

Chapter 8

The Numbers In The Bible

As we are proceeding with our study of the unfolding of the timeline of history, we constantly are making reference to numbers that God has recorded in the Bible. These numbers are placed in the Bible by God and, therefore, are to be very seriously considered. We must not gloss over them as if they have little or no importance. Therefore, before we continue our study, we should pause to learn how God uses numbers in the Bible. Given the spiritual principle that we are to compare spiritual things with spiritual (I Corinthians 2:13), and given the fact that the whole Bible and all that it declares is an integral part of the spiritual message, we know we must search the Bible to discover how God uses numbers.*

These numbers are placed in the Bible by God and, therefore, are to be very seriously considered.

Moreover, we must carefully consider God's use of numbers in the Bible because it is the numbers in the Biblical text that have especially given cause to a mistrust of the Bible. For example, there is probably no other body of Biblical citations that has done more to seem to invalidate the authority of the Bible than those pertaining to the duration of the reigns of the Hebrew kings.

We read, for example, in one citation (II Kings 8:26), that Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign. Yet in another citation (II Chronicles 22:2), we read that he was forty-two years old when he began to reign. Many more of these kinds of apparent errors can be cited in connection with the reigns of these kings.

The result of these apparent contradictions and errors is that a great many theologians have concluded that the numbers of the Bible are not accurate and are not to be trusted. These theologians have concluded that perhaps the numbers are not accurate, not because they are not accurate in the original

* We must be careful not to confuse an activity called "numerology" with the study of the numbers of the Bible. Numerology has to do with assigning number values to the Hebrew or Greek letters and adding together the number values of Bible words in an attempt to arrive at a hidden Bible message. Numerology has no Biblical validation and is not related in any sense to anything written in this book.

manuscript, but because a scribe may have made an error in transcribing a later copy. In any case, these apparent errors associated with the numbers of the Bible are very obvious and, therefore, many theologians have concluded that we cannot trust any numbers of the Bible.

After all, numbers are words and the whole Bible consists of words. If some words of the Bible are not to be trusted, then how can we trust any words of the Bible?

This conclusion concerning the apparent inaccuracies of the numbers of the Bible attempts to destroy the authority of the whole Bible. If the ancient copies, from which we obtain our present Bible, are inaccurate insofar as the numbers of the Bible are concerned, then how can they be trusted concerning any part of the Bible? After all, numbers are words and the whole Bible consists of words. If some words of the Bible are not to be trusted, then how can we trust any words of the Bible? We thus can understand why so many Bible scholars do not trust the Bible. They like what they read when it pleases them, but a passage that does not please them can be easily set aside in their minds as inaccurate and thus having no binding authority.

Unfortunately, this undercurrent of mistrust is far more in place than we might think. So many preachers and teachers of the Bible stress that the Bible is the infallible, inerrant Word of God, yet, in practice, they subject themselves to the authority of the Bible only when it appears to agree with the theological ideas that they themselves or their church hold. But when the Bible appears to disagree with their theological position, the Biblical citation in question is disregarded or modified in their thinking so that it does agree with their theological position. This kind of conduct is often consciously or unconsciously fostered and encouraged because they, at some time in their studies, have read commentaries that suggest the possibility of scribal error, particularly in connection with the numbers of the Bible.

There are no errors or real contradictions in the Bible. The whole Bible in the original languages is completely trustworthy. This includes every word whether it is a number or some other word.

The only errors that may be found will be those resulting from a faulty translation into our present languages or because inferior Greek texts were used in translating the New Testament. Wonderfully, the King James translation has used the correct Greek copies.

An example of a passage that appears to have been incorrectly written is that of the age of King Ahaziah at the time he began to reign. It appears that

a scribe, while copying the original language, made an error so that a wrong number now occurs in the Bible. In II Kings 8:26, the Bible reports that he was twenty-two years old when he began to reign. But in II Chronicles 22:2, the Bible reports that he was forty-two years old when he began to reign.

Actually, there is no contradiction. The solution is that, in the first instance, God is teaching that Ahaziah was indeed twenty-two years old when he began to reign. In the second citation, God is teaching that he began to reign forty-two years after the kingly dynasty of Omri, of whom Ahaziah was a descendant, began. (For a full discussion of these apparent discrepancies, the reader is invited to obtain free of charge the book *The Perfect Harmony of the Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* from Family Radio.)

Each and every word, even each letter of each word, in the original languages was precisely what God desired.

We must bear in mind that the Bible was crafted by God. Each and every word, even each letter of each word, in the original languages was precisely what God desired. Because He is God, He could have designed the Bible so that any 6-year-old child could clearly understand each and every teaching that God wished mankind to understand.

But God purposely wrote the Bible so that it would be difficult to discover many truths of the Bible. Jesus declares in Mark 4:11-12:

And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

In Proverbs 25:2, He further declares:

It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

God declares in I Corinthians 2:11-14:

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man

which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

God purposely wrote the Bible to foster unbelief in the hearts of those who do not want the salvation of the Bible.

As we examine these citations, we begin to understand that God purposely wrote the Bible to foster unbelief in the hearts of those who do not want the salvation of the Bible. For them, the Bible appears to contain errors, contradictions, and many things that apparently have no relationship to truth.

This, I believe, is the reason that the numbers that relate to the chronology of the kings of Judah and Israel appear so frequently to be in error.

But when we adopt Biblical principles, namely, that we are to trust that every word in the Bible in the original languages is God-breathed, that we are to compare Scripture with Scripture, and that we are to pray for wisdom, asking that the Holy Spirit will lead us into truth, then these supposed errors and contradictions will be eliminated. If they are not eliminated, it means that we must patiently wait upon God because ultimately, they will be eliminated. This is so simply because the Bible is the Word of God.

Emphasis must be made once more: In trying to understand a difficult passage, we must never countenance the thought that perhaps a word of a phrase has been accidentally or purposely altered by a scribe in transcribing from one copy to another. We can rest assured that not only did holy men of God speak as God the Holy Spirit moved them (II Peter 1:21), but also God protected His Word so that it would be available in its pure form to succeeding generations (John 17:13-21; Acts 1:8; Romans 16:25-27).

Numbers May Convey Spiritual Truth

We must keep in mind that numbers are words and therefore should be studied and defined like any word in the Bible. That is, if we wish to know the

meaning of a word, we should locate that word wherever it can be found in the original language of the Bible. By examining the context of each place it is used, ordinarily, it is possible to know the meaning of that word as it is used in the Bible. Thus, for example, we can learn from the Bible that the word “grace” may be defined as “God’s free gift of salvation.” Occasionally, some help in understanding a word used in the Bible may come from a non-Biblical source. However, the ideal source is the Bible.

Frequently, words have more than one meaning. The Hebrew word “*yam*,” for example, is translated as the word “sea” and as the word “west” in addition to several other ways, depending upon the context.

Frequently, words can be understood in a literal physical manner and also to signify spiritual truth. For example, the word “lamb” can refer to an animal, the offspring of a sheep, but it can also refer to Jesus as the Lamb of God who was offered, as the only sacrifice completely pleasing to God, to take away sins (Hebrews 9:11-14; I Peter 1:18-19).

We must remember that numbers are words and the same rules apply to numbers that apply to words. We, therefore, discover that a number can be understood in various ways. Following are the most common ways the Bible uses numbers:

1. Numbers can be used to measure the passage of time. For example, Israel was in Egypt for 430 years (Exodus 12:40).
2. Numbers can be used to describe a group of people, objects, things, etc. Thus, we read that there were eight souls on the ark (I Peter 3:20).
3. Numbers can be used to describe the size of an object. For example, the ark was 300 cubits long and fifty cubits wide (Genesis 6:15).
4. Numbers can have a literal, physical application and at the same time also have a spiritual or symbolical application. For example, we read in John 21:11 of 153 fish that were caught. This was the literal number of fish that were caught but the number 153 also has a definite spiritual application, as we shall presently learn. At times, the spiritual application will be readily seen, and at times, it may be hidden from our understanding.

5. In some instances, in a particular context, a number may have only a spiritual or symbolical meaning.

For example, Peter asked Jesus the question in Matthew 18:21:

. . . Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

And Jesus answered in the next verse:

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Now, $70 \times 7 = 490$. Was Jesus teaching that when we have forgiven someone 490 times, we can then stop forgiving that person? We know that the number 490 is not being used in that fashion because the rest of the chapter teaches that we are to forgive each other as Christ has forgiven us. We know that Christ does not forgive just 490 sins, but when He forgives individuals for whom He died, He forgives all of their sins (Mark 2:5-12; John 8:10-11; Colossians 2:13).

The numbers 70 and 7 are conveying the spiritual truth that our forgiving is to be completely perfect which means we are never to stop forgiving.

Therefore, we must understand that the numbers in the expression 70×7 , in this context, are conveying the truth that there is to be no limit to the number of each other's sins that we are to forgive. The numbers 70 and 7 are conveying the spiritual truth that our forgiving is to be completely perfect which means we are never to stop forgiving.

Another illustration is recorded in Psalm 105:8, where God declares:

He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.

The translators incorrectly translated the Hebrew word for "generation" as a plural word. However, in the original Hebrew, it is a singular word. Thus, the verse should read **"the word which He commanded to a thousand**

generation.” But that does not make any apparent sense. What kind of a generation is a thousand generation? Only when we realize that the number 1,000 can spiritually mean that which is complete does the sense of the verse become clear. God’s commands are to a complete generation. The generation that God has in mind, based on the word “covenant” which is found in this phrase, must include all the peoples of the earth. Psalm 105, verse 7, shows this:

He is the LORD our God: his judgments are in all the earth.

Likewise, when we read Revelation 20:2-7 we learn that Satan was bound for a thousand years. But when we carefully study everything in the Bible that relates to the binding of Satan, we learn that 1,000 years no doubt covers the whole period of time from A.D. 33 to A.D. 1988. This obviously is a much larger period of time than a literal 1,000 years. Therefore, even as was the situation in Psalm 105, the “**a thousand**” of Revelation 20:2 is a synonym for the word “complete” or “completeness.” Satan was bound for the completeness (1,000 years) of God’s timetable for his binding.

6. Frequently, large numbers can be broken down to smaller significant numbers to expose the spiritual significance of the larger number.

Larger numbers in Scripture have spiritual significance, but that significance often may not be seen until the number is broken down into its smaller significant numbers. The combination of these smaller numbers may convey two or three or more statements of spiritual truth agreeing completely with all that the rest of the Bible declares. This again highlights the magnificent nature of how God has written the Bible.

We have already observed how God has displayed His use of the factors of a larger number to teach spiritual truth (Matthew 18:21 [490 = 70 x 7]). (See also Leviticus 23:15-16; 25:8.) Now we cite, as examples of the many in the Bible, two large numbers given in Scripture whose combination of factors convey rich spiritual truth.

In John Chapter 21, by means of a historical parable, God describes all of those who will become saved during the latter rain. This is the time when there will be the final salvation period during which all those who are still to become saved will become saved. It occurs during the second part of the Great Tribulation which will immediately precede the end of the world. God describes these who are to be saved as 153 fish that were caught in a net that did not break and which were brought to land without being in a ship. The number 153 equals 3 x 3 x 17.

Presently, we will learn that the number 3 signifies God's will or purpose and the number 17, if it has spiritual meaning, signifies Heaven. Therefore, the 153 fish signify that it is the purpose (the number 3) of God to bring to Heaven (the number 17) all of those who are to be saved during the Great Tribulation.

Incidentally, only the numbers 3 and 17 are the basic factors of the number 153. 153 is also a product of 9×17 , but 9 is the product of 3×3 , so again we arrive at God's purpose signified by the number 3. 153 is also a product of 51×3 , but 51 is a product of 17×3 , so again we observe the spiritual meaning of Heaven signified by the number 17. A larger number may have different combinations of factors, but it is only God's use of numbers in the Bible in all of its contexts that dictates the spiritual meaning of any of these numbers. It is a thing of beauty and wonder to see how God, even in numerical expressions, reveals important spiritual truth for us to know!

A second large number is found in Acts 27:37 where God speaks of 276 individuals who were aboard a ship that was totally wrecked in a severe storm. However, all 276 people were saved. The number 276 breaks down into the numbers 12×23 or the number $3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 23$. Spiritually, it can be shown that the destroyed ship represents the end of the Church Age. The number 276 spiritually represents that it was God's purpose (the number 3) that those who are to continue to bring the Gospel (the number 2) would be rescued from the judgment (the number 23) that destroyed the ship (the local churches).

The Numbers of the Bible Do Not Appear by Happenstance

As we study the Bible, we occasionally notice that in the recording of certain historical events, a number appears to be featured. This is true, for example, of the numbers in connection with the accounts of the crucifixion of Christ. Remember, there were 3 crosses (Mark 15:27), 3 denials by Peter (Mark 14:66-72), 3 apostles were with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:33), Jesus prayed 3 times in the Garden (Mark 14:32-41), the words "**JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS**" were on the cross in 3 languages (John 19:19-20), 3 groups of men — the chief priests, the elders, and all the council — wanted Him killed (Matthew 26:59), etc. Included are some larger numbers that feature the number 3. For example, 30 pieces of silver were paid to betray Him (Matthew 26:15), and there were 3 hours of darkness, from the sixth to the ninth hour (Matthew 27:45).

Is the development of these events that surround the crucifixion of Christ — recorded so that the number 3 is repeatedly in view — accidental or incidental? Or is God, by the use of the number 3, conveying a great spiritual message that every thing that happened in connection with the crucifixion of Jesus was

altogether in accordance with God's unmistakable purpose and sovereign will?

