7 Vital Keys to *UNLOCK*

Bible and Prophecy

by Michel Danis

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The information presented in this document has been compiled from various sources. To complete this work, I have incorporated scriptures and included personal comments, which reflect the results of my own research and understanding. This work is dedicated to God, my Father, and to Jesus Christ, my Lord, Friend, and Master. I pray that this work will bring light and understanding to the reader. Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV)

PREFACE

The Bible itself claims to be divinely inspired. As Paul states, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). Similarly, in 2 Peter 1:20-21, it is written: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

From these scriptures, we understand that the Bible is "God-breathed," meaning that the inspiration of God applies to every word contained within it. A well-accepted theological definition of inspiration can be stated as follows: “The act of the Holy Spirit in which He superintended the writers of Scripture so that, while writing according to their own unique styles and personalities, they produced God’s Word—written, authoritative, trustworthy, and free from error in the original manuscripts.”

A *thought* on Rightly Dividing the Word of God

"**Study (g4704)** to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the Word of Truth"** (2 Tim. 2: 15). KJV

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth**.

Thayer’s definition; G4704; to make an effort, be diligent, striving, labour, study.

A Word about *Dispensationalism* and *Ultra-Dispensationalism*

Paul's exhortation to Timothy has sparked renewed interest in traditional methods of Bible study, particularly those rooted in apostolic teaching. This revival has brought fresh attention to **dispensational truth**, a framework that helps believers understand God's unfolding plan throughout history. The word *dispensation* (from the Greek *oikonomia*, meaning "house order" or "stewardship") refers to distinct periods in which God deals with humanity in specific ways, each marked by new revelation.

Within a single dispensation, such as the **dispensation of Law** (from Moses to Christ), God's will was revealed progressively—through the Law at Sinai, the sacrificial system, the Davidic covenant, and the prophets—yet the dispensation itself remained unchanged until Christ's finished work on the cross.

It's vital to recognize that **additional revelation expands** a dispensation rather than initiating a new one. Misunderstanding this has led some to either **ignore dispensational truth** or to embrace **ultra-dispensationalism**, such as the system known as *Bullingerism*. This extreme view is spiritually harmful, as it **distorts the intent of Scripture** by adding or taking away from God's revealed truth. Believers are urged to interpret Scripture faithfully, avoiding personal ideas not grounded in the Word.

<u>The wrong doctrines of Hyper-Dispensationalism concerning the New Covenant are:</u>

- The Bible is written for us but not all of it applies to us, that is, the body of Christ is only to follow what the Apostle Paul taught in his Epistles for doctrine and practice.
- Paul was the first Christian, and the body of Christ (Christian Church) started with his conversion.
- The Gospels are not for the body of Christ but are for the nation of Israel.
- Jesus only came to save the nation of Israel and His teachings were faith plus works for salvation, and the New Covenant was only for the nation of Israel and the body of Christ is not in the New Covenant.

In conclusion, Hyper-Dispensationalism (also known as Ultra-Dispensationalism, Mid Acts Dispensationalism) is a movement that sounds Biblical, but in essence, has doctrines that are false and that are dangerous to the body of Christ.

The **purpose** of this document is to **bring clarity to the body of Christ and to those who God calls**, helping believers rightly divide the Word of Truth without falling into unbalanced extremes. God has given us the **keys and principles**—through the whole counsel of Scripture—to understand both the unfolding of prophecy and the unity of His purposes in Christ.

CONTENTS

The first : **Prayer, Obedience, and an Open Mind - Guided by the Holy Spirit**

Second : **Understanding Fundamental Biblical Principles**

Third : **Understanding Biblical Symbolism**

Fourth : **Foundational Biblical Concepts — Foreshadows, Types, and God's Methodology of Revelation**

Fifth : **Interpret the Bible literally (*Normally*) - Hermeneutic Approach**

Sixth : **British Israelism and Prophecy**

Seventh : **Understanding the 7000 years God's Plan and Timeline**

INTRODUCTION

The Bible — A Locked Book

For centuries, countless readers have opened the Bible seeking truth, wisdom, and divine revelation—yet many have found its deeper meanings hidden, its symbols mysterious, and its message seemingly veiled. The Scriptures often speak in parables, prophecies, and spiritual language that cannot be understood by ordinary study alone. This has led many to realize that the Bible is, in a very real sense, a *locked book*.

