

About The Prophet



Thomas S. Gibson

I was born in 1955, in Wainwright, into a christian family with two brothers and one sister. My dad was an accountant. He was confined to a wheelchair because of polio when he was young. When I was eleven we found out he had cancer. He died within a few months.

We went to a Gospel Mission church when I was young. They did not believe in prophets, apostles, or tongues. As I grew up we changed churches for various reasons. We always seemed to be changing churches every few years: Nazarene, Pentecostal (PAOC), Salvation Army, Evangelical Free. At least the Pentecostals believed in tongues.

When I was 10 or 12 I began to have some knowledge in my spirit that I was called to be something special for the Lord. But I did not understand, at that time, how I just knew this inside of me. I had no experience in the Holy Spirit revealing things to me at that time.

I went through a rebellion in my teens. I did not do anything “wrong” as many did. But I had the idea that if I rebelled against the Lord and did not do anything such as drinking or smoking, it would be okay. I just didn’t want to obey.

I was under conviction for this rebellion. Once, in a service I went forward to accept the Lord just to get rid of the conviction I was under. I didn’t mean it, and I did not fool God for one minute!

In a short lived revival that went through Wainwright when I was turning 18 I made a commitment to serve the Lord no matter what. This time I meant it. It gave me much peace in my heart and a renewed interest in studying the Bible.

But it was in that study time that I began to realize that many of the churches I had gone to did not believe everything in scripture. This started a full time Bible study in private. The Holy Spirit and the Bible were my only teachers.

It was at about this time that I was shown by the Lord my calling. It did not happen in a christian or even a religious setting. I was at the Wainwright Stampede. They had rides, stampede, and of course, carnival games.

I was walking around looking at the various games. I felt the Holy Spirit prompt me to watch a specific game, so I did. This particular game had a wheel which they would spin, and a mouse would come out of the hole in the centre, and because of the

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spinning wheel, would run to the outside and into one of the many holes there. These outside holes were numbered from 1 to 35 (or some such number; I can't remember how high the numbers went).

As I watched, I knew in my spirit that the Lord would give me the first, third, and fifth numbers out of the next five games. Of course, I did not gamble but just watched. The Lord gave me a number, and yes, it was the correct one. The next game He gave me nothing. The third He also gave me a number, and it was right. And so on through the fifth game, just as He had said.

I left the area and went for a long walk. During this time the Holy Spirit began to speak to me about my call to the prophetic office. I knew very little about it at that time, but the sign that the Lord had given me was clear: He had called me to the prophetic.

Even though the Lord did not give me prophecy or any type of public revelation at that time, He did talk to me and teach me about the commitment and sacrifice of my call. I would occasionally receive dreams concerning my personal life, but nothing the Lord wanted me to give in public.

It was in 1985 or 86 that the Lord got me interested in computers. This interest came directly from Him, not me. I knew then that He would use them to send prophecies He gave me to the world, but I could not understand how at that time. Telecommunication (as it was called then), was at a speed of 1200 baud (or bps), and sometimes as slow as 300 baud. At that speed anyone could read it faster than it came onto your screen! And computers were not interconnected as they are now.

As the speed increased the Lord directed me to place prophecies of others (still none through me) onto a BBS (computer bulletin board service). Other computers could then phone mine and read or download them. I called it "The Full Gospel BBS." It was not very successful, and I shut it down. I started it up about a year later under the name The Prophetic Word BBS. A little more successful, but not much.

At that time compuserve was getting popular, and I started an account there. Then the Lord began giving me prophecies and I would place them as a file in the religious section from time to time. This would have been about 1993 or 94.

In about the same time with the Lord's instruction I started looking into the idea of the internet. At that time it was totally command driven. No such thing as a web site, but using special commands from the keyboard you could send email. While I did not go into the internet at that time, I kept as eye on it as I knew the Lord wanted me to go in that direction.

It was in 1996 AGT (now known as Telus) gave Wainwright local internet access. It was in May of that year I started The Prophetic Word web page. All of this was with the

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clear direction of the Lord (from the beginning of my first computer purchase and onward). I knew from the beginning that I would use it to circulate the prophecies that He was to give me.

I have never married and have worked in and around Wainwright all my life. Most of it as a concrete finisher for a local construction firm. But I have also worked in the oilfield as a crane operator and driven truck.

Articles, books, prophecies, and other materials are available from the web site, The Prophetic Word: prophetic-word.org

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The Incredible Arrogance of Date Setting

There is a commonly used saying when someone refuses to accept no for an answer--“what part of no did you not understand?” It may seem strange to relate this to setting a date for Jesus return, but I believe it definitely does apply.

We find the following in Mark 13:32-33:

32. But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

33. Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appoint time is.

NASB

We find in this scripture that Jesus *clearly* states that even He does not know the time of His return. In verse 33 we also find that we cannot know that appointed time! And yet so many so-called christians engage in the practise of attempting to find or set a date for the Lord's return.

Just what part of “you do not know” did they not understand? Why is it that something so clearly stated can be misunderstood? And why is it that even christians who are familiar with this scripture can be deceived?

It is these questions that I wish to address here. Over the years I have seen and conversed--dare I say argued--with those who refused to accept the obvious meaning, and set dates for Jesus coming again.

Needless to say, these dates passed with no occurrence at all. So how did these people get around a passage of scripture that they all knew. The answer has many parts. Some simply ignored this, but most went to great lengths to point out this passage and then go on a very long explanation which amounted to “why these verses do not mean what they say.” Or to put it more directly, they simply said Jesus did not know what He was talking about. Of course, they put it more amicably than that!

One way that has been attempted by many people is to look only at verse 32, which states you cannot know the day or hour. Then they go on to state a year, and sometimes a month. The problem with this is that verse 33 expands on the previous verse by using the term “appointed time.” This can mean any time including a month or a year. There is no way around this scripture. Its meaning is very plain. You cannot know the time!

Still there are those who try.

There is another part of this problem that is less obvious to many. That is of those who

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attempt to infer a date without really setting it. It is usually stated with such terms as “very likely” or “strongly expected” to get around absolutely guaranteeing the occurrence. It appears that they want to come as closely as possible to predicting a date for the Lord’s return, without actually doing so.

Is this any different than those errors above? I do not believe so. It is simply trying to use the technical excuse that they never guaranteed their date.

I ran across one ministry that put out a slogan along the line of repenting or preparing for Jesus return because the year 2000 was coming. Under questioning from me, it was explained that this did not mean date setting, but was to cause people to repent.

What good is that type of repentance? Is it necessary to bring about a deception—although not a deception with a specific date, but an implied one—in order to cause people to repent? And assuming that someone does repent, what will happen if they believe that the year 2000 will bring Jesus return, and then nothing happens? The end of that person could be worse than before their repentance, as they will likely turn against the Bible with a vengeance because the “prophecy” did not happen as expected.

We in the church must stand against such high deception. It cannot be allowed to continue unchecked. We must be witnesses to those who have heard the dates—that this is not so. It is only with this strong stand that we can turn the tide of such sin.

One thing is certain. Those who have heard false prophecies setting a date for Jesus’ return, will not believe that date is wrong, but instead believe that the Bible is wrong. It is a sad fact that people in general do not search the scriptures to confirm the truth, but accept dates put before them as coming from the Bible. It is only our continual witness that will bring about a revelation of the truth from a Biblical standpoint.

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The Temptation To Interpret

(all scriptures quoted are NASB)

The Lord once taught me a lesson many years ago. It was a lesson of interpretation that I believe many prophets have yet to learn. Sometimes it seems that I have yet to learn it properly, as God has to remind me about this from time to time. The following is a dream that God gave me:

This dream was given to me during the 1970's. I cannot remember the year of this dream, but I believe it was in the late 1970's or early 1980's. It occurred during the summer.



“The Clock”

I was in the air over Wainwright, my home town, and I could see the downtown area. Several things, however, were different. I could see the clock [the clock is a two storey high epitaph with a clock at the top on all four sides and a plaque containing the names of the soldiers that died in both world wars from the Wainwright area], the streets, the sidewalks, but only two buildings. All the other buildings were gone with only vacant lots in their place. The two buildings were the Bank of Montreal, at the corner of the clock, and a small old garage located at a back alley about half a block southeast from the bank.

When I awoke, the presence of the Lord was very strong and I knew this was from the Lord. But as I sought the Lord for a meaning, He was completely silent. This seeking the Lord with no response went on for many days, and into weeks.

Eventually I just let the subject die with a question about whether downtown buildings would all be removed except for two? From time to time over the years, I would think of this again, and question the Lord, but still there was no answer.