Similarly, we find the number 23 featured in places in the Bible where the judgment of God is definitely in view. For example, in Daniel 8:14, God teaches that the sanctuary and the host would be trodden underfoot 2,300 days. In I Corinthians 10:10, God speaks of a plague that killed 23,000 individuals in one day. That this is focusing on the number 23 as a number of judgment can be quickly understood because in Numbers 25:9, the Bible records that there were 24,000 killed in the plague. There is no contradiction between these two accounts. It is obvious that of the total number of 24,000 killed in the plague, 23,000 were killed in one day and that means an additional 1,000 were killed in a second day. However, God is particularly associating the number 23 with His judgment on sin. We thus learn that the number 23 can convey the spiritual meaning of God's judgment or God's wrath.

If we look at many numbers of the Bible, therefore, we can see that they may be conveying spiritual truth as well as teaching simple numerical value.

The number 2 is used frequently to describe those who bring the Gospel. Jesus sent the 70 out **"two and two"** (Luke 10:1). Revelation Chapter 11 describes the 2 witnesses who were killed and then again stood on their feet to bring the Gospel. In Acts Chapter 13, Paul and Barnabas were sent out together as the first missionaries. Thus, if the number 2 has symbolical or spiritual meaning, it would identify with those who are to bring the Gospel or who are the caretakers of the Bible.

The number 4 identifies with the whole world. The Bible speaks of east, west, north, and south (Psalm 107:3). It speaks of 4 winds (Matthew 24:31) and 4 corners of the land (Ezekiel 7:2). Thus, if the number 4 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it would identify with that which is universal or worldwide.

But the number 4 is also used to convey universality in the sense of going all the way to the end. For example, Jesus waited until Lazarus was dead 4 days before he was raised (John 11:15-17). King Jehu's dynasty was allowed to continue through 4 kings (II Kings 10:30; 13:1, 9-10; 14:16, 29; 15:8-12). Israel came out of Egypt in the 4th generation after being afflicted 400 years (Genesis 15:13-16). Abraham bought a burial ground for his wife Sarah for 400 shekels (Genesis 23:15) because she represents all true believers all the way to the end of time who expect with Sarah to receive their resurrected bodies. In all of these instances, the use of the number 4 indicates the extremity or the end of a period of time, even as it is used to point to the end of the world which is worldwide (II Peter 3:10).

The number 5 very frequently identifies with salvation or judgment. Christ had to experience judgment to bring salvation so we are not surprised that

both judgment and salvation identify with the number 5. The number 5 appears in the Bible both as $\frac{1}{2}$ which is .5 and as 5 or 50 or 500 or 5,000, etc. We immediately think of the temple tax which was .5 shekel (Exodus 30:13), or of the 5,000 who were fed by Jesus (John 6:10-13), or of the 5 wise and 5 foolish virgins (Matthew 25:1-2), etc. Thus, if the number 5 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it would be that of salvation or judgment.

If the number 6 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it probably would identify with work. Jesus worked 6 days to create the universe (Exodus 20:11). The number 666 of Revelation 13:18 identifies with the unsaved who essentially are working to get right with God.

The number 7 is used throughout the Bible in the sense of a completed cycle (7 days, 7 years), or in the sense of perfect completeness. For example, earlier we looked at forgiveness to be 70×7 times.

The number 9 is 3×3 . Therefore, symbolically or spiritually, it would signify purpose.

The number 10, like the number 100, or 1,000 or 10,000, etc. signifies completeness. The Bible speaks of 10 coins (Luke 15:8), 100 sheep (Luke 15:4), 1,000 years (II Peter 3:8), 1,000 generations (Deuteronomy 7:9), etc. Thus, if the number 10 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it would be that of completeness.

The number 11 is frequently used in the Bible to convey the idea of defective fullness. For example, there were 12 tribes (actually thirteen tribes) of Israel, but after David pridefully numbered Israel, God speaks of 11 tribes (I Kings 11:31-32). When Judas Iscariot, who was one of the 12 apostles (John 6:70-71), took his own life after he betrayed Jesus, there were 11 apostles left. Immediately, another apostle was chosen to bring the total back up to 12 (Acts 1:13-26). There are 11 millenniums from Creation to the first coming of Christ (see Chapter 9 of this book). But His coming is not complete (in that sense, defective) until He comes on the last day to finish all of His work that He has planned for mankind and this world (I Corinthians 15:24).

The number 12 is used frequently to signify the fullness of whatever is in view. There were 12 tribes and 12 apostles, the Holy City is spoken of as 12,000 furlongs by 12,000 furlongs by 12,000 furlongs (Revelation 21:16), etc. Thus, if the number 12 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it would be the fullness of whatever is in view. The numbers 7, 10, and 12, are, therefore, very similar to each other in signifying spiritual truth.

The number 13 symbolically or spiritually signifies super fullness. Ordinarily, the Bible speaks of twelve apostles, but in actuality there were 13. The 13th was the Apostle Paul who insisted under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that he met all of the qualifications of the original twelve (I Corinthians 9:1-2; 15:8-9;

II Corinthians 12:11-12). The Bible ordinarily speaks of twelve tribes of Israel but in actuality there were 13 (Genesis 49:1-28; Numbers 32:33; Joshua Chapters 16 and 17). The universe has existed for slightly more than 13,000 years (see Chapters 2 and 3 of this book). Thus, if the number 13 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it identifies with “super fullness”.

Curiously, we see this concept identified with the age of the earth. We have learned that the Old Testament era from Creation to the birth of Christ is almost exactly 11,000 years (11,006 years). We also can easily misunderstand the opening verses of Revelation Chapter 20 which speak of Satan being bound for a thousand years after which the end of the world would come. And 11,000 years + 1,000 years = 12,000 years, which symbolically identifies with complete fullness of time. But the New Testament era is about two thousand years. Therefore, the total time is very close to 13,000 years (13,023 years to be exact). And thus, we see again the concept of super fullness identified with the number 13.

The number 17 is found in several places that identify with Heaven. For example, during the last 17 years of his life, Jacob lived under the complete safety of Joseph who was a portrait or type of Christ at the time he was used of God to save his family from starvation (Genesis 47:28). Jeremiah paid 17 shekels for a piece of land in Israel as a sign that God would again bring Israel into the land; the land signifies the eternal kingdom of God (Jeremiah 32:9). Thus, if the number 17 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it would be that of Heaven.

The number 37, like the number 23, signifies God’s judgment. Noah was in the ark for a total of 370 days at the time God’s judgment was on the earth (Genesis 7:11; 8:14-18). The army of Sennacherib that was destroyed by God in one night numbered 185,000 (II Kings 19:35). $185,000 = 5 \times 37 \times 1,000$. The number 666, which is the number assigned to the unsaved who are under the judgment of God (Revelation 13:18), when broken down into significant numbers, is $3 \times 6 \times 37$. Thus, if the number 37 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it would be judgment.

The number 40 is used repeatedly in the Bible to signify testing. Moses was 40 days on Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:18). Israel failed the test of his absence and made the golden calf (Exodus 32:1-4). Israel was 40 years in the wilderness. They failed the test because almost none of them became saved (Hebrews 3:17). Jesus was tested 40 days and 40 nights by Satan (Matthew 4:1-2; Luke 4:1-2). Wonderfully, He did not fail the test (Matthew 4:3-11; Luke 4:3-14). Thus, if the number 40 has any symbolical or spiritual meaning, it would be that of testing.

The number 43 surfaces from time to time. For example, Israel was in Egypt for 430 years. The end of the 430 years brought judgment upon Egypt but

freedom (a picture of salvation) to Israel. Thus, if the number 43 has any spiritual or symbolical meaning, it would be, like the number 5, that of judgment or salvation.

The following is a summary of probable meanings of the numbers set forth above.

Number	Symbolical or Spiritual Meaning
2	Caretakers of the Bible
3	God's purpose
4	Universality or going all the way to the end
5	Salvation or judgment
6	Work
7	Perfect completeness
9	Purpose
10	Completeness
11	Defective fullness
12	Fullness
13	Super fullness
17	Heaven
23	Judgment
37	Judgment
43	Judgment or salvation

These comments about God's usage of numbers do not in any way insist that this, then, is the basis of recognizing the high possibility that A.D. 2011 may indeed be the year of the end of the world. If it were true that not a single number in the Bible conveyed any spiritual truth, the conclusions set forth in this study identifying with the unfolding of God's salvation plan would not change at all.

However, it is true that as we understand God's use of numbers in the Bible, we do have increased evidence that the timeline of history we have projected to A.D. 2011 has a great possibility of being correct.

. . . the numbers God has used in the Bible can have spiritual value, that is, they can be used of God to teach spiritual truth.

Now that we have learned that the numbers God has used in the Bible can have spiritual value, that is, they can be used of God to teach spiritual truth, we shall also learn that in the Calendar of History, major milestones are separated from each other in such a way that spiritual truth shines forth.

For example, Israel was in the wilderness 40 years, from the year 1447 B.C. to 1407 B.C. As we learned, the number 40 spiritually signifies testing. In Deuteronomy 8:2 we read:

And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

This verse clearly teaches that the 40 years Israel was in the wilderness was a period of time set by God for Him to test them (see also Numbers 14:33-34). By this verse, we are assured that the duration of a time period set forth in God's Gospel Calendar can be used to emphasize spiritual truth.

Again, we have learned that Abraham was seventy-five years of age when he came into the land of Canaan and that he died at the age of 175 years (Genesis 25:7). We have learned that the land of Canaan symbolically represents the eternal kingdom of God. We have also learned that the number 10, 100, or 1,000 can spiritually signify completeness. Additionally, we know from the Bible that Abraham represents all of those who are true believers (Galatians 3:29). Thus, the 100-year period from the year 2092 B.C., when Abraham entered the land of Canaan, until the year 1992 B.C., when Abraham died, signifies the completeness of eternal life for all those who become saved.

Fact is, God has structured the unfolding of His salvation plan so that as we discover the Calendar of History, we find two major principles to be in place:

1. The Gospel milestones in the unfolding of history are not in any sense haphazard or at random.

2. Frequently, the time duration between significant milestones convey important spiritual truth.

We should test these principles. We shall do so by listing a number of the significant milestones and then checking to discover if there is any possibility of spiritual meaning in the time segment between these milestones.

Time Intervals Can Convey Spiritual Truth

The following is a list of some of the milestones we have already uncovered as we have been studying the timeline of history. Additionally, three milestones are listed that we will come to later as we continue in our progress through time all the way to the end of time.

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1. 2092 B.C. Abraham arrives in the promised land, Canaan, which externally typifies the kingdom of God.

 2. 2067 B.C. Sodom and Gomorrah are completely destroyed.

 3. 1877 B.C. Jacob and his family are commanded to leave the promised land, Canaan, and go to live in Egypt.

 4. 1447 B.C. Israel as a nation leaves Egypt at the time that God's judgment falls on Egypt. All of the firstborn of Egypt are killed.

 5. 1407 B.C. Israel crosses the Jordan River and enters Canaan, which externally typifies the kingdom of God.

 6. 1047 B.C. Israel becomes a monarchy.

 7. 1007 B.C. David becomes king of Israel.

 8. 931 B.C. The kingdom of twelve tribes is divided into two kingdoms, Judah (two tribes) and Israel (ten tribes).

 9. 709 B.C. Israel is destroyed by the Assyrians.

 10. 609 B.C. Judah begins a time of great tribulation. During this time, Judah loses its independence and becomes first a vassal of Egypt and then a vassal of Babylon.

(continued)

11.	587 B.C.	Judah and Jerusalem are destroyed by Babylon. All the remaining Jews are commanded to leave Judea and live in Babylon.
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12.	539 B.C.	Babylon is conquered by the Medes and Persians.
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13.	391 B.C.	The last writing of the Old Testament.
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14.	7 B.C.	Jesus is born. Beginning year of first Jubilee period.
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15.	A.D. 29	Jesus is announced as the Lamb of God.
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16.	A.D. 33	Jesus is crucified. Church Age begins.
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17.	A.D. 1988	Church Age ends. Beginning year of the Great Tribulation (see Chapter 10 of this book).
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18.	A.D. 1994	Beginning year of second Jubilee period.
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19.	A.D. 2011	Probable end of the world.

These milestones did not occur in a random or haphazard manner. It can be shown that they are interrelated to each other in a definite pattern. We can see this pattern when we break down the intervals between these various events into their significant numbers. Remember, we learned that numbers can have spiritual meaning.

Two numbers will always signify judgment if they are used in a spiritual or symbolical way. They are the numbers 23 and 37. Additionally, there are two numbers that, depending upon the context, may signify either judgment or salvation. They are the numbers 5 and 43. Surprisingly, a great number of the time intervals between these important milestones feature these numbers of judgment.

For example, in the year 2092 B.C., Abraham came into the promised land of Canaan. It was the land that externally represented the kingdom of God. Yet 215 years later, in the year 1877 B.C., his grandson Jacob was commanded to leave the land of Canaan and go to Egypt. This was a portrait of God abandoning the external representation of the kingdom of God, in this illustration, the land of Canaan, to Satan. The number 215 can be factored or broken down into the significant numbers 5 x 43.

Again, for example, in the year 2067 B.C., Sodom was destroyed, and in the year 587 B.C., Judah was destroyed. Judah is linked to Sodom by the language of Ezekiel 16:46-48 where we read of Judah:

And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters. Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, as if that were a very little thing, thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways. As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.

Samaria, which was the capital of the ten tribes (Israel), is called the older sister, and Sodom is called the younger sister. These three, Judah, Israel, and Sodom, are linked together in that they came into destruction because of their wickedness. They are also linked together by the mathematical factors of the numbers that represent the time intervals between the dates of Sodom's destruction and Judah's destruction.

The time interval between Sodom's destruction in 2067 B.C. and Judah's destruction in 587 B.C. equals 1,480 years. The number 1,480 can be broken down to the significant numbers $4 \times 10 \times 37$ or $2 \times 4 \times 5 \times 37$ or $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 5 \times 37$. Spiritually, the number 1,480 thus can be understood that in the end (4) of these nations, there will be complete (10) destruction (37). Or, in the end (4), Judah, which was the caretaker of the Bible (2), comes under the judgment of God (5 and 37). Or, it could be understood to say that it is God's purpose (3 "2s") that Judah, which had been the caretaker of the Bible ($2 \times 2 \times 2$), would be brought under judgment (5 and 37).

