ. The judgment in I Corinthians 3 is for Christians, so, if you are saved— a child of God— this is where you are headed.

'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

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

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.'

— I Corinthians 3:11-15

Notice in the passage that the man doesn't burn; the works burn. Notice also in that passage that the fire is going to try every man's work of what sort it is. What the Lord is interested in is quality, what sort it is.

Don't you know a man in the Bible whose works all burned up in a fire, yet he didn't burn? It was Lot. Lot lost all he had in a fire, but the fire didn't touch him. The smell of smoke never even passed on him. That is a picture of a carnal Christian at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Now, there is something else to think about at the Judgment Seat of Christ. People don't think. They say, 'Well, I'll just be glad to get to heaven, and if I can just get there I'll be happy enough.' No, you won't! If you went home tonight and found your home burned to the ground; all of the sheets and linen burned; all of the furniture and Tupperware burned to the ground; the television lying there in ashes; and no insurance, you wouldn't be too happy about it. There are going to be millions of Christians who will face the Judgment Seat of Christ and will see their lives go up in flames— nothing to cover it. I think that most Christians will find that. They will see their life just go up in smoke."

The first judgment determines whether we will go to Heaven or Hell. The second judgment determines whether we live a happy Christian life or a miserable one. The third judgment determines whether we will get any rewards or not, and what kind.

IV. Judgment of the Jews.

Subjects: The Jewish Nation— Ezekiel 20:34-38

Time: During The Great Tribulation

Place: Jerusalem

Basis: Their Rejection of Christ— I Samuel 8:7; Luke 23:18

**Result: The Conversion of the Nation of Israel; Accepting Jesus Christ
 spas Their Messiah— Isaiah 66:8; Jeremiah 30:7**

- (cf. Zechariah. 13:8-9; Daniel 12:1)

While the Church is being judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Jews will be judged under the Antichrist on the earth. This judgment will take place during the last three and a half years of the Tribulation, which is aptly called "*the time of Jacob's trouble*." During this time, the wrath of God will be poured out upon the earth, and plagues shall bring death and torment for all.

At the coming of the Lord (Zechariah 14:3), the Jews will look upon Him "*whom they have pierced*" (Zechariah 12:10), and the Jewish nation will be born (converted) in a day (Isaiah 66:8). At that time, God will "*make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah*" (Hebrews 8:8).

Under the reign of the Antichrist, the Jews will have to suffer the plagues from the "vials of the wrath of God," endure to the end, and refuse to take the mark of the beast. Those who are faithful will have their reward if they faint not.

V. Judgment of the Nations.

Subjects: The Gentile Nations

Time: At the Second Coming of Christ

**Place: On Earth: Before the Throne of His Glory— In the Valley
 of Jehoshaphat**

Basis: Their Treatment of the Jews

**Result: The Punishment of Some Nations and the Blessing of
 Others**

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

***And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate." —
Matthew 25:31,32***

***"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." —
Matthew 19:28***

Notice that at this judgment, Christ sits upon the "throne of His glory." This is the time of the regeneration of the earth. In this Judgment, the Nations are made up of people who escaped death at the hands of the Antichrist, who avoided his mark, and who did not take part in the Battle of Armageddon. As a shepherd gathers his sheep, the Lord will gather all nations and bring them to the valley of Jehoshaphat (also called the valley of decision).

This prophecy was given to Joel regarding that time:

***"I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." —
Joel 3:2***

This all takes place at the beginning of the Millennium, after the Battle of Armageddon (cf. Matthew 25).

"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

***And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."* —
Matthew 25:32,33**

Of this Judgment, Dr. Ruckman says:

"The basis will be how they treated Israel in the Great Tribulation. He says to them, *'[I]nasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me'* (Matthew 25:40). The results are the damnation of the people who mistreated the Jews and the salvation of the people who blessed the Jews and took care of them. On the one hand we read, *'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels'* (Matthew 25:41). But for those who took care of the Jews we read, *'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'* (Matthew 25:34).

Of course, the *brethren* of Matthew 25:40 are the Jews, and the *sheep* are those who took care of the Jews. This earns these *sheep* nations the right to enter the millennial kingdom. The *goats* are those who abused the Jew or refused to help them in their distress. This brings upon them the wrath of God in the Lake of Fire. They will be cast into the Lake of Fire with the beast and the false prophet. This Lake of Fire will be located upon the earth during the Millennium, just outside the city of Jerusalem (Isaiah 34:8-10; Revelation 19:20).