It was many years later (about 10 or 15), when God brought this back to my mind, and this time asked me what I thought about it. I had no answer. What I then realized was that those two buildings had both been demolished, but the others were still there.

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The Lord then said that the reason I could only see the two buildings was that He was highlighting these to show me that they would be removed.

What He said next was most important! He said that the reason He did it this way was to teach me that no prophecy could be interpreted by a man, but only by God!! I then recalled the scripture:

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. 2 Peter 1:20-21 (NASB)

This was a lesson that was most important. Any prophecy, whether in the Bible or through man today, cannot be interpreted without direction from God. It is so easy to read into, or think we know, what some prophecy means. But we do not always know! We just think we do!

There was another aspect of this that came to mind. It was all of those prophecies in the Old Testament that deal with the Lord's first coming. They have been fulfilled. But if you went to them and read them, without first knowing how they came to pass, would you be able to interpret them accurately? Not likely!

The prophecies were given to us both as a sign and an idea of what God was to do. It gave us some of the facts for what was to come. But it did not state when and how these things would come to pass, or all the details involved. That was not important! You are suppose to live by faith daily, and not by an interpretation of prophecy!

For we live by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

If God was to let us run wild with every interpretation that we come up with we would stop listening to Him altogether. And, indeed, that's what tends to happen with so many people. It is sad to see this. Prophecy is to give some knowledge of what is to come without taking our concentration off of the Lord!

If God gave us complete details in the prophecies, we would no longer need the daily direction of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We would then be in total control, and God would be pushed aside. It is what our flesh would demand. It always fights against the Spirit of God in our lives. And when we allow it to take control we have put our King, the Lord Jesus Christ, in second place.

For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. Galatians 5:17

The Temptation to Interpret

So we see prophecy is meant to give some idea of what is to come, but not to lay out complete details. And for good reason! We are to live by faith with the Holy Spirit's daily direction, not by pieces of prophecies which we interpret (hopefully accurately!) with our own thinking.

If we got into that type of error, we would no longer need God's direction, and we would go out and do as we think. God has arranged it so that it is by faith, and not by our sight or thinking!

This is exactly what got Adam and Eve into trouble in the Garden of Eden. They rationalized with their minds what God meant with "do not eat" when the serpent tempted them. They figured that they knew more than God. It was a test of faith which they failed.

I hope we do not fail the daily tests of faith that God places in our lives. It is by passing these tests that we grow spiritually. Remember that it is by faith in God's direction, and not by fact of our thinking, that we should live our daily lives.

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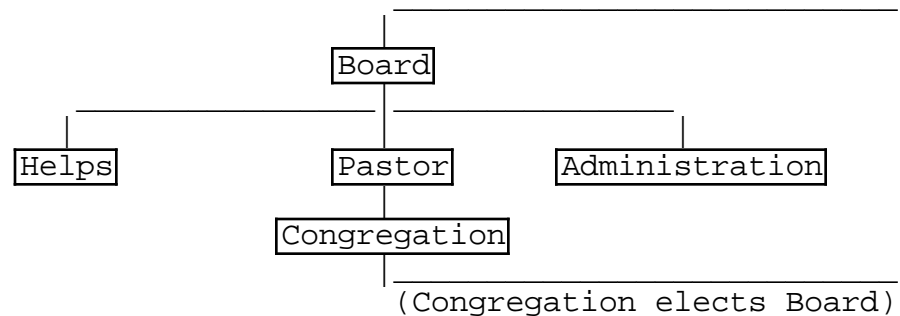
The Leadership of the New Testament Church

Today's church leadership consists mainly of the Board (elected by the members), and the Pastor (chosen by the board or by the members). The Board answers to the members of the church; the members of the church answer to the Pastor; the Pastor answers to the Board.

Everyone answers to someone else and we have a circle. Everyone is elected. And we end up with a democracy which satisfies the governments for a religious organization that is tax exempt; and it satisfies the world which loves to see democracy in action.

But is this compatible with the new testament church that is given to us in the Bible? Does God support a democracy?

Let's look at the church leadership as we find in most evangelical churches today.



Here we can clearly see the circle that I was referring to above. It is a democracy circle.

But God has not given us a democratic church in the Bible. He has always had a theocratic type of government--that is, the Lord Jesus Himself rules His church. Clearly democracy in the church cannot be compatible with scripture, but rather, we are using modern thinking to set out the leadership in the church today.

But what is the leadership in the new testament church?

In order to understand the references to foundations which we find in the following passage we need to understand how they made a foundation for a building in those

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days. They did not use concrete and steel as we do. Instead they built the foundation using blocks of stone. The most perfectly squared stone was the cornerstone. From there the rest of the foundation stones were aligned to it, making a straight stone foundation upon which the building was erected.

To find the scriptural church foundation we need to look at Ephesians:

19 So then you are no longer stranger and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; Ephesians 2:19-21

We see that Christ Jesus is the cornerstone, and the apostles and prophets that **He appoints** are the rest of the foundation. Therefore, if a church does not accept the apostle and prophet, they are clearly eliminating most of their own foundation. How can such a church stand? Clearly it cannot!

We need to understand that the apostle and prophet have not been eliminated from the new testament church. But they have been eliminated from most churches today! This is a very grievous error. If we eliminate such offices from the church, we can no longer build this church in God's Biblical order!

Once we have realized that the foundation is made up of Jesus Christ as the cornerstone and the rest of the foundation as the apostles and prophets, we can look at the rest of the leadership for the church which we find in the Bible.

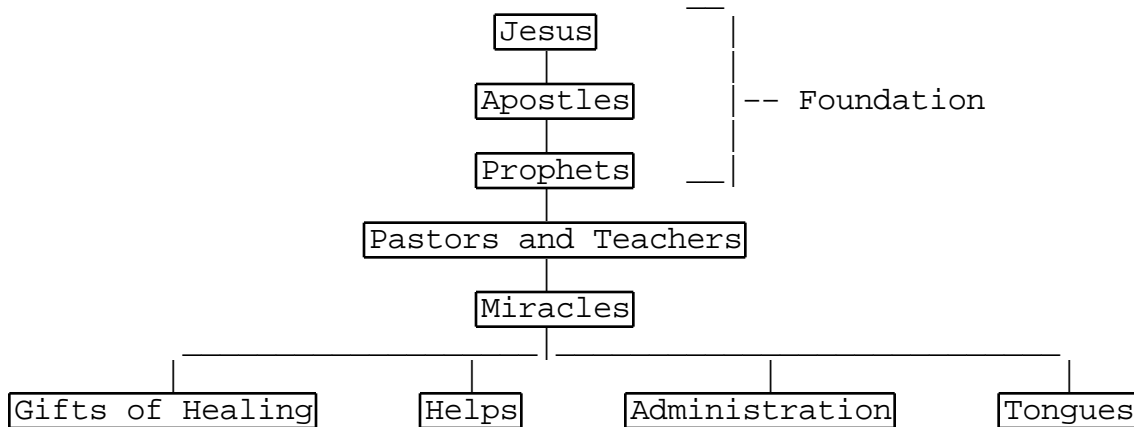
28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. I Corinthians 12:28

11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, Ephesians 4:11

It should be pointed out that pastors and teachers are put together. The reason for this is that a pastor, in Biblical terms, is a shepherd and teacher of the congregation.

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If we put all of this into a chart it will look like this:



Here we find the true church leadership which starts with Jesus, and continues with those whom He has appointed within the church. In the quote from Ephesians above we see that Jesus appoints people to these areas; they are not elected or chosen by men.

You will notice that in I Corinthians 12:28 that Gifts of Healing, Helps, Administration, and Tongues, are put together into one level.

However, we would be seriously in error if we took the above chart and made man in charge. Man cannot and must not be in charge of the church.

In any position that God chooses to place a man whether apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, or whatever, that man must submit to the leading of the Lord. It must be the Lord who is in charge through the man. Any man that God calls must be in submission to the Father.

Then as the Lord works through the ones who He appoints, the church will be lead by Him above. It is important to realize that every person should submit to the Holy Spirit's leading, and therefore, each and everyone will be working together as the Lord directs.

This is the true church that God has ordained to be in total submission to Him. I personally do not know of any church that follows it. But if we wish to have a church that truly submits to the Lord Jesus Christ, instead of to each other, we will have to conform to this model of submission which we find in the Bible!

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Now let us look at the leadership of the local church. This has always been assumed to be the pastor. However, there is no scripture for this. Indeed, the word pastor only appears once in the entire new testament in Ephesians chapter 4. The pastor is a shepherd, teaching and guiding the sheep. He is never referred to as a leader of the local assembly.