In similar fashion, we should take note of the following time intervals that also feature God's judgment upon Israel either as the twelve-tribe nation or upon Israel and upon Judah after they were divided into two nations. Please note that repeatedly, the numbers of judgment, 23, 37, and 43, come into view.

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1. Year 1877 B.C. Jacob commanded to leave the promised land and to live in Egypt.
 Year 587 B.C. Judah commanded to leave Jerusalem and to live in Babylon.
 $1,877 - 587 = 1,290 \text{ years} = 3 \times 10 \times 43$

 2. Year 1447 B.C. First born of Egypt killed and Israel delivered from captivity.
 Year A.D. 33 Christ as the firstborn killed to provide deliverance to those who are to become saved.
 $1,447 + 33 = 1,480 \text{ years inclusive} = 2 \times 2 \times 10 \times 37$

 3. Year 1047 B.C. Twelve tribes of Israel become a monarchy.

(continued)

Year 587 B.C.	Israel ceases to be a monarchy. Jerusalem is destroyed. $1,047 - 587 = 460 \text{ years} = 10 \times 2 \times \underline{23}$
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4. Year 931 B.C.	Israel becomes two nations. One is called Judah. One is called Israel.
Year 709 B.C.	Nation of Israel destroyed by Assyria. $931 - 709 = 222 \text{ years} \quad 222 = 2 \times 3 \times \underline{37}$

5. Year 609 B.C.	Nation of Judah becomes a servant first of Egypt and then of Babylon. Judah's seventy-year period of tribulation begins. $931 - 609 = 322 \text{ years} \quad 322 = 2 \times 7 \times \underline{23}$
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6. Year 587 B.C.	Judah destroyed by Babylonians. $931 - 587 = 344 \text{ years} \quad 344 = 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times \underline{43}$
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When we project the Biblical milestones into the future, we discover that three years come into great prominence and that the numbers signifying judgment continue to appear. The years are:

A.D. 1988. End of the Church Age. Beginning of the Great Tribulation (see Chapter 10 of this book).

A.D. 1994. Beginning of second Jubilee.

A.D. 2011. Probable date of the end of the world.

When we examine time intervals that link these dates to earlier significant dates, we take note of the following:

1. In the year 587 B.C., Judaea, which in the Old Testament externally typified the kingdom of God, was destroyed by Babylon. Yet, those who were driven out of Judaea and Jerusalem were to pray for Babylon and seek its spiritual welfare. We read in Jeremiah 29:4-5 and 7:

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; and seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

Likewise, in A.D. 1994, a similar situation prevailed throughout the world. The true believers had been driven out or had been commanded to come out of the churches. However, they were sent into the world as ambassadors to pray for and seek the spiritual welfare of the world.

Moreover, in 587 B.C., the land of Judaea had been forsaken by God and would continue to be forsaken by God throughout the seventy years of the tribulation of that day. In the same manner, the churches of our day have been forsaken by God and will continue to be forsaken by God all the way to the end of the present Great Tribulation, which will continue to the end of the world. Thus, we are not surprised to find a significant time interval between the years 587 B.C. and A.D. 1994.

The time interval between 587 B.C. and A.D. 1994 is 2,580 years. Remember, there is no year 0. Therefore, to determine the number of years from an Old Testament date to a New Testament date, the years are added together and one year is subtracted. Thus, when we add 587 B.C. to A.D. 1994, we obtain $587 + 1,994 - 1 = 2,580$ years. The number 2,580 breaks down into the significant numbers $3 \times 2 \times 10 \times 43$ or $3 \times 4 \times 5 \times 43$ or $12 \times 5 \times 43$.

Please note that the number 43, which can signify both salvation and judgment, is featured. In A.D. 1994, indeed, judgment continues on the local churches while salvation begins again throughout the world outside of the churches.

2. In A.D. 33, the Church Age began. In A.D. 1988, the Church Age came to an end. $1,988 - 33 = 1,955$. The number 1,955 breaks down into the significant numbers $5 \times 17 \times 23$. The number 17 signifies Heaven; the number 23 judgment. Thus, these significant numbers corroborate the statement of II Corinthians 2:15-16, where we read:

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

3. The interval of time between A.D. 1988 when the Great Tribulation likely began and A.D. 2011, which probably is the year of the end of the world, is 23 years. $2,011 - 1,988 = 23$.
4. The year Christ experienced the judgment of God on behalf

of all of those He came to save was A.D. 33. The year that God will judge the unsaved and sentence them to eternal perdition is probably A.D. 2011, the likely date of the end of the world. $2,011 - 33 = 1,978$ years. 1,978 factors into $2 \times 23 \times 43$.

5. We will discover that the first part of the Great Tribulation period is 2,300 days. $2,300 = 100 \times 23$.
6. The time from Creation to the Flood that destroyed the world in Noah's day was $6,000 + 23$ years.
7. The time from the Flood to A.D. 33 when Christ came under judgment for sin was $5,000 + 23$ years inclusive.
8. The time from Creation, in the year 11,013 B.C., until the end of the world, most likely in A.D. 2011, equals $13,000 + 23$ years.

Significantly, in each and every one of the important time intervals listed above, the time interval has one or more of the four numbers that are frequently associated with judgment.

Significantly, in each and every one of the important time intervals listed above, the time interval has one or more of the four numbers that are frequently associated with judgment. Remember, those numbers are 5, 23, 37, and 43. The time periods listed occurred in past history and, therefore, actually have taken place. However, we cannot help but notice how similar the projected time periods that end with the A.D. years 1988, 1994, or 2011 are to the actual time periods of the past. Is all of this coincidental or is it an indication of God's careful plan for the unfolding of His Gospel program?

We must remember that none of the years shown above are developed in an effort to make the numbers that signify judgment, for example, become evident. Each and every one of the years of the past that are shown and those that are projected into the future have been set forth with no regard or concern for the spiritual or symbolical meaning of any of the resulting time periods.

To say it another way — and it is not superfluous to repeat this statement — if it were true that not a single number in the Bible conveyed any spiritual truth, the conclusions set forth in this study that identify with the unfolding of God's salvation plan would not change at all.

The time periods shown above, as well as elsewhere in this study, do emphasize that we can know that the unfolding of God's salvation plan is not at all in a haphazard, random, capricious manner. They clearly demonstrate that the unfolding of history was carefully preplanned and structured by God. Moreover, it indicates that the numbers in the Bible are extremely important if we are to have any understanding of the timing of the history of the world all the way from the beginning of time to the end of the world.

The same God who gave us the Bible also set up the laws that govern the movement of planets and stars. These laws are expressed as numbers that were carefully designed by God.

If secular scientists paid no attention to numbers as they attempted travel to the moon or to the planet Mars, they could never achieve any success. The same God who gave us the Bible also set up the laws that govern the movement of planets and stars. These laws are expressed as numbers that were carefully designed by God. Likewise, the history of the world as it relates to the unfolding of God's salvation plan is expressed by numbers that have been carefully included in the Bible text.

It might be noted that there are many other indicators of the careful preplanned character of the unfolding of God's salvation program in which the numbers of judgment (5, 23, 37, 43), are not featured. A few examples follow:

1. Abraham, of whom all true believers in Jesus Christ are spiritually called the seed (Galatians 3:29), was circumcised in the year 2068 B.C. (Genesis Chapter 17). At that time, God's salvation promises were re-emphasized. Exactly 2,100 years later, in A.D. 33, the certainty of those promises is seen as Jesus literally endures the wrath of God to fulfill those promises for the heirs of salvation (Galatians 3:29 - 4:7). The number 2,100 breaks down into the very significant numbers $3 \times 7 \times 100$.
2. Abraham was seventy-five years of age when he came into the promised land, the land of Canaan. He died at the age of 175 having lived 100 years in the land of Canaan. Thus, God emphasized the principle that believers live in the kingdom of God for the completeness (100) of God's plan, that is, eternally.
3. The last written entry of the Old Testament part of the Bible

was made in the year 391 B.C. We will discover that in the year 7 B.C., Jesus was born. He is the very Word of God. From the year 11,013 B.C. until 391 B.C., holy men of God spoke as God the Holy Spirit moved them. But in 7 B.C., Christ, the very Word of God, appeared in the flesh. We read in John 1:14:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

It surely seems very significant that the duration of time between 391 B.C. and 7 B.C. is 384 years. Amazingly, the number 384 breaks down into 3×2^7 or $3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$. We have learned that the purpose or will of God is frequently signified by the number 3. We have also learned that the number 2 spiritually can signify the caretaking of the Word of God. We also have learned that the number 7 signifies complete perfection. Please note that the number 384 has the number 2 multiplied 7 times. Thus, in the number 384 ($3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$), we find these three very significant numbers. It was God's purpose (3) that the Word, who is the Lord Jesus, would finally come in the flesh as the Caretaker of the Gospel, indeed, the very essence of the Gospel (2), in the complete perfection of God's timetable (7 "2s").

It is also quite amazing to learn that there is a very significant relationship between the years 391 B.C. and A.D. 2011, which is the date of the probable end of the world. We do know that at the end of the world, Christ will again speak very literally as He comes with a shout, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, who can be no one but Christ Himself. We read in I Thessalonians 4:16:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

As indicated above, the word "archangel" is improperly translated. Christ is not an angel. He is the Messenger of the Covenant (Malachi 3:1).

Moreover, at the end of time, Christ will be speaking as the Judge of the earth, as all of the unsaved are brought into judgment.

Significantly, the period of time between 391 B.C. and A.D. 2011 equals 2,401 years. $391 \text{ B.C.} + \text{A.D. } 2011 = 2,402 - 1 = 2,401$ years. Amazingly, the number 2,401 breaks down into $7 \times 7 \times 7 \times 7$. Thus, two very important numbers are featured, the numbers 7 and 4. The number 7 indicates perfect completeness. The number 4 (4 "7s"), as we have learned, speaks of the end or the utmost extremity. Indeed, Christ will have spoken in complete perfection at the end of this world.

Many more examples showing the unfolding of God's salvation plan could be given. A few additional examples are indicated on the time chart set forth at the end of this book.

While we are speaking of numbers, we might also take note of the number of times events are interrelated by the number 1,000. We should note the following:

1. Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, was born in the year 2007 B.C. Exactly 2,000 years later, in the year 7 B.C., Jesus, who is the eternal King of Israel, was born.
2. In the year 1007 B.C., David, a great type of Jesus, became king of Israel. Exactly 1,000 years later, in 7 B.C., Jesus, the eternal King of Israel, was born.
3. In the year 967 B.C., Solomon began the building of the temple in Jerusalem. The construction of the temple points to the building of the spiritual temple of God which consists of all the true believers. Thus, the laying of the physical temple foundation was pointing to, and was spiritually fulfilled by, Christ becoming the spiritual foundation of all the true believers (I Corinthians 3:11). To become the foundation of the spiritual temple required that Christ pay for all of the sins of those He came to save.

In the year 967 B.C., Solomon began the building of the physical temple. Exactly 1,000 calendar years later, in A.D. 33, Christ became the foundation of the spiritual temple by completing all that was involved in His cross experience. $967 + 33 = 1,000$ calendar years (1,000 actual years inclusive).

4. The year 7 B.C. signaled the beginning of the first Jubilee (the proclamation of the Gospel to the world). Exactly 2,000 years later, in A.D. 1994, the second Jubilee began as God began his final program of saving **"a great multitude, which no man**

could number” (Revelation 7:9) during the time of the Great Tribulation.

5. Creation occurred in the year 11,013 B.C. On the first day of creation, God said **“Let there be light”**(Genesis 1:3). This declaration anticipated the fact that the light of the Gospel would go into all of the world. Exactly 13,000 years later, A.D. 1988 identifies with the end of the Church Age and the beginning of the Great Tribulation. During the first part of the Great Tribulation, there would be the half hour of silence in Heaven (Revelation 8:1). Immediately following this half hour of silence, the second Jubilee period began which will probably end seventeen years later in A.D. 2011.

It is indeed curious and possibly significant that many milestones found on the timeline of history ending with A.D. 2011 are very interesting and possibly very important in that they may help us further tie the whole program of history together.

It is indeed curious and possibly significant that many milestones found on the timeline of history ending with A.D. 2011 are very interesting and possibly very important in that they may help us further tie the whole program of history together. For example, we will discover that the probable duration of the Great Tribulation will be 23 years. The fact that the number 23 signifies judgment fits exceedingly well. Likewise, we will discover that 2,300 days is the time duration of the first part of the Great Tribulation when there was the half hour of silence in Heaven (Revelation 8:1).

Likewise, we will find that the 17- year period of the final harvest that takes place during the second part of the tribulation fits perfectly inasmuch as it is during these 17 years that a great multitude which no man can number is being saved (Revelation 7:9-14).

Curiously, as we have already noted, the precise 1,955 years of the Church Age factors into the significant numbers $5 \times 17 \times 23 = 1,955$. The effect of bringing the Gospel to the world is stated in II Corinthians 2:15-16:

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And

who is sufficient for these things?

The Gospel, which is the Law of God, both damns people to the eternal wrath of God and saves people by providing eternal life. This is illustrated in the expression $5 \times 17 \times 23 = 1,955$. Remember, the number 5 signifies both judgment and salvation, the number 17 signifies Heaven, which is the result of salvation, and the number 23 signifies judgment.

Earlier, we commented that there were 1,978 years from the cross to the probable end of the world. Remember, the number 1,978 factors into $2 \times 23 \times 43$. Earlier, we learned that the number 2 signifies those who are the caretakers of the Bible. We also have learned that the number 23 signifies God's judgment. Furthermore, the number 43 can signify salvation or judgment. Therefore, we can see in the number 1,978 that at the end of time, those who have been caretakers of the Bible will end up either under God's eternal salvation or under eternal judgment.