But God did not intend for His Word to remain closed forever. There are keys of understanding—that unlock its sacred mysteries. This booklet reveals **seven essential keys** that God has provided to help us unlock the Bible's hidden treasures. When these keys are used together, the pages of Scripture come alive, revealing a message far richer and more powerful than most have ever imagined.

In the Bible, the Creator reveals profound truths about Himself and the future. In Isaiah 46:9-11, He declares:

"Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ***Declaring the end from the beginning****, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,' Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed, I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it."*

In this passage, God not only claims the ability to reveal the future but also asserts His authority to bring His foretold plans to fulfillment. He stands apart from all others, declaring that His purposes are unstoppable and certain. The Creator's power and sovereignty over all things—past, present, and future—are clearly demonstrated, offering us assurance that what He has promised will indeed come to pass.

The Prophet of Prophets

A prophet is someone through whom God speaks—a person chosen to reveal God's will to His people. Among the greatest of these prophets is God's own Son, Jesus Christ. The book of Hebrews tells us: *"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds."* (Hebrews 1:1-2)

Jesus Christ stands as the ultimate Prophet, for He is not only the messenger but also the message itself. He brings the fullest revelation of God's will, being the heir of all things and the God's Agent Creator of the universe. Through Him, God speaks directly to humanity, fulfilling the promise of divine communication and guidance.

Why was Prophecy Written?

God inspired the prophet Amos to reveal an important truth:

"The Lord Eternal never does anything without telling His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7, Moffatt Translation)
"For the Lord Jehovah does nothing, except He has revealed His counsel to His servants the prophets." (YLT)

Before God intervenes in the affairs of nations or the world, He first sends His prophets to warn those who will be directly affected by His actions. But why does He do this? The reason is clear: He offers people a chance to change their ways—to repent of their sins—so that the prophesied calamity might be avoided.

God is fair, just, and righteous. He sends a warning and gives people an opportunity to repent. Therefore, the purpose of prophecy is threefold:

1. **To encourage repentance and avoid judgment**: Prophecy is given in love, urging people to turn from their sinful ways so they can escape the consequences of their actions.
2. **For those who don't repent at first**: Prophecy serves as a forewarning, so that when punishment eventually comes, people will recognize their sins and turn to God in repentance, knowing that He will deliver and rescue them. (See Deuteronomy 4:25-31).
3. **To announce the coming Kingdom of God**: Prophecy proclaims the future restoration of the earth—a time of prosperity, peace, and well-being. This is the promise of the Kingdom of God, a wonderful world to come.

A right perspective

Many people view prophecy as mystical, strange, and irrelevant to their lives. They lack a clear understanding of its purpose and meaning. Others, having encountered distorted interpretations of Bible prophecy, have grown skeptical and disillusioned.

However, when properly understood, the Bible speaks with clarity, consistency, and reliability. It provides a message that is relevant and accessible for us to understand the future.

Whether you are unsure of the value of the Bible's prophecies or hold them in deep respect, this booklet is designed to help you grasp prophecy accurately. I want you to see the true scope of prophecy—how it connects mankind's past, present, and future. Understanding prophecy can offer you a balanced perspective, as revealed by the Creator.

Bible prophecy is exciting to many, but some passages may seem difficult to understand. Books like Daniel and Revelation are filled with symbols and imagery. For instance, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (Revelation 6:1-8) represent devastation and deception. The Beast in Revelation 13, rising out of the sea with seven heads and ten horns, symbolizes something ominous. Similarly, the Beast in Revelation 17, which emerges from a bottomless pit and has the same seven heads and ten horns, is ridden by a harlot. The Apostle John writes, "And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Revelation 17:5).

What other puzzling prophetic symbols do we encounter in the Bible? How can we understand these mysterious symbols and the intricacies of Bible prophecy? In this document, we will briefly explore some vital principles and keys to understanding both the Bible and its prophecies.

How and When Will God's People Understand Prophecy?

The Bible tells us that only a certain group of people will understand prophecy and the mysteries of God's Word. A deep fear and reverence for the Lord is the foundation of wisdom and understanding. As Proverbs 1 and 2 reveal:

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Proverbs 1:7)

To understand prophecy, we must approach God's Word with diligence and reverence.