As we look at the scriptures we will find that the apostles appointed, as the Holy Spirit directed, elders who are the leadership of the local body.

21 And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,

22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they believed.

24 And they passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia. Acts 14:21-24

Here we see that Paul and Barnabus were setting up elders in the churches before they moved on to other cities. The elders were left in charge of the local church.

5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,

6 namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.

7 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,

8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,

9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. Titus

1:5-9

Here Paul leaves Titus in charge to set up elders in every city. Starting in verse 6 we see the requirements that must be met for one to be an elder. These are strict requirements that always must be met.

1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,

2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising over-sight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;

3 not yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.

4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. I Peter 5:1-5

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Here Peter exhorts the elders not to exercise power, but in humility to the Lord, lead and shepherd the flock. Humility and living as an example is the only way to truly shepherd the flock. Exercising power is never allowed by those in the leadership of the church.

17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. I Timothy 5:17

Elders are the main, but not the only, preachers and teachers of the congregation.

16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus in order that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.

18 And when they had come to him, he said to them,

“You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time,

19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews;

20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,

21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 “And now, behold, bound in spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there,

23 except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.

24 “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

25 “And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will see my face no more.

26 “Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of all men.

27 “For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

28 “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

29 “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;

30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

31 “therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

32 “And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

33 “I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothes.

34 “You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me.

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35 “In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” Acts 20:16-35

Here Paul needed to talk to the leadership of the local church. He therefore called together the elders of the church.

27 Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

28 And one of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius.

29 and in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.

30 And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabus and Saul to the elders. Acts 11:27-30

Here again we see that when sending to the church they sent it to the elders who were obviously the leadership of that church.

14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; James 5:14

When the leadership of a church was to pray and anoint a person it was the elders that did so.

1 And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

2 And when Paul and Barnabus had great dissention and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabus and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.

3 Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren.

4 And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.

5 But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.”

6 And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. Acts 15:1-6

19 “Therefore, it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles,

20 but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood.

21 “For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose

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men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabus--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren, Acts 15:19-22

Whenever there was a question of doctrine it was to the apostles and the elders of the church that the question was given. They then took this before the Lord and reported back what He answered.

The elders were clearly the leadership within the local assembly. They were the main preachers and teachers, guiding the local church in all things.

I think it is clear that the four fold ministry (also called the five fold ministry--see chapter 9) was part of the congregation, preached or taught from time to time, but were themselves just part of the local church.

They continued in whatever work God gave them to do, and would submit to the elders of the local church, and of course, to the apostles within the Body of Christ.

(For the purpose of this book I am referring to this as the four fold ministry, as opposed to the five fold ministry. The reason for this is that some [including me] combine pastors and teachers under one heading.)

We need, therefore, to examine scripture to find the role of each of the four fold ministries as they did their part within the church body. We understand that each one of them must submit to the Lord and His direction in their lives.

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,
20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,
21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; Ephesians 2:19-21

The very foundation of the church is Jesus, and with Him the apostles and prophets. This shows the importance of these two parts of the four fold ministries.

11 And he gave some as apostles, some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,
12 for the quipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;
13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ.
Ephesians 4:11-13

Let us look at each of the callings within the four fold ministry to see what scripture says about their individual roles.

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Apostles

- 1 And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."
- 2 And when Paul and Barnabus had great dissention and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabus and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.
- 3 Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren.
- 4 And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.
- 5 But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses."
- 6 And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.
- 7 And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.
- 8 "And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to the, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us;
- 9 and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.
- 10 "Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?
- 11 "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are." Acts 15:1-11

The apostles are the highest calling among men (see chapter 7). It is their place to call upon God and to follow Him in all the questions of doctrine and the direction of the church.

Prophets

- 27 Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.
 - 28 And one of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius. Acts 11-27-28
- 3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.
I Corinthians 14:3

A prophet receives words, dreams, or visions from the Lord concerning future events for edification (to build up), exhortation (to give warnings), and consolation.

The Leadership of the New Testament Church

Evangelists

8 And on the next day we departed and came to Caesarea; and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him. Acts 21:8

26 But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Arise and go south to the road that descend from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert road.)

27 And he arose and went; and behold, there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship.

28 And he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.

29 And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot."

30 And when Philip had run up, he heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31 And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Acts 8:26-31

Here is an example of an evangelist. Philip is called to preach and teach the word outside of the church. The church is evangelized—they have already received Christ. Evangelists go to the world to show them the way of the gospel. They go wherever sinners are found.

Pastors and Teachers

35 But Paul and Barnabus stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching, with many others also, the word of the Lord. Acts 15:35

Paul and Barnabus, along with many others, preached and taught the Word of God to the people. This is the call of the teacher within the church. Pastor means to shepherd or guide the people. This includes teaching, but is not limited to it.

So we see that the four fold ministry is within the church, each doing their part for the Lord as He directs them. The Word clearly places the apostles and the elders as the leadership, with the elders—which are chosen by the Lord—as the ones who direct the local assembly.

We also see from the scriptures that each one must operate in humility and obedience to the Holy Spirit. In this way there will be unity within the various callings.

Dating of the Old Testament

These notes date the Old Testament by the dates given in scripture starting with year 0 at creation. Where necessary, I have added notes to explain how I arrived at the dates. References are given in brackets throughout.

There are several areas in which the dates cannot be stated with certainty. Those dates are the birth of Abram (1949), and the last few hundred years before Christ.

0000: Creation -- Creation of Adam. Lived 930 years. [Gen. 5:1-5]

0130: Birth of Seth. Lived 912 years. [Gen. 5:3-8]

0235: Birth of Enosh. Lived 905 years. [Gen. 5:6-12]

0325: Birth of Kenan. Lived 910 years. [Gen. 5:9-14]

0395: Birth of Mahalalel. Lived 910 years. [Gen. 5:12-17]

0460: Birth of Jared. Lived 962 years. [Gen. 5:15-20]

0622: Birth of Enoch. Lived 365 years. [Gen 5:18-24]

0687: Birth of Methuselah. Lived 969 years. [Gen.5:21-27]

0874: Birth of Lamech. Lived 777 years. [Gen. 5:25-31]

1056: Birth of Noah. Lived 950 years. [Gen. 5:28-32; 9:28-29]

1556: Birth of Ham, Shem, and Japheth. [Gen 5:32]. Ham youngest [Gen. 9:20-24]. Shem born 1559 [Gen. 11:11].

Note: the birth of Ham, Shem, and Japheth is only given by one date. We know from Gen. 9:20-24 that Ham was the youngest. In order to calculate the date of Shem's birth, we need to work backwards from the birth of Shem's son, Arpachshad, in Gen. 11:10-11, which was 2 years after the flood.

1656: Flood came: Noah's age: 600 years. 2 mons. 17 days [Gen. 7:11]

Dating of the Old Testament

- 1657: God tells Noah to leave Ark: 601 years. 2 mons. 27 days: Noah's age presumed. [Gen. 8:13]
- 1659: Birth of Arpachshad from Shem: 2 years after the flood. Shem 100 years old. [Gen. 11:10-13].
- 1694: Birth of Shelah [Gen. 11:12-15]
- 1724: Birth of Eber [Gen. 11:14-17]
- 1758: Birth of Peleg [Gen. 11:16-19]
- 1788: Birth of Reu [Gen. 11:18-21]
- 1820: Birth of Serug [Gen. 11:20-23]
- 1850: Birth of Nahor [Gen. 11:22-25]
- 1879: Birth of Terah [Gen. 11:24-27]
- 1949: Birth of Abram, Nahor, Haran [Gen. 11:26-32].
-

Note: Scripture provides only a date for the birth of all three children. The date provided could be the date of the first born or the date after all three were born. Without a specific date for Abram's birth, I can only estimate. I have assumed that he was the first born, and have used the date of 1949. This may be correct or may be out a few years. Therefore all dates from this point are only estimates.