We must be impressed by God's use of the numbers of the Bible.

We must be impressed by God's use of the numbers of the Bible. Let it be emphasized again that no date or milestone in the timeline of history that we have set forth in this study has been prompted by any desire whatsoever to develop number relationships that may have spiritual or symbolical meanings. The Calendar of History that has been set forth in this study is based solely on Biblical information without any regard for the spiritual meaning that may be inherent in the numbers that result.

However, it cannot be coincidental or accidental that the number patterns that the Bible reveals are so beautifully interrelated.

However, it cannot be coincidental or accidental that the number patterns that the Bible reveals are so beautifully interrelated. They surely should further encourage us that God's Timetable of History is indeed almost to an end.

We have spent a little time learning about the accuracy and importance of God's use of numbers. Before we continue down the highway of time, we

should also take a moment to emphasize another aspect of Bible prophecy that is frequently grossly misunderstood. It is God's use of parables.

Christ Spoke in Parables

We have been continuing our journey through time as it is viewed in the light of the unfolding of God's grand salvation plan. Repeatedly, we have indicated that historical events recorded in the Bible were pictures or portraits of some aspect of God's salvation plan. Actually, we can think of the Old Testament as a picture gallery, with each picture representing some aspect of God's salvation plan.

We should, therefore, pause for a moment to show the solid Biblical basis for understanding the Bible in this way.

The extremely important principle that must be kept in mind as we search the Bible for any kind of truth is that Christ spoke in parables.

The extremely important principle that must be kept in mind as we search the Bible for any kind of truth is that Christ spoke in parables. We read in Mark 4:11:

And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables.

Jesus added in Mark 4:34:

But without a parable spake he not unto them

The principle that Jesus, the Author of the Bible, spoke in parables cannot be too strongly emphasized. Only by a clear understanding of this principle can a large part of the Bible be understood. Jesus explained why He wrote in parables. We read in Mark 4:9-12:

And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is

given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

God is explaining to us that He purposely wrote the Bible so that those who are without the kingdom of God, those who have not been given spiritual ears to hear, those whom God does not intend to convert because they are not chosen of God to salvation, will remain completely ignorant of many of the truths of the Bible. To assure this, God has written much of the Bible as historical parables which those who have not been given spiritual ears cannot understand. They can understand the historical reality of the Biblical statement, but they cannot understand the spiritual message that is hidden within the statement.

For example, the nation of Israel was given the ceremonial laws which are all like parables . . .

For example, the nation of Israel was given the ceremonial laws which are all like parables or metaphors. The observance of these laws should have pointed them to the coming Messiah (Christ) to save them. They, however, looked only at the physical observance of these laws as the key to their salvation. Thus, for example, they rigorously offered burnt offerings and kept the seventh-day Sabbath. But they perished because of their unbelief (Romans 9:31-33). They did not at all see the spiritual Gospel hidden within those laws.

Amazingly, we find that most churches have adopted a man-designed hermeneutic (method of Bible interpretation) that blocks them from understanding many portions of the Bible.* Their hermeneutic is altogether contrary to the Biblical teaching that Christ spoke in parables about which we are reading in Mark Chapter 4. It blocks them from understanding such great truths as the end of the church age, the Great Tribulation, the latter rain, etc. Their false hermeneutic virtually forces them to remain in their local congregations under the judgment of God. It is indeed remarkable that so many theologians and Bible teachers are trusting in an un-Biblical, man-made method of Bible interpretation that locks them out of the kingdom of God.

* For a full discussion of this, the reader is invited to obtain a free copy of *Wheat and Tares*, available from Family Radio.

Because these theologians and church leaders have implicit trust in the man-made method of Biblical interpretation which they have been taught in the seminary they attended, they are convinced that the method of Bible interpretation taught in this book is heresy. They also warn their followers that this is so. Thus, entire congregations remain in spiritual darkness. It is absolutely imperative that we never try to understand the Bible through the filter of any man-made principles. To do so, effectively removes God as the supreme and only authority who rules over His Word, the Bible.

A parable, simply stated, is an earthly story with a heavenly or spiritual meaning. It is like a metaphor or a simile.

A parable, simply stated, is an earthly story with a heavenly or spiritual meaning.

Because Jesus identifies Himself completely as the Word of God and indeed is God Himself, we, therefore, would expect that when God wrote the Bible, He constantly would use parables. That is, He would hide important spiritual truth in stories or in historical events. We see this in God's utilization of the ceremonial laws to point to spiritual truth. For example, the burnt offerings, the blood sacrifices of the Old Testament, were physical earthly activities pointing to or illustrating the spiritual truth of Jesus enduring the fires of Hell, of shedding His blood (that is, giving His life), that sinners might be saved. Thus, He was announced by John the Baptist as the Lamb of God. Jesus, of course, was not literally a lamb; He was the fulfilment of the ceremonial activity that pointed to or was represented by the Passover lamb as well as by the various burnt offerings or blood sacrifices in which lambs were sacrificed.

Likewise, we read in Isaiah 14:4 where God is apparently speaking of the king of Babylon, and He says:

That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!

However, if we continue to read this chapter, we discover God is not speaking of any historical king of Babylon. Instead, He is speaking of Satan. The citation of Isaiah Chapter 14 shows this as it continues in verses 12-15:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the

nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

God is speaking of Lucifer, who is also called Satan, as the king of Babylon because in the Bible, the nation of Babylon externally represented all of the kingdoms of this world who are ruled over by Satan. Therefore, Satan is externally typified or represented by the king of Babylon.

Because Christ spoke in parables and is, Himself, the Word of God, we can understand why this kind of presentation of truth is found here in Isaiah Chapter 14. Once we understand this principle, that God constantly utilized parables or metaphors or similes, much truth can be discovered in the Bible that otherwise would remain hidden.

Parables and The Book of Jeremiah

The Book of Jeremiah is a much larger example of Jesus speaking in parables. When we read it carefully, we will know that while most of this prophetic book is using the names of Old Testament nations, people, and cities, in actuality, it is pointing to the spiritual reality of the unfolding of God's salvation plan that identifies with the time of the Great Tribulation that concludes with the return of Christ and the end of the world.

For example, when we carefully examine Chapter 25 of the Book of Jeremiah, we will find language that assures us that we are on the path of truth. In Jeremiah 25:2-5, we read that God is addressing Judah and Jerusalem, warning them to turn from their evil ways so that they could dwell in the land for ever and ever. We read there:

The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened. And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, Turn ye

again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever.

The phrase in verse 5, “**land . . . for ever and ever,**” is an immediate clue that God is using parabolic language. The Bible is absolutely clear that this earth in its entirety will be destroyed by fire when Jesus returns at the end of the world (II Peter Chapter 3). Thus, the phrase “**the land . . . for ever and ever**” must be understood to be the kingdom of God which the true believers occupy eternally. Eternally, the location of the kingdom of God will be in the New Heavens and the New Earth. Thus, by use of this statement, God is warning the reader to look for the deeper spiritual meanings in the Jeremiah Chapter 25 message to Judah and Jerusalem.

Verses 11 and 12 of Jeremiah Chapter 25 further illustrate the principle that Christ spoke in parables. These verses say:

And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

In these verses, God uses the phrase “**perpetual desolations.**” The Hebrew word translated “**perpetual**” is a word that signifies “eternal.” Thus, this phrase could be translated “eternal desolations.” Immediately, we sense this verse is speaking about eternity future after this world has been destroyed.

But these verses indicate this everlasting desolation of the king of Babylon (also called the land of the Chaldeans) was to begin at the end of seventy years. Because everlasting desolation is to begin at the end of this world’s existence, we wonder how the time of seventy years fits in. We have learned that historically, this seventy-year period began in the year 609 B.C., the year Israel’s last good king, King Josiah died in battle. This seventy-year period was the time of tribulation that followed the time of his death. During this seventy-year period, first Egypt, and then Babylon, ruled in Judaea and Jerusalem. However, in the year 539 B.C., Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persian.

But following the year 539 B.C., Babylon was not eternally desolated. The city of Babylon still existed 200 years later, during the days of Alexander the Great. Thus, the prophecy of Jeremiah 25:11-12, which speaks of everlasting

desolation immediately following a period of seventy years, must be understood metaphorically. We must recognize that God is using parabolic or metaphorical language. That is, we are to look for the spiritual or Gospel application even though God is using actual literal historical names and events to illustrate and represent the Gospel application.

. . . we are to look for the spiritual or Gospel application even though God is using actual literal historical names and events to illustrate and represent the Gospel application.

Let us look at a couple more verses in Jeremiah Chapter 25 before we outline the spiritual application being portrayed in this chapter.

The next verse is Jeremiah 25:13, which reports:

And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

This verse says something very remarkable. It is teaching that all the information that God has given the prophet Jeremiah to write in this Book of Jeremiah is prophesied against all the nations. That is, the Book of Jeremiah is not concerned with a few nations, it is concerned with all the nations of the world. That we have correctly understood this is evidenced by a further disclosure in verse 26 of this chapter. There we read, after God had named many kingdoms that were in existence at the time Jeremiah was writing:

And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.

The phrase “**all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth**” assures us that God is speaking of the entire world. It is the entire world that will be under judgment when Christ returns at the end of the world.

The spiritual Gospel focus of the whole Book of Jeremiah is on the worldwide events that would occur as the world comes to an end.

Now we can understand why God said in verse 12 that Babylon would end up in everlasting desolation. Now we can understand why verse 5 spoke of Israel dwelling in the land forever and ever. God has written the Book of Jeremiah in the context of nations and historical events that were occurring in Jeremiah's day. But the spiritual Gospel focus of the whole Book of Jeremiah is on the world-wide events that would occur as the world comes to an end.

Therefore, as we carefully analyze anything and everything we read in the Book of Jeremiah, we discover that with few exceptions, the message is ultimately focused on the spiritual events occurring in our day, during which time we have come so close to the end of the world.

We now can know that references to Jerusalem, Judah, Israel, Canaan, and the temple, etc., which existed during the time of the Old Testament, externally represented the kingdom of God. However, in our day, it has been the local churches that have externally represented the kingdom of God. Therefore, the local churches are called Jerusalem, Judaea, the temple, etc. Thus, the local churches of our day are being warned by the prophecies and warnings set forth in the Book of Jeremiah.

As we indicated earlier, we might think of the Old Testament particularly, and to some degree also the New Testament, as a series of picture galleries. These true historical events recorded in the Bible are word pictures designed by God to illustrate important spiritual principles and future events that would take place as God unfolded His salvation plan.

As we are now learning, we must realize that most of what we read in the Book of Jeremiah, is speaking of the churches and the world that exist today. Thus, it is of particular importance to us today. The experiences of Judah, Babylon, etc., reported in the Book of Jeremiah, are as fully relevant to us today as any New Testament book. Fact is, they are as fully relevant as today's newspaper. The following principles should be kept in mind:

1. Babylon, Chaldea, and Sheshach are all synonyms that are speaking of Satan and his kingdom, which includes all of the unsaved of the world.
2. Egypt, Assyria, Philistines, etc. also refer to the kingdom of Satan.
3. Judah, Israel, Jerusalem, Tyre, Zidon, etc. normally refer to the local churches of our day although in certain instances, these names may refer to the eternal body of true believers.

4. Edom, Esau, Bozra, Esau, Mount Seir, etc. are names that refer to the unsaved within the local congregations.

Because the Book of Jeremiah clearly teaches that the revelations given to Jeremiah definitely apply to the whole world of our day, we may expect the same is true of the other prophetic books of the Bible such as Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, etc. We will see this as we look at representative verses in the Bible that address the issue of the Great Tribulation which the church and the world are now experiencing.

As we continue our study, we will look at many additional verses of the Bible that we can understand once we have learned the principle that Christ spoke in parables. Because He is identified as the Word of God (John Chapter 1), we will understand that these verses were written as parables or metaphors.

Now, however, we shall return to the unfolding of God's timeline of history as we examine the next great milestone, the birth of Jesus.

Chapter 9

7 B.C. – A.D. 33

Christ's Birth and Ministry

We have been traveling down the highway of time which is governed by the unfolding of God's salvation plan, and His plan has been unfolding for well over 10,000 years. The last milestone we examined was the year 391 B.C. which, in all likelihood, was the last year, during the Old Testament era, in which God broke the silence between Heaven and earth.

For the next approximately 400 years, there is no Biblical record that can be identified with the unfolding of the timeline of God's program of salvation. It is not until 8 B.C. that once more God begins to speak. It is the time in God's Gospel program for God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, to take on a human nature and physically, as the Son of God and the Son of man, to endure the wrath of God on behalf of all those individuals whom God had committed Himself to save throughout time. The birth date and the date of His crucifixion must be the most important milestones in the unfolding of God's salvation plan. For the previous 11,000 years, every Biblical event in one way or another was pointing to this awesome event of God taking on a human nature and actually suffering the wrath of God on behalf of all of those He came to save. Therefore, we should search the Bible to discover what we can concerning the timing of these extraordinary events.

Curiously, God has not given easily-understood information concerning an exact day, month, or year in which Jesus was born. We wonder why this is so in view of the fact that God has given so many other dates as He has unfolded His Gospel timeline. At this time in our understanding of the Bible, we can only speculate why He may have done it this way.

We do know that Christ's coming on a certain day and certain month and certain year was all carefully pre-arranged. The Bible tells us that Christ came in the fullness of time (Galatians 4:4).

Significantly, God gave considerable information that relates to the time of Jesus' birth. Fact is, there is so much of this related information we can almost be certain we can know His birth date. Indeed, it may have been God's purpose that only by a careful study of this related information would we learn the date of Christ's birth. We should spend a little time to assemble this information because it will prove to be very helpful as we continue to unfold the timeline of God's salvation program.