Many have confused this Judgment of The Nations with the Great White Throne Judgment. Lumping the two together, many view them as one *general judgment* for all at the end of time. They believe that Christians from the Church Age will gain entrance into Heaven because of their good works. This is not true, but let's compare the White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20), and the Judgment of Nations (Matthew 25) to see just how different they really are.

Bible interpretation is simple if we believe what we read, where we read it, in its context, and rightly divide the word. It all becomes simpler if we just let the scriptures teach what they say. Let's not try to twist them and make them fit something we have been taught.

VI. Judgment of Fallen Angels.

Subjects: The Fallen Angels

Time: After the Thousand Year Reign of Christ

Place: Before the Great White Throne.

Basis: Their Rebellion

Result: Cast Into the Lake of Fire

These fallen angels will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment

- **(Jude 6; I Corinthians 6:3; Genesis 6:1-6; II Peter 2:4-5).**

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." — Jude 1:6

Strangely enough, you and I (Christians) will be their judges.

"Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" — I Corinthians 6:3

You'll notice that Matthew 25:41 says Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels— not for man. However, any man who rejects Christ as his Saviour will be punished in Hell with them, "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7).

VII. The Great White Throne Judgment.

Subject: The Unserved Dead

Time: After the Thousand Year Reign of Christ

Place: Before the Great White Throne

Basis: Their Works

Result: Cast In the Lake of Fire

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." — Revelation 20:11,12,15

This judgment takes place at the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ. At this time, the heavens and earth will have already melted with a fervent heat and passed away .

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." — Revelation 21:1

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

— II Peter 3:7,12

At the White Throne Judgment, all the *unsaved dead* who had lived from the time of Adam until the time of the end of the Millennium will be sentenced to their eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire for their refusal to *obey what God said*. In addition to the unsaved dead, those saved during the Tribulation and the Millennium will receive their *reward* at this judgment. In Revelation 11:18, there are *prophets* and *saints* present receiving rewards. (These should not be confused with the Church, the *body of Christ*, since they will have already received their rewards *before* the Tribulation and will have been living in their glorified bodies for 1000 years.)

In *The Seven Judgments* Dr. Peter S. Ruckman says:

"At the White Throne Judgment there are witnesses. There is a prosecuting attorney: the devil. The questions are asked by God and the culprit is allowed to cross-examine God but, quite naturally (Romans 3), he not only will be unable to answer the questions put to him by God, but he will be unable to ask one question that God can't answer. If you will study Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John you will

find that every time Jesus Christ was asked a question He had an answer ready and when He asked questions back, His audience could not answer. This will be the condition of the unsaved sinner, the unregenerate, Christ-rejecting, hell-bound sinner as he stands before God and is presented with his life from start to finish, three-dimensional, full-color, stereo, tweeter woofer, hi-fi sound, and is demanded to give account of himself to God and answer the great and burning question, *'Why did you trust your own righteousness to get saved when God's righteousness was freely available as a gift?'* There is no way to answer this question and the man who fails to answer it has his home in a lake of fire. God forbid that should be your eternal destiny. *'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...'*" (Acts 16:31)

Conclusion

We have seen that when the major divisions in the Bible are pointed out, the student of the word of God is able to better understand the scriptures in the light of God's different dealings with man, in different periods of time. Thus, many troublesome passages may be understood clearly, without distorting the word of God. Thereby, our King James Bible is proven to be without contradiction or error, and can be studied with the full confidence that the One who inspired it remains faithful to teach it to those who diligently search the scriptures. (Romans 8:17; II Timothy 2:10-12; Colossians 3:23.)

Original Lesson By
Vernon Hanson
Bible teacher
Gloryland Baptist Church

Edited and expanded by
Linton M. Smith Jr.
ThB., ThM., DD.

This Bible course has been prepared and distributed as a ministry of Gloryland Baptist Church. It and other gospel materials may be obtained from:

Gloryland Baptist Church
P.O. Box 587
Adamsville, AL 35005
Pastor Charles Andrews

(205) 791-0312
valiantfortruth@sureword.com

valiantfortruth@sureword.com
Please report site problems to the [Site Author](#)