- 1949: Birth of Abram.
- 2035: Birth of Ishmael (Hagar). [Gen. 16:16]
- 2049: Birth of Issac (Sarah). [Gen. 21:1-5]
- 2109: Birth of Esau and Jacob. [Gen. 25:24-26]
- 2200 approx: Birth of Joseph (mother: Rachael). [Gen. 30:22-24]
- 2217 approx: Joseph pastures land before his dream. [Gen. 37:2]
- 2230 approx: Appears to be the beginning of the 7 years of good. [Gen. 41:46]

Dating of the Old Testament

2239 approx: Joseph makes himself known to his brothers. [Gen. 45:6]

2239: Israel (Jacob) comes to Pharaoh at age 130. [Gen. 47:8-9]

2256: Jacob, after living in the land 17 years, died. [Gen. 47:28]

2310 approx: Joseph dies in Egypt. 110 years old. [Gen. 50:26]

2669: Israel's departing from Egypt; the 1st day of the 1st month of year 1. [Ex. 12:2 & 40] Calculated from Israel's arrival at Egypt (see year 2239 + 430)

2669: Israel's journey from Ramses on 1st month, 15th day [Ex. 33:3]

2670: 1st day, 1st mon, 2nd year, tabernacle was erected & Moses begins to take census in 1st day of 2nd month in 2nd year. [Ex. 40:17]

2670: Congregation moves out in 2nd year, 2nd month, on 20th day; going from Sinai to Paran wilderness [Ex. 10:11]

2708: Aaron (123 years old) the priest dies at Mount Hor in 1st day of 5th month of the 40th year. [Ex 33:38]

2709: Moses instructs the people to go in and possess the land; 40th year, 11th month, 1st day. [Deut. 1:4-8]

NOTE: From this point on in scripture there are no longer any references to birth dates or years of the Israeli calendar. In order to calculate the dates as accurately as possible, I have compared the kings of Israel to the kings of Judah. As an example: a king that died in the 3rd year would stop reigning within the 3rd year; that is, after the end of the 2nd year, but before the end of, or at the end of, the 3rd year. This means that the average would be 2 1/2 years in this example. In the following listings of kings they are taken to the nearest 1/2 year, using the system noted above, because this would be the most accurate dating system for the kings of Israel and Judah during this period. See next note below for how the dates of the early kings are calculated. All dates are for the beginning of their reign.

3105.5: Israel: Ish-bosheth reigns 2 yrs. [II Sam. 2:10]

3105.5: Judah: David reigns 7 1/2 years in Hebron [II Sam. 2:11]

Dating of the Old Testament

3113.0: Israel and Judah: David reigns 33 years [II Sam. 2:11; 5:4-5; I Kings 2:11] David reigns 40 years total (33 + 7). Closer to 7 than to 8. See note above, and note below.

3145.5: Israel and Judah: Solomon reigns 40 years [I Kings 2:11-12; 6:1; 11:42]

Note: See I Kings 6:1 for the setting of the dates for the Kings. The dates above for the kings of Israel and Judah are reverse calculated from this verse.

3185.5: Israel: Jeroboam reigns 22 years [I Kings 12:20; 14:20]

3185.5: Judah: Rehoboam reigns 17 yrs. [I Kings 12:1, 16-17; 14:21]

3203.0: Judah: Abijam reigns 3 years [I Kings 14:31; 15:1-2]

3205.0: Judah: Asa reigns 41 years. [I Kings 15:9-10]

3206.0: Israel: Nadab reigns 2 years [I Kings 14:20]

3208.0: Israel: Baasha reigns 24 years [I Kings 15:33]

3230.5: Israel: Elah reigns 2 years [I Kings 16:8]

3232.5: Israel: Zimri reigns 7 days. [I Kings 16:15] Omri & Tibni fought for throne for some time. [I Kings 16:21-22]

3235.5: Israel: Omri reigns 12 years [I Kings 16:23]

3242.5: Israel: Ahab reigns 22 years [I Kings 16:29]

3246.0: Judah: Jehoshaphat reigns 25 yrs. [I Kings 15:24; 22:41-42]

3262.5: Israel: Ahaziah reigns 2 years [I Kings 22:40, 51]

3263.5: Israel: Jehoram reigns 12 years. [II Kings 1:17; 3:1]

3268.0: Judah: Jehoram reigns 8 yrs [I Kings 22:50; II Kings 8:16-17]

3275.0: Judah: Ahaziah reigns 1 year

Dating of the Old Testament

NOTE: Ahaziah, son of Jeroram, king of Judah, became king in the 11th year Jehoram, king of Israel, but did not begin to reign until the 12th year of Jehoram king of Israel (3276.0). Refer to II Kings 8:25-26; 9:16, 29.

- 3276.0: Israel: Jehu reigns 28 years [II Kings 9:14-37; 10:35-36]
- 3276.0: Judah: Athaliah reigns 6 1/2 years. [II Kings 11:1-20]
- 3282.5: Judah: Jehoash reigns 40 years. [II Kings 11:21; 12:1]
- 3305.0: Israel: Jehoahaz reigns 17 years. [II Kings 10:35; 13:1]
- 3319.0: Israel: Jehoash (Joash) reigns 16 years [II Kings 13:10]
- 3321.5: Judah: Amaziah reigns 29 years [II Kings 12:21; 14:1-2]
- 3335.0: Israel: Jeroboam reigns 41 years [II Kings 14:23]
- 3361.5: Judah: Azariah reigns 52 years [II Kings 15:1-2]
- 3399.0: Israel: Zechariah reigns 6 months [II Kings 14:29; 15:8]
- 3400.0: Israel: Shallum reigns 1 month [II Kings 15:13]
- 3400.0: Israel: Menahim reigns 10 years [II Kings 15:17]
- 3411.0: Israel: Pekahiah reigns 2 years [II Kings 15:22-23]
- 3413.0: Israel: Pekah reigns 20 years [II Kings 15:25, 27]
- 3414.5: Judah: Jotham reigns 16 years [II Kings 15:7, 32-33]
- 3429.5: Judah: Ahaz reigns 16 years [II Kings 15:38; 16:1-2]
- 3441.0: Israel: Hoshea reigns 9 years [II Kings 15:30; 17:1]
- 3443.5: Judah: Hezekiah reigns 29 years [II Kings 16:20; 18:1-2]

Dating of the Old Testament

NOTE: From here on there are only kings of Judah. The former method of comparing the kings of Israel and Judah against each other is not available. This former method was reasonably accurate; but now the years of the kings can only be close approximations.

3472.5: Judah: Mannasseh reigns 55 years [II Kings 20:21; 21:1]

3527.5: Judah: Amon reigns 2 years [II Kings 21:18-19]

3529.5: Judah: Josiah reigns 31 years [II Kings 21:26; 22:1]

3560.5: Judah: Jehoahaz reigns 3 months [II Kings 23:30-31]

3560.5: Judah: Eliakim reigns 11 years [II Kings 23:34-36]

3571.5: Judah: Jehoiachin reigns 8 years (3 months in Jerusalem) [II Kings 24:6-8, 12]

3579.5: Judah: Mattaniah (Zedekiah) reigns 11 years [II Kings 24:17-18]

3591.0: Babylon: Beginning of the 70 years of the reign of Babylon; 19th year of King Nebuchadnezzar [II Kings 25:1-2, 8; Jer. 39:1-2; 25:1; II Chr. 36:17-23; Ezra 1:1-5]

3661.0: Persia: Reigns of Cyrus, King of Persia. [II Chr. 36:17-23; Ezra 1:1-5]

To estimate the remaining time in the Old Testament in which dates are not given, I looked to the average generation, and used the geneology in Matthew. This method, again, introduces an estimate, as in the case of Abram's birthdate.

To calculate this I took the generations between two kings of whom the dates of their reign are known, and arrived at an average for a generation. This average is then used from that last king to the generation of Jesus Christ.

Dating of the Old Testament

<p>3105.5 David -----</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Solomon</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Rehoboam</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Abijah</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Asa</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Jehoshaphat</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Joram</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Uzziah</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Jotham</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Ahaz</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Hezekiah</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Manasseh</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Amon</p>	<p>-----</p> <p> </p> <p>-----</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3529.5 (Josiah)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>-3105.5 (David)</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">- 13 Generations = 424.0</p> <p style="text-align: right;">424.0 ÷ 13 = 32.6 years/generation</p>
<p>3529.5 Josiah -----</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Jeconiah</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Shealtiel</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Zerubbabel</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Abuid</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Eliakim</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Azor</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Zadok</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Achim</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Eliud</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Eleazar</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Matthan</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Jacob</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Joseph</p> <p>Jesus (Christ) -----</p>	<p>-----</p> <p> </p> <p>-----</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">- 14 Generations from Josiah to Jesus</p> <p style="text-align: right;">14 X 32.6 = 456.4 years from Josiah to Jesus</p> <p style="text-align: right;">3529.5 + 456.4 = 3985.9 years in Old Testament Approximately</p>

Articles, books, prophecies, and other materials are available from the web site, The Prophetic Word: prophetic-word.org

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The Order of End Time Events

(All scriptures quoted are from the New American Standard Bible)

I have been studying prophetic scripture since I was called to be a prophet at 18 years of age (that's about 27 years ago). Many of the prophecies in scripture give only a piece of an event without explaining where the prophecy fits in with other events.