At the time Jesus was born, Israel was under the rule of the Roman government. However, Israel was permitted to have their own puppet king. He

was a wicked old king named Herod (Matthew 2:1-18). We know from trustworthy secular records that Herod died in April of 4 B.C.

We know from the Biblical record that there were Magi to whom God announced Christ's birth by placing a miraculous star in the sky (Matthew 2:1-2). When these Magi searched their holy books to try to discover the significance of this unusual star, they eventually would have read in Numbers 24:17:

I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

At that time in history, there was in Persia a second level ruling party called Magian. In all likelihood, the Magi who saw the star were from Persia. Remember, Babylon defeated Judah and in turn, the Median-Persian nation defeated Babylon. Therefore, the libraries of Judah could easily have ended up in Persia.

In any event, because the Magi saw this miraculous star, they believed a great king must have been born in Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel. They therefore eventually came to Jerusalem to pay homage to this King who was predicted in the holy book of Israel.

They arrived in Jerusalem and inquired about this baby King. And the wicked Herod, who would not for a moment want the possibility of another king ruling over Israel, inquired diligently of the Magi about when the star had appeared.

In Matthew 2:7 we read:

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

Certainly, considerable time had gone by because it was a huge undertaking for the Magi to make all of the preparations and assemble all of the personnel necessary to make the long trip from Persia to Jerusalem.

The theologians in Herod's court reported that the Bible prophesied that a king, the Messiah, was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). The Magi, therefore, went on their way to Bethlehem, and the star which they had seen in the east went before them and stood over the house where Jesus was living with Joseph and Mary (Matthew 2:9-11). Thus, the star was a miraculous star, only a few hundred feet high in the sky. If it were higher than that, it could not stand over one house.

Herod had wanted the Magi to come back to Jerusalem and report to him if they found this child King (Matthew 2:8). But the Magi were warned by God not to return to Jerusalem. Therefore, they went home another way (Matthew 2:12).

But now comes information important to our examination of the Biblical Timeline of History. We read in the Bible that Herod, in great anger, gave the command that all of the children in Bethlehem were to be killed, **“from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men [Magi]”** (Matthew 2:16).

Thus, God has given us a time reference. We can know that the star must have appeared about two years earlier because in his effort to kill Jesus, Herod killed all the two-year-olds in Bethlehem according to the time the Magi had given him. Therefore, we may assume, as did Herod, that Jesus was born about two years before the Magi spoke to Herod. Since Herod was still living prior to April of 4 B.C., it meant that Jesus had to have been born at least two years earlier, that is, two years prior to April of 4 B.C. Remember, Herod died in April of 4 B.C.

Presently, we will look at Biblical evidence that indicates Jesus had to have been born late in September or early in October. Therefore, Jesus would then have had to have been born in 7 B.C. because if He were born in September of 6 B.C. Jesus would have been only one and a half years old when he was visited by the Magi. Therefore, Jesus must have been born in September or October of 7 B.C.

. . . the very essence of the Jubilee Year resides in Christ through whom liberty can be proclaimed to the world.

The year 7 B.C. was a very significant year. Earlier we learned that it was a Jubilee Year. We also learned that the very essence of the Jubilee Year resides in Christ through whom liberty can be proclaimed to the world.

In Which Month Was Jesus Born?

But what about the month of the year? What can we learn? In Luke 1:35-36, God records the messenger from Heaven giving Mary the news of her impending conception:

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow

thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

These verses suggest that Jesus was conceived about five to six months after John the Baptist was conceived in the womb of his mother Elisabeth. Since the ordinary period of pregnancy is about nine months, the conception of John the Baptist would, therefore, have been fourteen to fifteen months before the birth of Jesus. Thus, if we can determine when John the Baptist was conceived, we would have a fairly good idea of when Jesus was born.

In Luke 1:5 we read:

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

Zacharias was the father of John the Baptist, and in this verse, we learn that in his priestly duties, he was of the course of Abia. We, therefore, must search the Bible to learn what we can about the course of Abia (Hebrew *Abijah*).

In I Chronicles Chapter 24, we learn that the divisions of the priests were twenty-four, that is, the priesthood was divided into twenty-four courses. In verse 10, we read, **“The seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah.”** Thus, Zacharias, being of the course of Abia or Abijah, served in the eighth course. These courses followed one another throughout the twelve months of the Jewish calendar. Since there were twenty-four courses in all, two courses would have served in each month with the eighth course ending its service at the end of the fourth month.

That we might understand this correctly, we find that in I Chronicles Chapter 27, God has given us information concerning the soldiers who served the king of Israel. They were divided into twelve courses of 24,000 men in each course. Each course was assigned to one month’s service. Thus, we read, for example, in I Chronicles 27:5:

The third captain of the host for the third month was Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

This verse teaches that the third course served the third month. Thus, we are quite sure that in similar fashion, the eighth course of the twenty-four of the priesthood,

that of Abijah, would have ended at the end of the fourth month of the Jewish calendar.

Returning to Zacharias, we read in Luke 1:23-24:

And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months. . . .

This verse suggests that the conception of John the Baptist occurred shortly after the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. The course of Abia was finished, as we have learned, at the end of the fourth month. From Luke 1:36, we learned that it was in the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy that Mary was told that she would be with child of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit probably took place about six months after the end of the fourth month which ended Zacharias' temple assignment. The conception of Jesus, therefore, would have been close to the end of the tenth month or early in the eleventh month of the Jewish calendar.

If Jesus were born in 7 B.C., John the Baptist would have been conceived in 8 B.C. According to the Jewish calendar, the end of the tenth month in 8 B.C. was December 28 of our modern calendar. Thus, the birth of Christ would have been nine months later which would have been very late in September or very early in October of 7 B.C.

We can analyze Christ's birth date in a slightly different way. The last day of the fourth month in 8 B.C. was July 5. This was the date Zacharias left the temple. It thus means that Elisabeth conceived John the Baptist probably as early as July 15. Thus, John the Baptist would have been born about nine months later or about April 15, 7 B.C. We know it was a full term birth because Luke 1:57 records:

Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

We also know that Mary spent about three months with Elisabeth for we read in Luke 1:56: **"And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house."** We surely can assume that Mary stayed with Elisabeth until her son John was born.

Remember we read in Luke 1:35-36 that the angel informed Mary that Elisabeth had conceived and this was her sixth month. The Bible then records in Luke 1:38-39:

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda.

Assuming it took about two weeks to arrive in Elisabeth's house, it meant that Mary was about three and a half months pregnant when she left Elisabeth at the time John was born. As we learned earlier, the birth of John was about April 15. Thus, it appears Mary would have left Elisabeth about April 15. Therefore, Jesus would have been born about five and a half months later than April 15 or about October 1.

In any case, we know that the information concerning such things as the course of Abia, the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy, and the three-month visit of Mary with Elisabeth has been carefully placed in the Bible for a purpose. That purpose focuses on the date of Jesus' birth. For certain, it means that Jesus had to have been born very close to October 1 in the year 7 B.C.

When we calculate the date of the Day of Atonement in 7 B.C., we discover it was October 1, a date that appears to fit perfectly with our present conclusion that Jesus was born about October 1. With all of the foregoing evidence, may we assume that Jesus was born on the Day of Atonement? Let us look at a bit more evidence that shows that this is a very logical assumption.

In Daniel 9:25-27, God presents to us the seventy weeks that focus on the coming of Jesus. Verse 25 of Daniel 9 declares:

Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

Earlier in our study, we learned that seven weeks of years is the time between Jubilee Years. Thus, this first seven weeks are to be understood as the period of time from one Jubilee to the next Jubilee. The year 458 B.C. is the year in which Ezra was commanded by the king of the Medes and Persians to re-establish the Law of God in Jerusalem (Ezra 7:8-26). Spiritually, it is the true believers, to whom God gives the desire to keep the Law, who are the Jerusalem that is being built (Ephesians 2:19-22; Revelation 21:9-10). The year immediately following 458 B.C. was the year 457 B.C., which was a Jubilee Year. Thus, this first seven weeks would begin immediately following the year 458 B.C. This period — from one Jubilee to the next Jubilee — would cover the years to the next

Jubilee Year, 407 B.C. (See *The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9*, available free of charge from Family Radio.)

But could there be an additional meaning? Note again the language, from the time **“from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks.”** Is this a veiled reference to the fact that Jesus would come in a Jubilee Year? We learned earlier that Jesus is the essence of the Jubilee Year. He is totally identified with the Jubilee. Remember, too, that the year 7 B.C. was a Jubilee Year that began the first Jubilee period that extended throughout the time of the Church Age.

Indeed, more than 500 years before the birth of Christ, God had declared in very veiled language that Jesus would be the Jubilee and/or would be born in a Jubilee Year. To understand this, we must look again at the Bible's explanation of the timing of the Jubilee Years. In Leviticus 25:8-10 we read:

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

In these verses, God is making a very insistent point that 7 x 7 years separated one Jubilee from the next Jubilee. Four times in verse 8 this is repeated. Note the unusual fourfold emphasis set forth in this one verse:

“ . . . seven sabbaths of years . . . ”

“ . . . seven times seven years . . . ”

“ . . . seven sabbaths of years . . . ”

“ . . . forty and nine years . . . ”

In verses 10 and 11, God emphasizes that the fiftieth year was a Jubilee Year:

. . . Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land . . . A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be . . .

On the basis of these verses, I believe we may conclude that when

years of time are in view, the phrase “seven sevens” is equivalent to, or a synonym for speaking of, “from one Jubilee to the next Jubilee.”

When we apply this conclusion to Daniel 9:25, we discover that, in a hidden way, this verse is predicting that Christ would come as the Jubilee and/or in a Jubilee Year. In Daniel 9:25 quoted above, the term “**seven weeks**” is literally the words “seven sevens.” As we have noted, the context is describing the number of years from the command to build Jerusalem (that is, the bringing of the Law to Jerusalem) to the coming of the Messiah. Thus, the “seven sevens” refers to “seven sevens of years.” With the term “seven sevens of years” being understood as “from one Jubilee to the next Jubilee,” this verse would then read:

Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be — from one Jubilee to the next Jubilee — and threescore and two weeks

We have seen that the command to build Jerusalem (spiritually to bring the Law of God to Jerusalem) occurred in the year 458 B.C. when the priest Ezra was given that command by the king Artaxerxes I. The next year, 457 B.C. was a Jubilee Year. Literally, fifty years later, 407 B.C. was the next Jubilee Year. Likewise, sixty-two sevens of years, 434 years that followed, began the next year, 406 B.C. This 434 years continued until the year A.D. 29 which was the year when Jesus was announced as “**the lamb of God**” (John 1:29). It was after this, in A.D. 33, that Jesus the Messiah was “**cut off**” (Daniel 9:26). That is, He endured the wrath of God on behalf of those whom He came to save (Isaiah 53:8).

Spiritually, the phrase “**from the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks**” (remember seven sevens of years indicates from one Jubilee to the next Jubilee), thus appears to be a hidden reference to the idea that the next Jubilee after the Jubilee Year 457 B.C. was Jesus Himself, who is the very essence of the Jubilee. Moreover, since Jesus was born in the Jubilee Year 7 B.C., and very likely on the Day of Atonement, a day that definitely relates to the Jubilee (Leviticus 25:9), we can understand that this prediction of Daniel 9:25 is giving us further assurance of the likelihood that the birth of Jesus is related to the Day of Atonement in the Jubilee Year 7 B.C.

We have noted that the Day of Atonement identified with the Jubilee Year. It was on that day the Jews were to afflict themselves (Leviticus 23:27). Based on Isaiah 58:3, we can understand that “to afflict one’s soul” was to fast.

Moreover, Isaiah 58:6-7 teaches that fasting means to bring the Gospel. These verses declare:

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Each and every one of the above expressions, such as “**loose the bands of wickedness**” and “**deal thy bread to the hungry**” spiritually refer to the act of bringing the Gospel to those who are in bondage to sin and who are dying of spiritual malnutrition. This ties in perfectly with the Jubilee which focuses on declaring liberty throughout the land. That is, Jesus as the Savior, the very essence of the Jubilee, is to be published throughout the world.

We wonder, was this the import of the information noted in Luke 2:16-17 concerning the shepherds? The Bible declares:

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

The shepherds surely symbolize all true believers. On the day of the birth of Jesus, the Jubilee, the Lord Jesus, was being proclaimed throughout the land, beginning with the shepherds. Fact is, Heaven itself began this proclamation to the world as indicated by the Heavenly host declaring the praises of God when they appeared to the shepherds (Luke 2:13).

Indeed, it appears that a great amount of circumstantial evidence points to Jesus as the very essence of the Jubilee being born on the Day of Atonement in the Jubilee Year 7 B.C.

Jesus, the very essence of the Jubilee, is to be published throughout the world.

More Information about 7 B.C.

The year 7 B.C. is very uniquely related to many other important milestones in the unfolding of the history of God's salvation program. For

example, note the following. (See also in this volume “Chapter 8. The Numbers in the Bible” and the fold-out chart, “Important Time Interval Relationships” which follows the last chapter.)

Spiritually, all true believers are the seed (that is, descendants) of Abraham. Galatians 3:29 declares:

And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Spiritually, all true believers are also children of God. Galatians 3:26 declares:

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Therefore, we are not surprised to discover a parallelism between the birth date of Abraham and that of Christ who is, of course, God. Abraham was born in the year 2167 B.C. Jesus was born in the year 7 B.C. These two birth dates are spiritually related to each other.

Moreover, there are two major periods of time during which the Gospel went forth into the whole world so that all over the world, as people became saved, the spiritual sons of Abraham and Christ multiplied. The first period is that which began in the Jubilee Year 7 B.C. when Jesus was born and which transitioned into the Church Age. We will discover that this first period ended in A.D. 1988. The second period is that which began with the Jubilee Year A.D. 1994 and will continue to the end of the world. These three years, 2167 B.C., 7 B.C., and A.D. 1994, are intimately related.