Proverbs 2:1-7 gives us a blueprint for this process: *"My son, if you receive my words And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding;* ***Yes, if you cry out for discernment****, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures,* ***Then*** *you will understand the fear of the Lord, And find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom;* ***From His mouth come knowledge and understanding****; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly."* (Proverbs 2:1-7)

This passage encourages us to seek wisdom with the same diligence and determination as we would search for hidden treasure. God promises to reveal His wisdom and understanding to those who sincerely and earnestly pursue it. But how can we begin to understand the mysterious symbols of Scripture and the many complexities of Bible prophecy? In this document, we will briefly explore some key principles and essential tools for interpreting the Bible and unlocking the meaning of its prophecies.

Prophecy was hidden until the end time

In the book of Daniel chapter 12, we are told that certain prophecies would remain sealed until the end of time:

"But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." (12:4)

"How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?" (Daniel 12:6)

"It shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished." (12:7)

Though Daniel hears these words, he does not fully understand their meaning and asks for clarification:

"My lord, what shall be the end of these things?" (12:8)
The response he receives is that the prophecy would remain sealed until the end:

"Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." (12:9)
At that time, many will be purified and refined, but the wicked will continue to act wickedly. Most importantly, only the wise will understand:

"Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." (12:10)

This passage teaches us that the full understanding of prophecy was hidden until the end times, and only the wise and faithful servants of God would be able to comprehend it.

Since the return of Israel to its land in 1948, along with the rapid advancements in technology, increasing natural disasters, and a rise in immorality, we can clearly observe the signs that we have entered the last days, as also described by Jesus and Paul. These events align with the biblical descriptions of the end times, signaling that the fulfillment of God's prophecies is drawing near.

The *first Key*: Prayer, Obedience, and an Open Mind — Guided by the Holy Spirit

The ***love of the truth*** in the Bible is the first vital key because it leads to salvation, protects against deception, and aligns believers with God's will (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

2Th_2:10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because **they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved**.

John 17:17 Jesus is the Truth. His Word is the Truth and sanctifies us.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, **having girded your waist with truth**, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

What is the Love of the Truth?

The love of the truth is a deep, sincere desire to know, accept, and live by the truth revealed by God in His Word.

True love for the truth is more than intellectual agreement—it's a heartfelt commitment to seek God's Truth and will, trust His promises, and live according to His standards, even when it's difficult. According to 2 Thessalonians 2:10, those who do not love the truth are vulnerable to deception and ultimately spiritual ruin.

1. **It is necessary for salvation**

   2 Thessalonians 2:10 – *"...they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved."*

   a. This shows that loving the truth is not optional, it's essential to receiving salvation.

   b. Those who reject it are vulnerable to strong delusion and judgment (v.11-12).

2. **It is rooted in loving God**

   John 14:6 – *"I am the way, the truth, and the life..."*

   John 8:32 – "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

   a. Loving the truth means loving Jesus, who is the embodiment of truth.

   b. It also means embracing the freedom that comes from walking in God's truth.

3. **It involves obedience**

   1 Peter 1:22 – "You have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit..."

   a. Love of the truth leads to action—obedience to God's Word and moral transformation.

4. **It contrasts with deception and unrighteousness**

   Romans 1:25 – *"They exchanged the truth of God for a lie..."*

   2 Thessalonians 2:12 – *"...all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."*

   a. The Bible contrasts love of the truth with a love for sin or lies.

   b. Rejecting truth is not neutral, it's often a choice to prefer something false or sinful.

-Pray for understanding

Before you begin studying the Bible, take a moment to pray and ask God to guide you, revealing His understanding and will. True insight comes from the Creator through His Word—it's not something we can attain on our own. *(Psalm 119:33-40; Proverbs 3:5-8; Jeremiah 9:23-24)*.

God is the One who reveals Truth. To receive revelation, we must approach Him with humility, acknowledging that He alone is the ultimate Revealer. Indeed, God shares His secrets with His servants, the prophets, so that they may pass on His knowledge, especially concerning things to come, to His people. Revelation is a gift, a blessing that brings insight and direction to those who receive it.

Rev 1:3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

Amos 3:7: "Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals **His secret** to His servants the prophets"

Amos 3:7: For the Lord Jehovah doth nothing, Except He hath revealed **His counsel (PLAN)** unto His servants the prophets. (YLT)

God assures us that His faithful servants, the prophets, will be given understanding of Bible prophecy.