It has become obvious to me that there is at least one place in scripture that does contain an outline of events in the order that they will occur. That outline is found in Matthew 24:1—25:46, Mark 13:1-37, and Luke 21:5-38.

This is the story where Jesus was asked by His disciples when the prophecies of the end will come to pass. Jesus begins at that time and gives an outline of the events in the order that they will occur until His return. By studying this outline we can get an idea of where different events will fit in with one another.

I will use the account in Matthew for this study because it contains the most detail.

The outline of prophetic events given by Jesus can be divided into 7 categories. These categories are:

1. Beginning of Birth Pangs [Matt. 24:4-8]
2. Rise of Evil [Matt. 24:9-14]
3. Abomination of Desolation and Great Tribulation [Matt. 24:15-28]
4. Jesus Second Coming [Matt. 24:29-31]
5. Knowing When the Time is Close [Matt. 24:32-36]
6. Warning to be Ready [Matt. 24:37--25:30]
7. Judgment Day [Matt. 25:31-46]

The first four are the order of events, and the last three give warnings to be ready and a description of the Judgment Day.

The prophecy begins with the disciples commenting on the temple building, and its glory. Then as Jesus answers them, He begins to tell of all the events that shall occur throughout time until His return.

1. Beginning of Birth Pangs [Matt. 24:4-8]

- 4 And Jesus answered them and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.
- 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.
- 6 "And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.
- 7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.
- 8 "But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

It is very rare for anyone to claim that they are the Christ. However, we have certainly

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seen many wars, and they are increasing. We have seen famines and earthquakes. But Jesus says these are just the beginning of the birth pangs.

Clearly we are living in this first category. We have seen just a little of what is to come.

2. Rise of Evil [Matt. 24:9-14]

9 “Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name.

10 “And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another.

11 “And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.

12 “And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold.

13 “But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved.

14 “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.

Has this come to pass yet? Look at verse 9. It says, that we will be hated of *all* nations. This certainly has not been seen yet. There are very few nations that truly hate christians. So this has not yet to come to pass.

As we look at the rest of this passage we see that we are now living before this period of time; although it could be said that we are just beginning to get into it. There are many false prophets around, and there has been some increase in lawlessness, but I believe that this speaks of a time when these things will significantly increase.

The gospel has been preached in much of the world, but has it been preached in *all* the world? I don’t believe it has yet. There are many areas of the middle east (arabic nations) which have not heard the gospel, or are just beginning too. So while this is close to coming to pass, it has not happened yet.

I do believe that we are close (but how close?) to entering this time frame. We will have to wait and see how long it will be before these prophecies are fulfilled.

3. Abomination of Desolation and Great Tribulation [Matt. 24:15-28]

15 “Therefore when you see the Abomination of Desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),

16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains;

17 let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house;

18 and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak.

19 “But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days!

20 “But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath;

21 for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.

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22 “And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.

23 “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ’” or ‘There He is,’ do not believe him.

24 “For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

25 “Behold, I have told you in advance.

26 If therefore they say to you, ‘Behold, He is in the wilderness,’ do not go forth, or, ‘Behold, He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe them.

27 “For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.

28 “Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

The “Abomination of Desolation” is an act done by the antichrist. So at this point clearly he will be reigning on the earth. If we look at Daniel 11:31 we will see that this act will be done in the sanctuary of the Temple. However, at this time the Temple has not yet been built. This building of the Temple, is one event to watch for in Israel.

False christs and false prophets will arise even more than before in an attempt to deceive christians. It is important to realize that miracles done by someone does not make that person a christian. Miracles can be done by satan through those he has chosen to deceive, even those that are in the churches.

Also we find that the return of Jesus will come as lightning that flashes from the east to the west. He will not come as He did in the first coming. Remembering this will keep one from being deceived so easily.

4. Jesus Second Coming [Matt. 24:29-31]

29 “But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken,

30 and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory,

31 “And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

Here we clearly see the coming again of Jesus. He will not be walking the earth as He did at His first coming, but will come forth in the sky and all will see Him.

In verse 31 we see the rapture of the saints (the gathering together of Jesus’ followers from one end of the earth to the other). And it clearly occurs *at His Second Coming!* This has not been a popular prophetic interpretation. But it is unmistakable in this passage exactly where this gathering together of the saints (the rapture) takes place.

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5. Knowing When the Time is Close [Matt. 24:32-36]

32 “Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near;

33 “even so you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.

34 “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

35 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

36 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

I have heard of some of the most ridiculous ideas concerning what the fig tree means. One of them is that the fig tree must be Israel’s return as a nation. Why would someone try and come up with an explanation when the meaning is stated in verse 33?

It says, “when you see *all* these things.” What things? The things that Jesus has been speaking about since He began this long explanation to His disciples. So the fig tree represents *all* of what Jesus has been speaking up until this point. This includes the anti-christ and the abomination of desolation.

6. Warning to be Ready [Matt. 24:37--25:30]

37 “For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.

38 “For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the son of Man be.

...

I will not take the space here to quote the entire passage because of length. It is, however, good reading. It gives examples of how sudden the coming of Jesus will be, and how we are to be ready.

Matthew 25:14-30 shows how we must be constantly serving Jesus until His return. We are not to sit back and accomplish nothing until He shows up; but rather, we should be witnessing and serving in any way that God calls us to throughout this time.

7. Judgment Day [Matt. 25:31-46]

31 “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

32 “And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;

33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

34 “Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

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35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;
36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to me.'
37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink?
38 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?
39 'And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'
40 "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'
41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;
42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink;
43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'
44 "Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?'
45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'
46 "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

In order to find the exact time of the Judgment Day, look at Revelation 20:1-15. Verses 11-15 is the Judgment Day. This occurs right after the 1000 year reign of Christ.

It is at that time that we shall see who was truly serving Jesus from their heart; and who were hypocrites; not serving Jesus, but just very religious.

This is important, for we know that the Lord looks at the heart, not at our outward actions. He cannot be deceived. Many will say they are serving the Lord, but how many truly are?

Articles, books, prophecies, and other materials are available from the web site, The Prophetic Word: prophetic-word.org

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Negotiating With God

What is negotiating with God? Is it good?

I am not referring to asking understanding from the Lord, but rather when God comes to us with something, and we attempt to negotiate with Him until we have an agreement that we can live with.

This is obviously sin. We are not to try and negotiate with the Lord until we have something we like, but rather we are to submit to His will.

There are two types of negotiations with God. Those in which He asked us to do something that we would rather not. This usually begins with excuses and complaints that someone else should do it, or perhaps that we could not do that. Like God does not know who to ask and we have to tell Him who He should go to!

The other type is the reverse. We wish to have something and He says no. On and on we will go until God has had a face full of complaints as we try to get our own will.

But doesn't the Word say if we ask repeatedly we can get it? Yes it does, but to what end?

Lets look at that passage.

5 And He said to them, "Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves;
6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him';
7 and from inside he shall answer and say, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.'
8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.
9 "And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.
10 "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened.
11 "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he?
12 "Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?
13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? Luke 11:5-13

These verses are used by those who say when you wish for something to ask

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repeatedly until you get it. In some ways, this can be true. But can we ask for something that we should not have, and receive it for our constant repetition in requests? I believe you can. The following took place in my life and taught me a valuable lesson.

Many years ago I was at a place where I needed to buy a new car—well at least a newer car. I had done some looking but had not found anything yet. At one point I went to a dealers lot and started looking through the lines of second hand cars. I came across one that I liked and the salesman was pushing hard (of course!). So I said I would think about it. I did this because I wanted to take a walk and talk with the Lord about it.

It was during this walk that I started to ask God whether or not I should have this car. He was adamant that I should not. I asked the Lord several times and always the answer was “no.” But I didn’t like the answer! So I kept asking. Eventually He said “yes”. Then I became concerned that it may not be His will. But from that point on the answer was always “yes”.

I got my loan through my own bank and therefore it was a few days before I actually bought the car. But after a few days I happily finished the paperwork at the dealership and drove off.

It was then it hit me. As I drove off to the street, and as I crossed the sidewalk and curb, or more accurately as I drove across the property line, the conviction of the Lord hit me. It was very strong. I knew then that I had done wrong. But why was it wrong when God had told me it was okay?