Amazingly, the time intervals between these three events tie these events closely to each other. Please note the following:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Birth of Abraham</u> | <u>Birth of Christ</u> | <u>Jubilee Year</u> |
| 2167 B.C. | Jubilee Year 7 B.C. | A.D. 1994 |

$$2,167 - 7 = 2,160$$

$$2,160 = 10 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$$

$$7 + 1,994 - 1 = 2,000$$

$$2,000 = 2 \times 1,000$$

$$2,167 + 1,994 - 1 = 4,160$$

$$4,160 = 10 \times 13 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$$

We have learned that numbers in the Bible can be synonyms for spiritual truth. Remember that:

2	can signify the caretaker of the Gospel
3	can signify God's purpose
5	can signify salvation and/or judgment
10	can signify completeness
13	can signify super fullness

Thus, the time interval of 2,160 years between the birth of Abraham and the birth of Christ can spiritually signify God's complete (the number 10) purpose (the number 3) for bringing into existence the spiritual seed of Abraham who are also the spiritual seed of Christ. The true believers could not become the spiritual seed of Abraham unless Christ was born. He, who is the very essence of the Gospel is, therefore, the ultimate Caretaker of the Gospel (the number 2).

Likewise, the 2,000 years between the Jubilee Year 7 B.C. in which Christ was born and the Jubilee Year A.D. 1994 spiritually can signify that the caretaking of the Gospel (the number 2) is completed (the number 1,000) during the final harvest which began in A.D. 1994. Remember, the caretakers of the Gospel (Christ Himself and all the true believers) were given the task of proclaiming liberty to the world.

Furthermore, the 4,160 years between the birth of Abraham and the Jubilee Year A.D. 1994 can signify the complete (the number 10) super fullness (the number 13) of the task of the caretaking of the Gospel (the number 2) during which the spiritual seed of Abraham and of Christ will be multiplied. The fact that there are 5 "2s" in the number 4,160 possibly highlights the salvation which brings the spiritual seed to Abraham and to Christ.

- Jacob was born in the year 2007 B.C. Exactly 2,000 years later, Jesus was born.
- Israel left Egypt in the year 1447 B.C. Jesus was born in the year 7 B.C. $1,447 - 7 = 1,440$ years. $1,440 = 10 \times 12 \times 12$. The number 12 signifies fullness. Thus, God ties the time of deliverance from Egypt to the birth of Jesus indicating that in the complete (10) fullness (12) of time, the Deliverer will come.
- Israel entered the land of Canaan in the year 1407 B.C. $1,407 - 7 = 1,400$. 1,400 breaks down into $7 \times 2 \times 10 \times 10$. Thus,

God identifies the entrance of Israel into the land of Canaan, which signifies salvation, with Christ's birth in 7 B.C. The passage of 1,400 years teaches that in the perfect completeness of time (the numbers 7 and 10), the true believers (the number 2), will be able to proclaim the good news that entrance into the kingdom of God is possible.

- David ascended the throne in the year 1007 B.C. $1,007 - 7 = 1,000$ years. Thus, God is signifying in the completeness of time (the number 1,000), the King would come to rule over His people. When Jesus was on trial, He answered Pilate's question "**Art thou a king**" by saying, "**To this end I was born**" (John 18:37).

All of the above calendar milestones are definitely taught in the Bible. Therefore, we can see how God has not laid out an erratic time program for the unfolding of His Gospel program. Rather, it is very carefully and harmoniously structured so that, even in the pattern of times, there is great harmony. We are reminded that God created flowers, for example, so that there is beauty in the exact arrangement of the petals in that flower. It is the same God who has pre-arranged His salvation program so that there is beautiful harmony in the timing of each event.

A.D. 29. Jesus is Announced

The next important milestone in the unfolding of God's salvation program is the occasion when Jesus officially began His work. This was at the time He was announced as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). That is, He in all the world is the only one who can take away sin.

Immediately, we will ask the question: Does the Bible tell us the precise time of this important announcement? To assist us, God wrote in Luke 3:1-3:

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

This verse gives us a historical time reference. According to accurate historical secular information, Tiberius Caesar ascended the throne in A.D. 14, the year his stepfather Augustus Caesar died. Therefore, his first full year of reign would have been A.D. 15 and his fifteenth year would have been A.D. 29.

Significantly, it was precisely 567 years earlier, in the year 539 B.C., that Cyrus conquered Babylon and thereupon gave the command to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. We read in Ezra 1:1-2:

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

As we learned earlier, the building of the temple spiritually was pointing to the building of the kingdom of God. In this citation of the Book of Ezra, Cyrus, who was also called Darius the Mede, is a picture of Christ who conquered the kingdom of Satan in order to build His kingdom. Christ officially began His work as the Messiah in A.D. 29, at the time that He was announced as the Lamb of God. At that time, He was baptized to ceremonially indicate that He not only had come as the burnt offering, but that He had come as the High Priest to offer the lamb.

Now let us examine the spiritual significance of this time interval. $539 + 29 - 1 = 567$. The number 567 breaks down into the significant numbers $7 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 = 567$. These numbers could signify that the perfect fulfillment (the number 7) of the purpose of God (the number 3) to build His temple occurred when Jesus went to the cross. The occurrence of 4 "3s" could signify that this rebuilding of the temple especially focused on the final period of spiritual temple building that is occurring during the second Jubilee, which is taking place during this time of Great Tribulation.

Returning to the historical account, we wonder if there is, at this important milestone in the unfolding of God's salvation program, any other information that shows the importance of this date in Biblical history. For example, can we know the exact day of the year this momentous event occurred? And was that day an important day for any additional reason?

We *can know* the precise day this great announcement was made, and we will discover it was a very special day.

To find an answer to these questions, we must look at a very curious citation written in Daniel 12:12. There we read:

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

Because this verse is written in a book of the Bible that has much to say about end time events, for years I have tried to relate this verse and its reference to 1,335 days to the timing of the end. However, no matter how I tried, I was unsuccessful in relating it in any meaningful way with the end of time.

Truth concerning this verse began to dawn when I started to wonder if this verse related to the first coming of Christ. Could it be the word “he” in this verse is a reference to Jesus Himself? He would be the Blessed One. He would be the One who must wait to come.

Why must Christ wait to come? Could He not have come whenever He decided to come?

Why must Christ wait to come? Could He not have come whenever He decided to come? The answer is No! As we have learned, God has a very carefully planned timetable for all of history. This timetable is tied very securely to God’s salvation plan. The coming of Christ is the greatest event in this salvation plan, but His coming had to fit precisely into this timetable. Therefore, Jesus had to wait for the exact time when this timetable called for Him to come. That is why Galatians 4:4-5, which we looked at earlier, indicates that Jesus came in the “fullness of time”. That is why we read in Isaiah 30:18:

And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.

What then is the period of 1,335 days for which He must wait to come? Examining the 1,335 days in the light of what we know concerning the timetable of Christ’s first coming, it is not difficult to see the possibility that the 1,335 days identifies in some way with His coming to be crucified.

When we study Daniel 9:27 (see *The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9*, available free of charge from Family Radio), we learn that the time from the

baptism of Jesus to the cross was approximately three and a half years. We learned that it was at Jesus' baptism that He officially began His work as the Messiah and that sacrifice and offering ceased in the middle of a week of seven years. We learned that the only time sacrifices ended was at the cross when Jesus sacrificed Himself for our sins. If the middle of the week meant precisely three and a half years, then that equals 1,278 days ($3\frac{1}{2} \times 365.2422$ days). But 1,278 days is short of 1,335 days. Could it be that the middle of the week was an approximation? But then the Bible would have said "about the middle of the week."

Then I remembered that Jesus had one more task to do that distinctly related to the atonement. It was a task that was an absolutely important part of God's salvation plan. That task was the sending of the Holy Spirit. It was God's plan that the Holy Spirit, who is God Himself, must begin His activity of applying the Word of God, the Bible, to the lives of those whom God planned to save. Unless this was done, no one could become saved.

Jesus spoke of this, indicating that He Himself would take care of this matter as soon as He returned to heaven. We read in John 16:7-8:

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

The Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost in A.D. 33. We read about this in Acts Chapter 2, wherein God discloses that in that day, about 3,000 were saved. Pentecost was fifty days after the cross. Fifty days added to an exact three and one half years (1,278 days) gives us a span of time equal to 1,328 days. This is only seven days less than 1,335 days. Daniel 9:27, which speaks of the Messiah being cut off, does not appear to be insisting on an exact three and a half years (1,328 days). It would appear that given the fact that 1,328 days is so close to 1,335 days, we have discovered what God had in mind with the 1,335 days. However, by studying the Bible more carefully, we will find the three and one half years are a very exact time.

If we start with the 1,335 days prophesied in Daniel 12:12, we can reconstruct the timing of events that preceded Pentecost. The last fifty days of the 1,335 days was the period from the Saturday immediately after the crucifixion to Pentecost. Six days earlier than this was the Sunday we call Palm Sunday. On this day, the time of the atonement was officially announced as having come. Jesus came into Jerusalem and was proclaimed a King (John 12:1, 12-15). This

precipitated all of the required events that brought Christ to the cross a few days later. Such actions as the evidences of the hatred of the Pharisees and the betrayal by Judas brought to reality Christ's crucifixion. Therefore, the Sunday we call Palm Sunday and the crucifixion are inseparably connected.

Moreover, we read in Exodus 12:3 that on the tenth day of Nisan, the Passover lamb was to be selected. It was to be killed on Nisan 14 (Exodus 12:6). In A.D. 33, when Jesus became the Passover Lamb, the tenth day of Nisan began at sundown on Sunday and continued until sundown on Monday.

Thus, all of that Sunday, which we call Palm Sunday, until sundown, was actually the ninth day of Nisan. In Mark 11:9-11, God ties the ninth day to the tenth day by indicating that Christ's entry into Jerusalem and the events that were a part of that day's activity continued into the evening hours. Those verses record:

And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest. And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

The phrase "**eventide was come**" shows that the events of that historic day continued until the evening hours. Therefore, God is tying together the selection of the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:3) to the selection of Jesus, the ultimate Passover Lamb.

In Exodus 12:3, God commanded:

Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, it was equivalent to a great worldwide announcement that the Passover Lamb now had been selected, and on the fourteenth day of Nisan, He was to be killed. The fourteenth day of Nisan began on Thursday evening, the very time Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane already beginning to endure the awful wrath of God for the sins of all His true people. His punishment by God would continue all through Friday until shortly before sundown on Friday when Jesus declared, "**It is finished**" (John 19:30).

Thus, the pattern of the punishment of Christ, the ultimate Passover Lamb, was dramatically set forth already in Exodus Chapter 12 where God details the selection of the Passover lamb.

In addition, the ninth day of Nisan in A.D. 33 was exactly, to the day, three and a half years after September 25 in A.D. 29 when Jesus was announced as the Lamb of God. Curiously, this in turn precisely agrees with the prophecy of Daniel 9:27 wherein God indicated that **“in the midst of the week [seven] He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.”**

If we now recognize that Palm Sunday occurred exactly three and a half years after Jesus was baptized, the timetable is as follows:

1. Jesus' baptism to Palm Sunday	3½ years	1,278 days
2. Palm Sunday to cross		5 days
3. Cross to Saturday in tomb		1 day
4. Saturday immediately after crucifixion to Pentecost		50 days
		1,334 days or
		1,335 days, inclusive

When we include both the day of Christ's baptism and the day of Pentecost, we end up with precisely 1,335 days. This 1,335 days is the exact number prophesied in Daniel 12:12. To the very day, this prophecy was fulfilled.

When we examine the 1,335 days, we can pinpoint that period on the calendar. The end of it is on Pentecost in A.D. 33. In an examination of the Jewish calendar for A.D. 33, we find that Pentecost was May 21. We know that this is an accurate date because of the great amount of Biblical evidence that points to A.D. 33 as the year of the cross. When we examine the Jewish calendar for A.D. 33, we find that the timing of the Passover of A.D. 33 agrees perfectly with the Biblical information that identifies with the timing of the Passover.

Therefore, we can be quite certain that Pentecost occurred on May 21, A.D. 33. But what date in A.D. 29 was exactly 1,335 days earlier than this? It would be interesting to know if Jesus was baptized on any kind of special day insofar as new moons or other feast days are concerned.

According to astronomical calculation, we can discover that in A.D. 29, when Jesus was baptized, the date of His baptism was September 25.

The computation of the 1,335 days of Jesus' ministry works out as follows:

Days in Calendar	Number of Days Toward 1,335 Days
Three years: 9/25/29 through 9/24/32 (3 x 365.2422) = 1,095.7266	1,096
Sept. 25-Sept. 30 inclusive (A.D. 32)	6
October 31 (A.D. 32)	31
November 30 (A.D. 32)	30
December 31 (A.D. 32)	31
January 31 (A.D. 33)	31
February 28 (A.D. 33)	28
March 31 (A.D. 33)	31
April 30 (A.D. 33)	30
May 1-May 21 inclusive (A.D. 33)	<u>21</u>
	1,335

Please note that six days are included for September. This is because the day of the baptism of Jesus, which was September 25, was also a day identified with Jesus' work on earth, which began with His baptism. Also, the 21st day of May (A.D. 33) is included because that was the date when Jesus sent the Comforter who is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the period of time from September 25, A.D. 29 through May 21, A.D. 33, inclusive, equals 1,335 days.

The Announcement of the Jubilee

Interestingly, September 25, A.D. 29, is a very special date. This is because September 25 is Tishri 1, and Tishri 1 is the date of the first day of the seventh month. Concerning this day, we read in Leviticus 23:23-25:

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of a Jubilee, an

holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

We can be absolutely certain that it was on this special day of the first day of the seventh month in A.D. 29 that Jesus was baptized. We can be absolutely certain because God had prophesied hundreds of years earlier in Daniel 12:12 that, **“Blessed is he [the Messiah] that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.”** How precisely the Bible gives information!