Jesus also said that the Holy Spirit would guide His servants into all truth, a truth that includes understanding prophecy.

And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures" (Luke 24:44-45).

It was not their intellect that let them grasp the meaning of the Scriptures, God had to open their minds.

-Ask, Seek, Knock, with Persistence!

Mat 7:7 "**Ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you.

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

Luk 11:8 I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, **yet because of his persistence** he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

Luk 11:13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will **your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit** to those who ask Him!"

-Fasting complements prayers

In the Bible, fasting refers to a voluntary and complete abstinence from **both food and water** for a period of time—typically at least 24 hours, as an expression of humility, repentance, and devotion before God.

Examples of complete fasts:

- **Esther 4:16** – Esther called the Jews to "neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day" before she approached the king.
- **Exodus 34:28** – Moses fasted forty days and forty nights on Mount Sinai, receiving the Ten Commandments.

- **Acts 9:9** – After encountering Jesus on the road to Damascus, Saul (Paul) fasted for three days without eating or drinking.
- **Leviticus 23**: 32 – It *shall be* to you a sabbath of *solemn* rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth *day* of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath."

In Mat. 6, *right after the Lord's prayer*, Jesus mentioned that he expects us to fast.

In Scripture, fasting accompanies prayer as a means of humbling oneself and opening the mind to divine understanding, guidance, and revelation. It prepares the heart to hear God clearly and align with His will.

Mat_6:16 "Moreover, **when you fast**, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

Mat_6:17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

Mat_9:15 And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

Mat 17:21 However, this kind (*of demon*) does not go out except by **prayer** and **fasting**."

In Daniel 9, Daniel fasted and prayed with supplication…

-Obedience is essential

Obedience is a vital key to understanding God's Word, as it aligns our hearts with His will. As Scripture tells us, those who keep His commandments are granted a deeper understanding:

"All those who do His commandments have a good understanding." (Psalm 111:10)

By obeying God, we open ourselves to His guidance and wisdom, enabling us to better grasp His truths and purpose for our lives.

Pro 2:1 My son, **if you will receive my words and hide (treasure, store up) my commandments with you**,

Pro 2:2 so that you attend to wisdom, you shall extend your heart to understanding;

Pro 2:3 yea, **if you cry after knowledge and lift up your voice for understanding**;

Pro 2:4 if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures,

Pro 2:5 **then** you shall understand the fear of Jehovah and **find the knowledge of God**.

Act 5:32 And we are His witnesses to these things, and *so* also *is* the **Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him**."

-Humility and open mind bring understanding

Do we see and recognize God?

To explore that question, let's examine the account of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Although they were walking with Christ Himself, they did not recognize Him. Their eyes, as the text says, were "restrained." But were they truly blinded, or was something else preventing them from recognizing him?

The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–15)
Two disciples were traveling from Jerusalem to Emmaus, discussing the recent events surrounding Jesus. As they talked, Jesus Himself came near and walked with them, yet they did not recognize Him.

- They were physically with Him, yet unaware of His presence.
- The question naturally follows: are we walking with Christ, yet failing to see Him?

The passage states that "their eyes were restrained," which might suggest divine intervention. However, as the account unfolds, another explanation becomes more plausible. When Jesus asked about their conversation, they responded with surprise, even disbelief that He seemed unaware of recent events.

And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" And He said to them, "What things?" (verses 17-19)

This reveals something important: even those who had followed Christ closely could fail to perceive Him.

Why did they not recognize Him?

The issue was not merely physical blindness; it was expectation and understanding.

- They did not expect to see Him.
- People tend to see what they anticipate or are conditioned to see.
- Without deliberate reflection and discernment, deeper truth often goes unnoticed.

In the same way, believers today may walk in circumstances where Christ is present and active yet fail to recognize Him because they are not consciously engaging with the truth.

People tend to see what they expect to see. They notice what they want to see and what they have been conditioned or taught to recognize.

Unless a person makes a deliberate effort to be discerning, to think carefully and consider other aspects of what is ***he is looking at, it is likely that he will not see***

Christians must consciously reflect on and process the truths they receive from God as they walk through the circumstances of life. It is possible to walk with Christ yet fail to truly recognize Him.