As the Lord dealt with me about this I began to realize that I had begged off of God something He clearly did not want in my life! As the Word says, if I asked and asked I could get it, but even though I got it, it was not what God had wanted.

Afterward the Lord would not let me out of it easily. I had to keep that car for about three years. Every time I got into it the Spirit reminded me that it was not His will for me to have that particular car. That was hard to take. Especially when the Lord would not let me get rid of it! It is a lesson that I shall never forget!

After about the three year mark of ownership I was allowed by the Lord to sell it. As I look back on it, it was not a reliable car, and I surely would have ended up with something better had I listen to God in the first place!

After that I was very careful about repeated requests. These days, if the Lord has not given me an answer to a question, of course, I will continue to look and ask for the answer. But if I have a “no”, then I accept that “no” without argument.

Remember, God knows what is best! Isn’t that why we go to Him in the first place? So

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when we get an answer we do not like, we should learn to humble ourselves and accept it. We will be better off with God's will, than with our own.

Articles, books, prophecies, and other materials are available from the web site, The Prophetic Word: prophetic-word.org

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The Fear of the Lord

Many times in the Bible we run into the phrase “the fear of the Lord.” At least this is how the King James Version translates it. Other translations—more modern ones—tend to use the word “reverence.” So which should it be? The two words have significantly different meanings.

Do we really understand the term “the fear of the Lord?” While many may say, “yes,” to this; they often disagree among themselves as to what it should mean. Many of these translations (if they are honest), put a note in the margin saying that its literal meaning is fear.

So why then translate it “reverence”? If it means something else, why are they translating it this way? Are they attempting to re-write scripture to make it say what is more politically correct for modern times? If the note in the margins of many Bibles says it literally means “fear” why don’t we translate it that way?

Many years ago I did not understand how we could fear God and still have a relationship with Him. Perhaps, I thought, it really did mean reverence.

It was not until the Lord began to deal with me about worldliness that I began to understand what fearing God really meant. My understanding was enlightened when the Lord rebuked me for not obeying him at one point. He pointed out that I was “in fear of man,” or feared what man thought or would say to me if I had done the Lord’s bidding.

In other words, I had a fear of man and therefore did what man thought was best. After all, what would man think of me if I did something he opposed, or thought was crazy?

The fear of God is the same. If we fear God, we will be concerned about what God thinks, and what He would say or do if we did not do His will. This is the “fear of the Lord.” We must learn to discipline ourselves to be concerned only with what He thinks and wills. Then we will be truly fearing Him, and not man.

This type of fear will not hinder our relationship with Him, but will instead produce and stronger relationship than we have ever had before.

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A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

I believe that the most powerful sermon recorded in the scriptures is found in the gospel of Matthew and was spoken by Jesus Himself.

If you take this sermon just as Jesus preached it, you will find that it is most controversial and important. Why? The sermon on the mount completely contradicts everything man has taught, and still teaches in many churches today. Many people try and tone down this sermon, but I believe He meant it just the way He spoke it.

For the purpose of this study I have divided The Sermon into 27 points. We will look at it point by point. It is found in Matthew chapters 5 through 7. I am quoting from the New American Standard Bible (NASB). As we take a close examination of this we will realize that it certainly does not follow after the normal preaching of the day. It was straight forward, powerful, and destructive to the thoughts of man!

To begin:

5:1 And when He saw the multitudes, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

5:2 And opening his mouth He began to teach them, saying,

Point 1:

5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

We find that this is the first time that anyone has taught that the poor are blessed. This totally runs against all the teaching of the world. They have sought after money as if it was a god, spending much of their time at this endeavour.

The church has also followed after this in many cases. Seeking finances for grandiose building projects before they seek after the things of God. It makes you wonder about all those expensive churches, whether they really can believe this point from the Lord!

I have also noticed that those who are the most receptive to the gospel are those that have little in this world. It seems that riches cloud our spiritual judgment!

In order to be "poor in spirit" one cannot be in love with money, that is, seeking it much of the time. We have to seek the Lord first, and after this we allow Him to show us His way to meet our needs in this earth.

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Point 2:

5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Quoted often at funerals, this comment looks at the eternity of time. We have a habit in this fleshly life to see only what is around us. But the fact remains that we are only here temporarily; and permanently (as children of God) we live with Jesus. When we only see with our natural eyes, we have lost focus of what is the true situation in this earth.

Point 3:

5:5 Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

We do not find this quoted enough! Many times christians who are wronged for one reason or another try to take revenge. It is the first thing that comes to mind, the first natural reaction in the flesh. But this is not the teaching of Jesus. His teaching is be gentle! And inherit the earth!

Point 4:

5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

A promise for those who are seeking the ways of God: they shall find and be filled. If you seek you shall find!

Point 5:

5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Are we merciful to those who treat us badly? This will determine whether we receive mercy! We should note that it does not say to be merciful to those who are kind to us. We need to show mercy to all no matter how they may treat us. For this reason many christians do not receive mercy.

Point 6:

5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Purity in our hearts is the way to see God. This purity comes from the Blood of Jesus that He shed on the cross. Keep your heart in tune with the things of the Lord!

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Point 7:

5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

There is no room for fighting and grudges here! When someone speaks badly about us, do we react with peace or revenge? We are to be peacemakers all the time!

Point 8:

5:10 Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Are we willing to be persecuted? There is a blessing for those who are. Why is it we shun persecution when we will receive a blessing for it? It is time we realized that this is the norm in the christian walk--the world will persecute us as we make an unconditional stand for Him.

Point 9:

5:11 Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me.

5:12 Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

5:13 You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty again? It is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

5:14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

5:15 Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peckmeasure, but on a lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house.

5:16 Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Do we really think we are blessed when we are insulted for Jesus' sake? It clearly says that we are! Our first reaction to persecution, gossip, etc., should be to rejoice! This is not the first reaction that comes to mind, but as the Holy Spirit renews our mind it should become our natural reaction.

If we are not willing to take a stand in front of the world for His sake, including a stand to rejoice in persecution, how can they learn about Him? We are the light. Without our stand they will see nothing about the life of Jesus. They are not going to study the Bible. We will be a walking Bible unto them!

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Point 10:

5:17 Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

5:18 For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.

5:19 Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

5:20 For I say unto you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

So if the commandments of the law are still in effect, what did Jesus come to fulfill?

He came as the ultimate sacrifice for sin, which He fulfilled on the cross; and therefore there is no more sacrifice necessary, for it is fully accomplished! He fulfilled the Law!

Point 11:

5:21 You have heard that the ancients were told, “You shall not commit murder” and “Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.”

5:22 But I say to you everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother “Raca,” shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, “You fool,” shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

5:23 If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

5:24 leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

5:25 Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, in order that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.

5:26 Truly I say to you, you shall not come out of there, until you have paid up the last cent.

This certainly flies in the face of what the world teaches, or even what we in the church tend to do!

An important point is verse 23. It does not say if you have something against your brother (this would be worse!), but if he has something against you! You are responsible to try and reconcile with your brother or at least let him know that you don't hold anything against him. That's how important it is not to fight with one another!

This entire passage is against all court battles, name calling, and bad feelings between the brethren. These things have no place at all!

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Point 12:

5:27 You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery;”

5:28 but I say unto you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.

We are responsible for what we think, not just for our actions. What we allow ourselves to think will eventually turn up in our actions!

Point 13:

5:29 And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

5:30 And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell.

At first glance this may seem strange, but think about it. Whatever causes us to stumble and turn against God must be thrown away. If we have something in our life that conflicts with God’s will it must go! Nothing is more important than the Lord God and His ways. Our spiritual life is far more important than anything else in this life!

Point 14:

5:31 And it was said, “Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of dismissal;”

5:32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

So much for the acceptance of divorce and remarriage in the churches! Obviously this is sin in God’s eyes. Since it is so plain here, why do so many churches allow this? Why are so many christians guilty of it? Clearly the world’s view has become more important than God’s view in many so-called places of worship.

Point 15:

5:33 Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, “You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.”

5:34 But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,

5:35 or by earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the Great King.

5:36 Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.

5:37 But let your statement be, “Yes, yes” or “No, no;” and anything beyond these is of evil.

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This is one statement of Jesus that many try to avoid. But it is here, and we must believe and obey it. Whenever I have run into this, lawyers and commissioner of oaths have always changed "swearing an oath" to "declaring the truth." Most christians don't even realize this is in the Bible.

Point 16:

- 5:38 You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."
- 5:39 But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.
- 5:40 And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.
- 5:41 And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two.
- 5:42 Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

This is exactly what Jesus said. It has got to be the hardest thing for us to obey. But here it is and we must obey it! Our entire attitude in the helping of others is to be of the greatest help that we can.