The Hebrew word in Daniel 12:12 that is translated “cometh” in the King James Bible is used very interestingly in another place. The word “cometh” used in Daniel 12:12 is the Hebrew word “*naga*.” The same word “*naga*” is translated “touch” more than ninety times in phrases such as **“the soul that shall touch any unclean thing”** (Leviticus 7:21), and **“an hand touched me”** (Daniel 10:10). But this same word “*naga*” is also translated “come” in a few places. One of these places is extremely interesting because it is used in connection with the observance of feast days. This citation is Ezra 3:1, where we read:

And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem.

The word “come” is the Hebrew “*naga*” even as it is in Daniel 12:12. In Ezra 3:6, God adds the words:

From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid.

These verses historically relate the experiences of Israel in Ezra’s day. Spiritually, they must point to Jesus Who laid the foundation of the spiritual temple — the whole body of true believers — by going to the cross. The historical event recorded in Ezra Chapter 3 is, therefore, a portrait pointing to the baptism and announcement of Jesus as the Lamb that would take away the sins of the world. Both in Ezra Chapter 3 and in Daniel 12:12, God is focusing on Tishri 1 which is the first day of the seventh month. Three and one half years after Jesus was announced as the Lamb of God, the foundation of the temple would be laid by Jesus experiencing God’s wrath.

Since the word “come” used in both Ezra Chapter 3 and Daniel 12:12 ordinarily signifies “touch,” we can know that Daniel 12:12 is teaching that Christ

as the Blessed One had to wait for the fullness of God's timetable before He could come to, or be in touch with, the 1,335 days, which was the period of time when Jesus did all of His work as Savior. It began on the feast of Tishri 1 in A.D. 29 and ended 1,335 days later on May 21, A.D. 33 when the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost. How beautiful and harmonious is the Word of God! How trustworthy are all the prophecies and numbers of the Bible!

As we learned earlier, the Bible speaks of two Jubilee periods. The first began with the birth of Jesus in the Jubilee Year 7 B.C. Later, we will learn that the second Jubilee period began in A.D. 1994, which was also a Jubilee Year. Later in our study, we will examine the second Jubilee period very carefully.

However, the baptism of Jesus in A.D. 29 was intimately identified with the first Jubilee. At the time Jesus was born, the Bible especially calls attention to two important events that identify with the nature of the Jubilee, i.e., the proclamation of liberty to the world. The first is the Heavenly host that appeared to the shepherds, announcing the birth of Christ (Luke 2:9-14). The second is the activity of the shepherds as they told the world all that they had seen and heard (Luke 2:17, 20).

We have learned that in all likelihood, Jesus was born on the Day of Atonement in the year 7 B.C., a Jubilee Year. Remember we learned also that the Day of Atonement is identified with the Jubilee.

Now, we have come to the first day of the seventh month in A.D. 29. As we have learned, this feast day was also identified with the Jubilee. Thus, we are not surprised that on that day in A.D. 29, two great announcements were made that, by means of the Bible, have been published all over the world.

The first was the announcement by John the Baptist, "**Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world**" (John 1:29).

The second was the announcement from Heaven recorded in Mark 1:9-11:

And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

In both John 1:29 and in Mark 1:9-11 we see the reason why Jesus was baptized and announced on the Holy Day of the First Day of the Seventh Month. It was the day that we received an enormous reminder that the Jubilee Year has come.

How precisely God has knit together the unfolding of His Gospel plan!

How Old was Jesus when He was Baptized?

We have arrived at the conclusion that in all likelihood, Jesus was born on October 1, 7 B.C. and that He was announced on September 25, A.D. 29. Thus, Jesus would have been six days short of being thirty-five years of age when He was announced and baptized. Is that possible? Does not the Bible say that He was thirty years old when He was baptized? Let us examine this question.

In Luke 3:23 we read:

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli.

Very literally, the first phrase should read, "And Jesus Himself was about thirty years beginning . . ." That is, it took about thirty years of preparation before Jesus would officially begin His work as Messiah. Did the preparation begin with His birth or did it begin at another time?

Since we know from other very clear evidence we have derived from the Bible that He actually was almost thirty-five years of age when He began His work as Messiah (at the time of His announcement and baptism), we wonder why God focuses on the number 30. True, God carefully inserted the word "**about**" to assure us He was not actually 30. Being almost thirty-five years of age at this time certainly does not disagree with the statement "**about thirty.**"

Several reasons may be advanced why God features the number 30. Four will be suggested.

1. The about 30 years may be identified with the call out of Egypt. We read in Matthew 2:13-15:

And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

Jesus would have been a few years old when his family returned from Egypt. Thus, it would have been very close to 30 years later, when He was about 35 years of age, that He officially began His ministry. In that case, we would understand the beginning of His preparation to be close to the time when He was called out of Egypt. This is the most likely solution to the puzzle of the **“about thirty years”** phrase. It was about 30 years after He was called out of Egypt that Jesus began His work as Messiah. Remember that the Bible says **“Out of Egypt have I called my son”** (Matthew 2:15).

2. The number 30 symbolically signifies the complete purpose of God. This would emphasize that it was God’s complete purpose that Jesus was ready to begin His work officially as the Messiah now that He had been announced and baptized.
3. Joseph of the Old Testament, who was a picture or type of Jesus, was 30 years old when he became second-in-command in Egypt and began the activity that would save his family from starvation. The term **“about thirty”** might thus show identification between Jesus’ work as Messiah and Joseph.
4. David, also a type of Christ, ascended the throne of Israel when he was 30 years old. The term **“about thirty”** might thus show identification between Jesus’ work as Messiah and David.

Thus far, we have examined Jesus’ life and we have marveled at the accuracy of the Bible’s account of the timing His earthly ministry, but now, we should look at the next very important milestone in the unfolding of God’s salvation plan. It is the crucifixion of Jesus.

A.D. 33. Christ is Crucified

We have come a long way on the highway of time. All along the way, there have been important milestones that were focusing on this stupendous event of God Himself, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, becoming the Savior. We already have learned much about His birth at which time the wonderful proclamation throughout the land had begun because the Jubilee, Jesus Christ, had come. Remember the shepherds spread abroad what they had heard and seen. And then came the reminders of the Jubilee as Jesus was announced both by John the Baptist and by the voice from Heaven.

But now we have come to the great year, A.D. 33. It was the year that the whole world and the whole creation unknowingly had been waiting for. How can we be sure that this auspicious year was A.D. 33 and not some other year?

Remember this year was anchored as A.D. 33 when we analyzed the 1,335 days of Daniel Chapter 12. It is locked into A.D. 33 because as we learn from Daniel Chapter 9 (see *The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9*, available free of charge from Family Radio), it was in A.D. 33 that sacrifices and offerings ceased. All of the previous sacrifices of the past 11,000 years were fulfilled and ended when Christ was sacrificed as He went to the cross.

There is another cogent reason why A.D. 33 had to be the year of the crucifixion. The Bible is very clear that Christ was crucified on Friday. The year in which He was crucified had to be a year when Nisan 14, the delegated Passover date, fell on a Friday.

We must remember that each year, Nisan 14 could identify with a different day of the week. For example, in A.D. 32, Nisan 14 would have come on Monday. In A.D. 34, Nisan 14, the Passover date, would have come on Wednesday. But the Bible tells us that when Jesus was crucified, it was Friday. Remember when Jesus' body was placed in the tomb it was the day before the Sabbath. We read in Mark 15:42-45:

And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

Moreover, in Daniel 9:24, God gave us another very definite time clue concerning the timing of the crucifixion. That verse states:

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

The term “**seventy weeks**” is actually the words “seventy sevens.” We saw earlier that the context shows that “seventy sevens” is to be understood as

seventy times seven years which equals 490 years. Daniel 9:25 declares that the beginning of the time period of 490 years is the event of the going forth of a **“commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.”**

Spiritually, Jerusalem refers to the kingdom of God. To restore and to build it spiritually refers to teaching the Word of God to people so that those whom God saves, as He applies that Word to their hearts, become eternal citizens of the kingdom of God. Spiritually, they are “Jerusalem” which Jesus came to build.

The command to which Daniel 9:25 refers was given to Ezra the priest by the Median-Persian king Artaxerxes I in 458 B.C. In Ezra 7:25 we read:

And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.

Precisely 490 years later, in A.D. 33, the prophecy of Daniel 9:24 concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus **“to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness”** was fulfilled. $458 + 33 - 1 = 490$. Remember, we are presently learning that it was in A.D. 33 that Jesus went to the cross to pay for the sins of all those that He came to save. Thus, A.D. 33 agrees perfectly with the prophecy of Daniel 9:24. Thus, we are assured that the crucifixion of Jesus could not have taken place in any year other than A.D. 33.

We have seen that for many reasons, the Lord was crucified in A.D. 33. This is the year and occasion that is super important. Had Christ not been punished for sins, there would be no salvation for anyone. No event in the entire history of the world can stand in the shadow of this climactic event. The impact of what happened at the cross identifies with each and every human being who has ever inhabited planet Earth. On the one hand, Christ, in His atonement work, guaranteed the salvation of all those whom God had chosen from the foundation of the earth to become saved. But on the other hand, the fact that Christ suffered the equivalent of eternal damnation on behalf of those He came to save also guaranteed that every person who does not become saved must himself, as payment for his sins, bear the wrath of God, which is eternal damnation.

*Had Christ not been punished for sins, there would
be no salvation for anyone.*

True, there are a great many Bible teachers and theologians who teach that because Christ physically suffered the death of crucifixion, He therefore, by His intense physical suffering, has covered and atoned for each and every sin that was ever committed by any human being. They, therefore, believe the physical beating and the other mistreatment He endured when He was crucified must have been super awful. This kind of totally un-Biblical conclusion has produced movies such as the recent "The Passion of the Christ" movie.

When Christ was crucified, He suffered physical pain just as the two thieves hanging on crosses next to Him experienced. But the physical pain He endured did not in any way pay for any sins. When Jesus was still very much alive He said, "**It is finished**" (John 19:30).

What was finished? How could anything be finished if He were still physically alive? What was finished was payment for sin. For whose sins? For the sins of those who had been elected by God to become saved.

How could the payment be "finished" when He was still physically alive? The payment was fully paid because beginning in the Garden of Gethsemane and until Jesus said "**It is finished,**" He had been under the punishment of God. This is why in the Garden of Gethsemane, before He endured any physical suffering, the sweat was pouring from His body like great drops of blood (Luke 22:44).

That is why the cry was wrenched from His lips, "**My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?**" (Matthew 27:46). We do know that God's Law demanded eternal damnation as the payment for any and every sin. Therefore, in order for Christ to free His elect from the sentence of eternal damnation, the wrath that God poured out upon the Lord Jesus Christ had to be equal to the penalty of eternal damnation that each and every one of God's elected people would have had to endure.

So, it was horrendous suffering that Christ endured. It is only because Christ was, and never ceased to be, God, that God could so intensify the punishment so that in the hours from the Garden of Gethsemane until Christ spoke the words, "**It is finished,**" the whole penalty could be paid. And the whole penalty was paid, ensuring that those for whom it was paid will never end up in Hell.

However, as we noted earlier, this terrible experience of Jesus, in which God's Law concerning payment for sin had been fully satisfied, also impacted every human being who never does become saved. The fact that Jesus met and fulfilled all the demands of the Law guarantees that each and every person who never does become saved must on his own behalf bear the punishment of eternal damnation as payment for his own sins.

This is why the unfolding of history in terms of the rise and fall of civilizations, or of nations or of any other aspect of human existence is entirely

unimportant. It is unimportant because when it is all over, and the world has come to an end, the only thing that is important is: “Do I spend eternity future in Hell under the awful wrath of God or is it possible that I will spend eternity future with Christ in the New Heavens and the New Earth?” There is no third solution. It is one or the other. It is Heaven or Hell.

Christ Arose

A very interesting and perhaps significant piece of information is the fact that, in all likelihood, Jesus was, to the very day, exactly 38½ years old when He arose from the grave on that Sunday morning in A.D. 33.

We have already learned that, in all likelihood, Jesus was born on October 1, 7 B.C. In 7 B.C., October 1 was the Day of Atonement. The Passover in A.D. 33, which was the year and occasion for the crucifixion of Jesus, took place on March 31, according to our modern calendar. Therefore, it was two days later, on Sunday, April 2, that Jesus arose from the grave. The time from October 1 in 7 B.C. to April 2 in A.D. 33 is precisely, to the very day, 38½ years. The number 38½ is interesting because it can be broken down into the expression .5 x 77. We know that the number .5 can signify salvation or judgment. The number 77 appears to be very significant because God uses it in another important place in connection with the coming of Jesus.

In Luke Chapter 3, God gives the genealogical line of Jesus going all the way from Adam the son of God to Jesus Himself. Beginning with God as number 1, counting Adam as number 2, etc., we find that Jesus is number 77. We can be sure that God wanted the total number of names to come to the number 77. A careful inspection of the names in the Luke 3 account from Adam to David show the names, with one important exception, to be identical to the names given in the Old Testament (Genesis Chapters 5 and 11). The exception is that God introduced the name Cainan between the names Arphaxad and Sala (Luke 3:35-36). In Genesis 11:10-14 we read:

These are the generations of Shem: Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood: and Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah: and Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber.

Please note in this citation Cainan is not included.

It was no problem for God in the Luke 3 account to introduce the name Cainan between Arphaxad and Salah because, as we learned much earlier in our study, Salah was not an immediate son of Arphaxad. By introducing the name Cainan between Arphaxad and Salah, God was able to focus on 77 names in the genealogical history of Jesus.