Christ's rebuke (Luke 24:25)

So, were these disciples truly "blinded"? At first glance, it may seem so. Yet in light of what Jesus Himself says in verse 25, that does not appear to be the case.

Jesus responds with a strong correction: "***O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken***."

The word translated "foolish" (Greek: *anoeetos*) carries the sense of being **inconsiderate**. In its original sense: **They failed to consider or think**! ***Another definition is "to reason improperly***."

In other words, they were not using their understanding as they should have.

They did not truly believe what the Old Testament said about the Messiah and His resurrection. Because they did not expect to see Him, they failed to recognize the very Christ who stood beside them.

For this reason, Jesus calls them "foolish," indicating that they should have been able to discern who He was. He also describes them as "slow of heart to believe," emphasizing their lack of spiritual awareness. As a result, He finds it necessary to teach them the foundational truths once again.

When we read Christ's rebuke, it becomes clear that the issue was not blindness, but unbelief.

This clarifies the issue:

- They were not simply "blinded."
- They failed to believe and properly apply what Scripture had already revealed.

Their inability to recognize Christ stemmed from unbelief and lack of spiritual perception, not from an imposed blindness.

A matter of faith, not just sight

When they later say, "We were hoping that it was He who would redeem Israel," it exposes the weakness of their expectation.

- Their hope was more like a wish than a conviction.
- It lacked the firmness of true faith grounded in Scripture.

The account challenges us on a personal level. It is possible to be close to Christ, hearing His words, walking in His ways, and still not truly "see" Him?

Conclusion:

- **Objectiveness is required! Objectivity is essential!**

  To truly see God and receive His revelation, we must remain open to His truth; otherwise, we will fail to recognize Him. Our allegiance must be to Christ, not to any man.

- ***Now, why do so many organizations fail to receive (new) revelation?***

  One reason is that they follow a man rather than God. As a result, even if they appear to walk with Him, their lack of receptiveness prevents them from truly seeing Him or grasping the full picture.

- **Humans see what they expect to see.** People see what they want to see and are educated to see. ***Unless a person makes the effort to be discerning, to think consciously about other aspects of what he is looking at, it is likely that he will not see.***

- **Recognizing the time of our visitation**, being attentive to what God is doing in the moment—requires the posture of a true spiritual listener.

  This is captured well in Job 33:14–16: "For God may speak in one way, or in another, yet man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, while slumbering on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction."

  The idea is that God is active and speaking, but perception is not automatic. The issue is not His silence, but our ability—or willingness—to hear.

  To "recognize the time of our visitation" is therefore to remain spiritually alert:

- not assuming God only speaks in expected ways
- not being closed to instruction
- but being willing to listen, discern, and respond when He is working

In that sense, the question is not whether God is present, but whether we are attentive enough to recognize His voice when He speaks.

Luk 19:44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another**,** because you did not know the time of your visitation."

- **Be teachable like the little children**
- **Be fair-minded like the Bereans**

Spiritual perception requires more than proximity. It requires:

- Active belief in God's Word
- Thoughtful reflection
- A heart ready to recognize truth, even when it appears differently than expected

The real question, then, is not simply *"Do we see God?"* but rather:

Are we prepared, through faith and understanding, to recognize Him when He is present?

-The Bereans Approach

An example of a proper, humble, godly approach is that of the Bereans, mentioned in Acts 17:10-12: **They "were more *receptive*** than those in Thessalonica, for they welcomed the message very eagerly and examined the scriptures every day to see whether these things were so. Many of them therefore believed, including a few Greek women and men of high standing" (New Revised Standard Version).

It's important to recognize that, unlike many others, the Bereans did not immediately dismiss Paul's message, *even though much of what he said challenged their long-held beliefs*. Instead, they approached his teaching with openness. They examined the Scriptures carefully and thoughtfully, comparing Paul's words with God's Word. As a result, they saw that what he was saying aligned with the truth. After diligently verifying it, they humbly accepted the message and were willing to change their beliefs.

In the same way, if we want to truly understand the Bible, we must adopt the mindset of the Bereans. We should examine the Scriptures thoughtfully and honestly, not simply relying on our existing beliefs or traditions. Like the Bereans discovered, our own assumptions can be mistaken. God calls us to have a humble, teachable spirit as we read His Word and hear it preached. When we approach Scripture this way, we can embrace it not just as information, but as the foundation for how we live.