When someone is angry we must not retaliate. The Lord will judge in the end. It is not up to us to defend ourselves. We are to allow wrong to be done to us, for nothing in this life counts for anything at all, except what we do for Jesus! Protecting our bodies and our goods is not important! Service to Him is the only thing that matters!

Point 17:

- 5:43 You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.
- 5:44 But I say unto you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you
- 5:45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.
- 5:46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?
- 5:47 And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even Gentiles do the same?
- 5:48 Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Here love is really explained! Love those who despise and hate you! It is easily said, but it takes the Spirit of God to become committed to fulfilling these things!

Point 18:

- 6:1 Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

We find that our righteous actions must be done in secret. If we show our actions to the world we lose any reward we could have. Jesus looks at this in three parts: giving, praying, and fasting. I have labelled them a through c. We will look at them one at a time.

Point 18a:

6:2 When therefore you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

6:3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing

6:4 that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Generally, giving within most churches is done in secret. But I have seen this command blatantly disobeyed.

I actually knew a church which had a fund that was behind in the needed money. They used time within the Sunday service so that people could be asked to stand up in the congregation and pledge an amount to this fund. The whole purpose was to get the highest amount in a pledge. It was like an auction! While this is certainly not the common practise in most churches, it is important that we do avoid this error!

It is also important that we keep our giving secret. Any attempt to brag about, or even to show unto others what we give is clearly in violation of Christ's command here.

Point 18b:

6:5 And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

6:6 But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

6:7 And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.

6:8 Therefore do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need, before you ask Him.

6:9 Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.

6:10 Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

6:13 And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

6:14 For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

6:15 But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

Praying in secret is not something that is taught in most churches I have attended. But it is a command, and we should obey it.

Verse 7 states not to use meaningless repetition. So what is the "Lord's Prayer" if it is not for repetition? If it is not for repetition it can only be a guide, or an outline, as to what type of prayer we should have--an example if you will. Yet this repetition is what we have been taught! We have gone from a command to not use such repetition to the point where it has become commonplace.

Therefore, as we pray, we should pray to the Father, not to Jesus; we should pray for His Kingdom to come; we should pray for our daily needs; we should pray for our forgiveness as we forgive others; and we should pray for us not to be led into temptation. This is the type of content our prayers should have!

The last point Jesus makes is most important: if we do not forgive, we will not be forgiven for our transgressions. This is most serious! Our attitude must be one of forgiveness to others.

Point 18c:

6:16 And whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

6:17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face

6:18 so that you may not be seen fasting by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

So how many of us fast? This must be our first question. If we make a study of Jesus' life we will find that He fasted often. If Jesus, the Son of God, needed to fast why do so many of us not do so? It is clear from scripture that fasting is needed to build spiritual strength. This is one of the reasons why our churches have little or no power in them!!

Not only must we fast, but we must do so in secret. Fasting is done between the Father and ourselves. It is not to be bragged about or even mentioned. Keep it between the Father and you, and you will be rewarded by Him.

Point 19:

6:19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

6:21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

6:22 The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

6:23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

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6:24 No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

(Mammon simply means things of this world, especially riches.)

What we serve is where we put our trust and our heart. There is no getting around this. Those who are constantly serving mammon are always trying to get the latest car, the biggest house, the best of this world—and they are spending their time working to earn it, and spending time to enjoy it; but not spending time with the Lord! They have laid up treasures in this earth, and they can't take it with them!

We must spend time with the Lord, and in witnessing for the Lord, and all manner of work for the Lord—this is laying up treasure in heaven.

What we spend our time looking upon is what will fill our heart. We must look upon the things of the Lord and be filled with the those things of heaven. We cannot look upon both evil and good and expect that we will be filled with good.

Point 20:

6:25 For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?

6:26 Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?

6:27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span?

6:28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin,

6:29 yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these.

6:30 But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith?

6:31 Do not be anxious then, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “With what shall we clothe ourselves?”

6:32 For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

6:33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.

6:34 Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

In verse 30 Jesus clearly makes the comment that those of us who are trusting in this world to meet our worldly needs are “men of little faith.” We are to put our thoughts, energies, and time into doing what is right, and the Lord will see that our needs will be met.

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This does not mean that we sit around and do nothing! But it does mean that we are to trust God to provide a way to meet our needs. We need to trust Him to show us the job or work that we should be doing. We need to trust His direction in our lives at all times.

Remember, worry has never accomplished anything. As verse 34 states, “each day has enough trouble of its own.” If we are worrying about tomorrow then we have added that days problems to the problems of today. And it will mount until the stress will give us extreme trouble.

Point 21:

7:1 Do not judge lest you be judged.

7:2 For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

7:3 And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

7:4 Or how can you say to your brother, “Let me take the speck out of your eye,” and behold, the log is in your own eye?

7:5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.

We have a fleshly tendency to judge others; and by our own understanding! But we shall be judged by God according to our standard. If we have shown mercy to others, so it will be with us; but if we have not, then mercy will not be shown to us either. It pays to show mercy upon all who we come in contact with!

If we will let the Lord take the worldliness that we see around us and remove it from out of our eyes, than we can truly show the mercy and truth of God in our actions! If we have a log of the world in our eyes so that we cannot see clearly, we cannot truly show mercy unto others, and will be judged accordingly.

Point 22:

7:6 Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

The things of God, which are holy, are not to be given unto the ways of satan. One way we do this is when we defend the things of satan.

An example of this would be when we defend the right to our freedom of religion along with the “right” of others to commit murder of the unborn, divorce and remarry, and so on. In our world of democracy it has become so easy for us to abuse our freedom and combine the defense of ourselves with the defense of sinners.

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We must make it clear that we are not standing up for freedom to do as we wish, but we are defending the Word of God. It is God's ways that are important. We need to stand *against* sin while *defending* the Word!

Point 23:

7:7 Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.

7:8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

7:9 Or what man is there among you, when his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone?

7:10 Or if he shall ask for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he?

7:11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

7:12 Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

As we ask and seek from the Father we will receive from Him. If we are not receiving, we have asked for something that we should not receive, at least not at this time. Verses 9 through 11 state positively that God will give unto us what is best for us. Remember that a father may discipline his son and keep something back from him that he should not have, or is not ready for; and it is the same with the Lord.

The last verse is most interesting. As God gives unto us what is best for us, we should also be treating others as we would wish to be treated. Indeed, it would appear from this verse that if we do not treat them properly we may not receive what we seek from the Lord!

Point 24:

7:13 Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it.

7:14 For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

It is very easy to be influenced by the world and its ways. We must be constantly vigilant in keeping ourselves away from the sins that are all around us.

Point 25:

7:15 Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

7:16 You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they?

7:17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit.

A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

7:18 A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

7:19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

7:20 So then, you will know them by their fruits.

False prophets are a problem within the church. Many times throughout the New Testament Epistles we are warned against false prophets as well as other false ministries. These can be identified by their fruits.

Some examples of bad fruits are: the love of money--always pushing for greater financial gifts (I Timothy 6:10); the selling of gospel material (Matthew 10:8); creating divisions within the Body of Christ--including denominations (I Corinthians 1:10-17).

These are only three examples of bad fruits that we may see in a false prophet. As we follow a prophet's ministry we will be able to readily see if they are a true prophet or not.

Point 26:

7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.

7:22 Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons and in Your name perform many miracles?

7:23 And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.

In this passage Jesus delivers the truth about false miracles and false prophecies in the church. There will be true justice against the false. When we stand in front of the Lord on that judgment day, He will right all wrongs and separate as only He can do: the right from the wrong. Those who have so cleverly deceived will not be able to have an acceptable defense in that day.

It is important to remember that although people use the Name of the Lord Jesus, many of them will be showing "window dressing," and within their heart's they will be serving self or satan. There is an evil power (satan) that seeks to deceive and will perform many miracles in front of our eyes. It is always the Word of God that we must use as our guide throughout this life. **If anyone differs from that Word (the Bible) than they are wrong;** or possible worse, they are filled with deceiving evil spirits seeking to deceive even the church.

Point 27:

7:24 Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock.

7:25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.

7:26 And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be

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like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand,
7:27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against
that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.

If we build on the Rock (Christ Jesus and His Word [The Bible]), we shall stand in the day of trouble. If we stand on the world and its ways we will fall a great fall when the day of trouble comes. We must make sure that we stand on the Word of God and not on man's ideas of religion!

Conclusion

In order to build of the Rock Christ Jesus we must obey and follow all the words which He has spoken in this great sermon. As we follow the direction of Christ we will have built on the solid Rock.