Thus, not only does God tie Jesus to the number 77 in His human genealogy, but also God ties Jesus to the number 77 by the fact that He was exactly $.5 \times 77 = 38 \frac{1}{2}$ years old when He arose as the firstborn from the dead (Colossians 1:18). It is startling to see this time relationship between the date of His physical birth and the date when He became the firstborn from the dead.

This information also helps us to learn that there was great precision as God unfolded His salvation plan. A quick review of the time information concerning Christ's first coming which has been disclosed to us in the Bible is as follows:

1. In the Jubilee Year 7 B.C., Christ was born on the Day of Atonement (October 1). On the Day of Atonement, the shophar of the Jubilee was blown.
2. Christ was announced as the Messiah on the first day of the seventh month in the year A.D. 29. This feast day identified with the Jubilee because the shophar was blown as a memorial of the Jubilee.
3. Christ came into Jerusalem on Sunday, March 26, A.D. 33, as the King who was about to be sacrificed. The evening of that Sunday began the tenth day of Nisan, the day the Passover lamb was to be selected. March 26 was, to the day, three and one half years after Jesus was announced on September 25, A.D. 29.
4. Jesus was crucified Friday, Nisan 14, the very day the Old Testament Passover was to be observed.
5. Jesus arose on Sunday morning, April 2, A.D. 33. On that day, Jesus was, to the very day, precisely $38 \frac{1}{2}$ years of age.
6. We will learn that the Holy Spirit was poured out — that is, God officially began the Church Age — 49 days after Christ

arose from the grave. The period of 49 days reminds us that we have learned from Daniel 9:25 that 7×7 is speaking of from one Jubilee to the next Jubilee. Since Christ, the Jubilee, arose on April 2, A.D. 33, and that 49 days later (7×7), the Holy Spirit was poured out, spiritually, therefore, we can see that the Jubilee proclamation of deliverance from sin began in earnest on Pentecost Day of A.D. 33 as about 3,000 are saved.

This summary shows that each important event that took place in relationship to the first coming of Jesus followed a very precise pattern. We are amazed as each event was anticipated by Old Testament commands given to Israel concerning the timing and character of the feast days. Moreover, repeatedly in this study, we have seen the precise placement of each event as it related to other events. Nothing occurs in a haphazard or random fashion. Each event holds tightly to a pattern of great precision.

As we go on in this study and develop, from the Bible's information, the timetable of the various events that relate to the second coming of the Lord Jesus, we will find again great precision as each event fits into its proper place, altogether in accord with patterns God has established and which He has recorded in the Bible.

Pentecost

Returning now to the propitious year A.D. 33, there is another great event that took place as God unfolds the timeline of history. When we were following the timeline of history in the Old Testament, we noted that one of the important ceremonial feast days was the Feast of Weeks. It was also called the Feast of Harvest or Feast of Firstfruits. It was a very important time when portions of the early spring harvest were brought to the temple.

There is evidence that it was on this day that a great shift took place insofar as the unfolding of God's salvation plan was concerned.

We learned that this feast day was observed in the New Testament as Pentecost. It was called Pentecost from the Greek word "*pente*" which we translate as "fifty." It was a day that came fifty days after the Sabbath following the Passover. There is evidence that it was on this day that a great shift took place insofar as the unfolding of God's salvation plan was concerned.

Remember that when Israel came out of Egypt, the external representation of the kingdom of God was shifted from an individual family to the nation of Israel. At that time in history, God gave further pictures to illustrate the character and nature of the kingdom of God. For example, the land of Canaan, which had been given to the nation of Israel, also became an external representation of the kingdom of God. Additionally, God focused on Jerusalem, and the temple in Jerusalem, and the nation of Israel, and the land of Judaea as external representatives of the kingdom of God. Thus, even when Christ came, entities such as the temple, Jerusalem, the nation of Israel, etc., were still regarded as external representations of the kingdom of God.

But then, when Christ was hanging on the cross, the veil of the temple was rent. As we noted earlier in our study, the huge curtain that hid from the eyes of mankind the Holy of Holies was opened. It was effectively a great announcement that God was finished using Judaea and Jerusalem and national Israel and the temple as external representations of the kingdom of God.

Jesus had told the disciples that, when He went back to Heaven, He would send or pour out the Holy Spirit who would convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-8). In other words, there was a new era dawning.

The evidence of this new era, which was the central focus of the unfolding of God's salvation plan, can be clearly seen on that day of Pentecost in A.D. 33. Jesus, the Perfect Preacher, had been preaching for three and a half years, and very few people became saved. Yet, on that Pentecost Sunday, about 3,000 became saved (Acts 2:41). It was the beginning of the Church Age whereby local congregations would come into existence all over the world.

These local congregations as divine institutions, carefully designed by God Himself, would now externally represent the kingdom of God. The land of Canaan, Judaea, Jerusalem, the temple would no longer typify or externally represent the kingdom of God. Fact is, the local congregations would be spoken of as the temple, or Jerusalem, or Judaea, or the house of God because they now had become the external representation of the kingdom of God.

*Within these local churches, two kinds of people
could be found.*

Within these local churches, two kinds of people could be found. There were those who truly had become saved so that already they were eternal citizens of the kingdom of God. God speaks of them in the Bible as Jerusalem above

(Galatians 4:26). They are spoken about in the Bible as “wheat” (Matthew Chapter 13). They are the eternal church which Christ came to build, against which the gates of Hell cannot prevail (Matthew 16:18).

On the other hand, there were many in the local churches who believed they had become saved, who gave substantial outward evidence of having become saved, but they were not saved. They were still under the wrath of God. They are spoken of in the Bible as Jerusalem which is now (Galatians 4:25). They are called “weeds” or “tares” in the Bible (Matthew Chapter 13). They were actually trusting in their church or their pastor or in some spiritual work they had done. They did not understand that the entire work of salvation was God’s work. They had not received from God a brand new resurrected soul in which God would energize them and God Himself would work in them to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

These local churches would rise and fall throughout the time of the Church Age. Some would become so apostate that they would disappear. Some would become so overrun with false gospels that finally, Satan, as an angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14), would be ruling within them.

Again and again, God would raise up new local congregations. Thus, as a whole, the local congregations carried out the task God had assigned to them. That task was to send the Gospel into all the world.

Because **“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”** (Romans 10:17), wherever the Bible could be read, God would save people. Therefore, in the churches in which encouragement was given to read the Bible, God’s salvation program for the world continued. This was in spite of the fact that many wrong doctrines were taught in most of these churches. How wonderful that it was not the church or the pastor who saved anyone.

More Information about A.D. 33

A.D. 33, when Christ was crucified and when the Church Age began, also interrelated with many other significant milestones in the timeline of history. For example, we might recall that in the year 2092 B.C., Abraham, together with his wife Sarah and his nephew Lot, arrived in the promised land, the land of Canaan, which externally represented the kingdom of God.

Now $2,092 + 33 = 2,125$ years inclusive. That is, 2,125 years after that first entrance into the promised land, the kingdom of God is forever secured. This is so because Christ rose from the grave, proving that He had paid for the sins of those He came to save.

Curiously, the number 2,125 breaks down into some very significant numbers. (See Chapter 8 of this book for a discussion on the numbers of the Bible.)

2,125 is the product of $5 \times 5 \times 5 \times 17$.

The number 5 can signify salvation or judgment. The number 3 (there are 3 "5s") signifies God's purpose. The number 17 signifies Heaven. Thus, the number 2,125 in a sense teaches that the land of Canaan and the resurrection of Jesus symbolize that God's purpose of salvation is to bring people to Heaven. This is another brief example of how the milestones of God's salvation history are tied together in a very definite pattern.

Preliminary Outline of End-time Events

Now, to assist in our understanding of the events that precede the end of the world, we shall briefly outline the sequence of events that will occur between this present time and the end of the world. This sequence of events has been developed by very careful Bible study. Later in our study, we will examine these events in greater detail.

We will find that in A.D. 33, immediately after Jesus returned to Heaven, God shifted from the utilization of the nation of Israel as the caretaker of the Gospel to the era of the local churches. (Please read Ephesians Chapters 3 and 4 and Hebrews Chapters 2 through 6 and Chapter 12.) The local churches, or groups of churches that were called denominations (see Mark 9:38-41), were established by God to be the caretakers of the Bible. They were given the express command to send the Gospel into all the world (Acts 1:1-8; II Thessalonians 3:1). To make their efforts successful throughout the time of the Church Age, God Himself, in the person of the Holy Spirit, applied the words of the Bible to the lives of those whom God planned to save (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-15). Thus, even though at any given time, a local church may have been incorrect in many of its doctrines, God's plan to save those who had been elected to salvation was not frustrated (I Corinthians 11:19). As long as the Bible could be heard and read in that congregation, God would apply the words of the Bible to the lives of those He planned to save (Romans 10:17; I Timothy 4:13-16; II Timothy 2:24-25).

Additionally, it was the task of the local congregation, particularly by means of their elders and deacons, to nurture those who had become saved by teaching these saved individuals the Biblical principles by which they were to live (Acts 14:21-27; study also the Books of I and II Timothy and Titus). This was the basic plan of God throughout the Church Age.

The Church Age continued for 1,955 years. It officially began on Pentecost Day in A.D. 33 when about 3,000 individuals were saved in one day (Acts 2:1, 41). The Church Age ended, as we will discover the Biblical evidence

shows, in A.D. 1988, possibly on the day before the day of Pentecost in 1988. Curiously, the calendar works out so that from Pentecost in A.D. 33 to the day before Pentecost in A.D. 1988 was a time duration of precisely 1,955 years to the very day. We will learn that, like so many of the time intervals between milestones in the development of God's salvation plan, 1,955 years breaks down into significant prime numbers.

$$1,955 = 5 \times 17 \times 23.$$

We are learning that spiritually these numbers signify:

5 = judgment or salvation,
17 = Heaven,
23 = judgment.

We do know that the Gospel is a two-edged sword that brings, on the one hand, many to salvation or Heaven, and on the other hand, brings those who remain unsaved into eternal damnation (II Corinthians 2:15-16).

Immediately following the 1,955-year Church Age, a short period of time began that the Bible calls a time of Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21; Revelation 2:22-23). At that juncture in time, several tremendously significant changes occurred in the unfolding of God's salvation plan. We can summarize them as follows:

1. The moment God began the period of Great Tribulation, the Church Age ended (II Thessalonians 2:1-5).
2. When the Church Age ended, God the Holy Spirit abandoned each and every local church so that even though Bible truths were still proclaimed in many of them, no one could become saved because the Holy Spirit was no longer present within them to apply the words of the Bible to those who were elected by God to salvation (II Thessalonians 2:6-12; also, please study I Samuel Chapters 1 through 4).
3. The cause for this great change was the growing evidence that the people in the local churches were trusting in the church doctrines for their salvation rather than in the Bible alone. Their church had become their god instead of Christ. Therefore, even as God had earlier prophesied, He brought judgment on the

churches because of their growing apostasy (I Peter 4:7-19; see also Jeremiah Chapters 5-8). This judging process would transition into God's judgment on the whole world at the end of time (Matthew 24:15-31).

4. The remnant of true believers within the churches was commanded to come out of the churches to escape the preparations of God to bring the remaining members of these churches to trial when Christ returns at the end of the world (Matthew 13:24-43; Luke 21:20-24; Revelation Chapter 18).
5. This period of Great Tribulation was divided into two periods of time. The first period lasted for 2,300 days. During this first period, no one in the whole world was being saved even though inside and outside of the local churches, there were true believers zealously sending the true Gospel into the world (Daniel 8:13-14; Amos 8:11-14; Revelation 8:1; 11:7-10).
6. During the second period of the Great Tribulation, even though the Bible was still present in the local churches, no one could become saved because God the Holy Spirit did not return to any local church to apply the Word of God to anyone. Instead, during this second period of time, God continues to prepare those in these churches for the trial at the Judgment Throne of Christ which will take place when Christ returns at the end of the world.
7. During this second period of the Great Tribulation, outside of the local churches there is a great harvest of people who are becoming true believers all over the world (Matthew 24:21-22). They hear the true Gospel from individuals who have no connection with a local congregation (Matthew 24:9-14). This period of time, which apparently will continue for seventeen years, will probably result in more people becoming saved than ever before in history (Revelation 7:9-14). It appears that most of the people who will become saved will have had little or no previous knowledge of the Bible or its truths (Luke 13:25-30).
8. At the end of these two periods, which together will encompass twenty-three years of time, Christ will appear to everyone

living in the whole world as the Judge of all the unsaved (Matthew 24:29-31; II Thessalonians 1:4-10; II Peter 2:1-9; Revelation Chapter 19). Simultaneously, all the true believers will be instantly changed into their eternal spiritual bodies and will be caught up in the air to be with Christ (I Corinthians 15:51-57; I Thessalonians 4:17).

9. Virtually at this same time, those who had died after having become saved will have their bodies resurrected as eternal spiritual bodies, and they, too, will be caught up to meet Christ in the air (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). When they died, they, in their spirit essence or soul, had been taken to Heaven where they had been reigning with Christ. However, they come with Christ when He returns as the Judge on the last day (Revelation 19:14). Therefore, it is at this time that they are joined with their resurrected bodies.
10. Simultaneously, all of the unsaved who had lived during the previous 13,023 years of the history of the world but had died will be resurrected. They will be resurrected as whole personalities to stand for Judgment alongside all of those who are still living at that time and had not become saved (Revelation 20:11-15).
11. After all the unbelievers are individually judged and removed into a place called Hell and the Lake of Fire, God will completely destroy this present universe by fire and create New Heavens and a New Earth wherein the true believers will live with Christ forevermore (Matthew 25:46; II Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1-8).

This is a brief outline of the main end-time events God speaks of in a great many places in the Bible. If we keep this outline in view as we continue our study of the Bible, it will greatly help us to see the perfect harmony of the whole Bible as it addresses these end-time events.