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The Purpose of Judgment

Does judgment have a purpose? I believe that judgment sent from God does indeed have a purpose. Below we will look at a number of scriptures to find the reason why God sends judgments in this day and age.

Judgments that come from God are found throughout the Bible in both the Old and New Testaments. It is certain that there must be a reason, or a purpose, for such judgments. To determine God's purpose and thinking behind the judgments which He sends let us look first into Ezekiel.

13 When I say to the righteous he will surely live, and he so trusts in his righteousness that he commits iniquity, none of his righteous deeds will be remembered; but in that same iniquity of his which he has committed he will die.

14 But when I say to the wicked, "You will surely die," and he turns from his sin and practices justice and righteousness,

15 if a wicked man restores a pledge, pays back what he has taken by robbery, walks by the statutes which ensure life without committing iniquity, he will surely live; he shall not die.

16 None of his sins that he has committed will be remember against him. He has practiced justice and righteousness; he will surely live. Ezekiel 33:13-16 (NASB)

Here we see that God will turn away from the judgment given to a person if that person repents and turns from his sins. The reverse is also true for a righteous man. If he turns away from the correct path and sins (continuing in that sin), then he shall be judged.

If God, who is perfect and just, will stop judgment He has pronounced on an individual because that individual has repented, then one can come to the conclusion that the judgment has no further purpose in such cases and is therefore ended. It is clear then that the main, and one could also say the only, purpose of judgment is to bring about repentance.

3 The Lord is slow to anger and great in power,
And the Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. Nahum 1:3a (NASB)

From this passage we can see that God will always punish the guilty. However, we also see that He is slow to anger. Why slow to anger? Because God is waiting to see if a person will repent! It is repentance that God desires. He only resorts to judgment when repentance is resisted and refused.

12 "Yet even now," declares the Lord,
"Return to Me with all your heart,
And with fasting, weeping, and mourning;
13 And rend your heart and not your garments."
Now return to the Lord your God,
For He is gracious and compassionate,
Slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness,
And relenting of evil. Joel 2:12-13 (NASB)

The Purpose of Judgment

As we turn from our sin and toward the Lord's grace and mercy we are spared the judgments that would have come upon us.

This is true both for individuals as well as nations. If a nation has been prophesied against—that is, God has stated that He will send forth judgments upon it—and then that nation repents, it is spared from God's wrath. For He will be slow to anger, giving both individuals and nations time to repent. But if that repentance does not come about, then one can expect that the judgment will come in the time that the Lord has defined.

11 And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

14 And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:11-15 (NASB)

Here we find the only time that God desire's judgment for the purpose of "making one pay" is at the end of the age when we will all stand before the great white throne to be judged by Jesus. At all other times of judgment we have that opportunity to repent and be spared anything further in terms of God's wrath.

True repentance of either an individual or a nation will always bring about a turning away of the wrath of God. We therefore can conclude that judgment in this day and age has only one purpose, and that is to bring a person or a nation to the place of repentance.

I firmly believe that God will only resort to judgments that cause death when all other "lighter" judgments have failed. Even if the wrath of God has progressed to the place where people are dying, there is still time for the ones that are left to turn from their sins and receive the mercy of God.

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What Is True Repentance of a Nation?

I am frequently asked about what constitutes true repentance of a nation. God has given me many prophecies of judgment against America and because of this the subject is a constant concern to many people. We have seen some judgments against America of late and many wish to see it stop. There has been much calling on God. But is it true repentance? Let us look at Romans in our first step in scriptural study of this subject.

- 1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?
- 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?
- 3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?
- 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.
- 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection,
- 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;
- 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.
- 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,
- 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.
- 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.
- 11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Romans 6:1-11 (NASB)

What we can see here in this passage, which explains the simple gospel of Christ, is that there must be a turning away from sin when we repent. If a nation, or even an individual, continues to sin there could not have been any true repentance!

- 33 Do not be deceived; "Bad company corrupts good morals."
- 34 Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God, I speak this to your shame. I Corinthians 15:33-34 (NASB)
- 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts,
- 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.
- 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace. Romans 6:12-14 (NASB)

It is also clear from these two passages that as we dedicate ourselves to God in repentance from sin that there will come a change in us. If we are looking at a nation to see if it has repented, there must also come a change in that nation. It must turn from the sin which caused God to send judgment upon it and become a christian nation

What is True Repentance of a Nation?

looking and seeking the things of God. If the people of that nation have not turned and made a change in their direction, there has not been any true repentance. This change must be seen throughout the nation and not in small selective areas. Therefore we should see an end to sin within the nation.

Below are a few scriptures that portray many of sins which are very common in nations today and which one would expect to be eliminated or greatly reduced if a nation truly repented.

20 And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man.

21 "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries,

22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness.

23 "All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man." Mark 7:20-23 (NASB)

9 Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments;

10 but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness. I Timothy 2:9-10 (NASB)

31 And it was said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of dismissal";

32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. Matthew 5:31-32 (NASB)

The passages above certainly cover a great deal of the sins that we see around us. It is clear that a nation in which its people commit abortion, immorality in dress, adultery, the love of money, and the other sins which are mentioned above, is far from God and dedicated to itself and selfishness; rather than dedicated to God and His righteousness.

As a nation truly repents the people will turn from such sinful ways unto the ways of God. However, if we do not see such a turning away from sin, one can be sure that the nation has not repented and that the nation is in danger of judgments, (or further judgments), from God.

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Prophetic Comparison of: the Beasts of Daniel 7, the Horses of Zechariah 6, and the Horses of Revelation 6

(All scriptures used from the NASB)

Many years ago I asked the Lord about any connection between the horses of Zechariah and Revelation. To my surprise He said there was a three way connection between the beasts of Daniel, and the horses of both books.

He also stated that the relationship is not by the description or colour of the horses, but by the place (first, second, etc.) they hold in the individual scriptures. That is, the first beast in Daniel is to be compared to the first horse in Zechariah and the first horse in Revelation, and so on.

The Lord also showed me how the beasts in Daniel are to be translated.

The lion is Great Britain.

The eagle is the United States of America. (In 1782 The US chose the bald eagle as its national symbol).

The bear is Russia.

The leopard is China. With a little research using Abingdon's Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, I determined that the leopard could be translated either as a leopard, or tiger. According to Strong's the chaldean word means "to spot or stain as if by dripping; a leopard (from its stripes)." A tiger also has stripes. However you translate it, this represents China.

The fourth beast in Daniel is obvious to any Bible prophecy student. It is the anti-christ and his kingdom.

After receiving this revelation I did a little study and realized that there is an excellent correlation between these scriptures and this interpretation.

On the next page I have compiled a chart showing how this correlation works.

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Prophetic Comparison: Daniel 7, Zechariah 6, Revelation 6

Daniel 7:1-28	Zechariah 6:1-8	Revelation 6:1-8	Interpretation
<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">7:4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lion with eagles wings - Wings plucked off and it was made to stand as a man - Human heart given it 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6:2a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chariot with red horse 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6:2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White horse - He who sits on it has a bow; crown given it; went out conquering and to conquer 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Lion is Britain; the eagle the United States of America - This is the separation of the USA from Britain
<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">7:5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resembling a bear - Raised up on one side - 3 ribs in its mouth - Was said to it, "Arise, devour much meat!" 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6:2b & 6 & 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chariot with black horse - Goes to north country - Those in north country appease God's wrath in north country 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6:4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Red horse - Him who sat on it given to take peace out of earth so men killed one another; great sword 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Bear is Russia - Russia also has and is taking peace out of much of the earth
<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">7:6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leopard - Has 4 wings of a bird on the back - Has 4 heads - Dominion given it 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6:3a & 6 & 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chariot with white horses - Goes after the black horses to the north country (see above) 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6:5-6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Black horse - Pair of balances in hand: a quart of wheat a denarius, 3 quarts of barley a denarius: do not harm the oil and the wine 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Leopard is China - 4 wings and 4 heads <i>may</i> indicate other nations with China
<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">7:7-8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beast; dreadful, terrible, extremely strong - Large iron teeth; devoured, crushed, and trampled others with feet - 10 horns; another little horn (with eyes of man & great boasts) plucks up 3 of the first horns 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6:3b & 6-7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chariot with strong and dappled (spots of a different colour) horses - Dappled go to south country - Strong patrolled the earth 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6:7-8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashen horse - He who sits on it is Death, and Hades (hell) follows - Given to kill 1/4 of the earth 	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any student of Bible prophecy will recognize the anti-christ's kingdom here