-All Scriptures are inspired

2Ti 3:15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

2Ti 3:16 **All Scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

2Ti 3:17 **that the man of God may be complete**, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

When Paul explained in 2 Timothy 3:15-17 that all Scripture is inspired and is important to righteous living, this was before the books of the New Testament had been canonized or portions of it had even been written. So, the "Scripture" to which Paul referred was the Hebrew Bible, what we commonly call the Old Testament. For several decades in the early Church, this was the only "Bible" available. Later, as we saw in 2 Peter 3:14-16, the apostle Peter referred to Paul's writings as Scripture also.

Accepting only a part of the Scripture as a basis for faith has resulted in literally hundreds of denominations professing to be Christian but holding contradictory beliefs. Yet if we do justice to what the Bible says, all Scripture should be respected and believed, from Genesis to Revelation. Jesus plainly told us to live by every word of God (Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4). We should rely on Scripture, and not on man's ideas, to explain God's truths.

-The Holy Spirit - The Essential Power

The Bible makes it unmistakably clear: if someone does not have the Holy Spirit, they do not belong to Christ.

Romans 8:9 says, *"But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His."*

While many churches and believers have developed their own ideas about how one receives the Holy Spirit, it's essential to return to what Scripture actually teaches. I once visited a popular Christian website that offered a button saying, *"Click here to accept Jesus."* While well-intentioned, approaches like this oversimplify a process the Bible outlines with clear conditions. Receiving the Holy Spirit is not something that happens by clicking a button, it requires genuine faith, understanding, and obedience to God's Word.

Scripture lays out the steps necessary to receive the Holy Spirit:

1. **Hearing the Message of the Kingdom** – As Jesus taught in Matthew 13:19, *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it…"* The message of the Kingdom must be heard and understood.
2. **Being Called by God** – As Jesus said in John 6:44, *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him."* It is God who initiates the call.
3. **Repentance and Baptism** – In Acts 2:38, Peter declared, *"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*
4. **The Laying On of Hands** – In Acts 8:17, we read, *"Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit."* This pattern is consistent throughout the New Testament, showing how the Spirit was given through the hands of God's servants.

It's also important to note that even Jesus' disciples, while walking with Him, did not fully receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit until the day of Pentecost. Before that, they had the Spirit ***with*** them—through Jesus and God's power, but not *in* them. After Pentecost, their understanding of God's Word and His plan deepened dramatically, **as the Holy Spirit came to dwell within them and guide them into all truth.**

1Co 2:10 But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep

things of God.

1Co 2:11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

Joh_14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things,** and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

The Holy Spirit is the Power that teaches us. In fact, Jesus is the one that teaches us, and He does it through the power of the Holy Spirit.

For those who are not yet called by God and do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them, the Bible appears as if written in a coded language. They are unable to comprehend the deep spiritual truths it contains. This is one of the main reasons many professing believers struggle to properly understand Scripture, they may not actually have the Holy Spirit in them. However, the Spirit may still be with them, as God begins to call and work with them, drawing them toward a true relationship with Christ.

Joh 6:44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

-Let's see how prayer works in action

God *reveals* Nebuchadnezzar's Dream through Daniel's <u>prayer</u>.

Dan 2:17 Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions,

Dan 2:18 that **they might pray** for the mercies of God in Heaven concerning this secret, that Daniel and his companions should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Dan 2:19 Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. And Daniel blessed the God of Heaven.

Dan 2:20 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His.

Dan 2:21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings. <u>He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.</u>

Dan 2:22 He reveals the deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him.

Dan 2:26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its meaning?

Dan 2:27 Daniel answered before the king and said, The secret which the king has demanded cannot be shown to the king by the wise men, the conjurers, the horoscopists, or the fortune-tellers.

Dan 2:28 But there is a God in Heaven who reveals secrets and makes known to King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head upon your bed are these.

Dan 2:29 As for you, O king, your thoughts came on your bed, what should happen after this. And He who reveals secrets makes known to you what shall happen.

Dan 2:30 But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living man, but so that the meaning might be known to the king, and that you might know the thoughts of your heart.

-Daniel's Fast and Prayer for His People

Dan 9:2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

Dan 9:3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

Dan 9:4 And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,

Dan 9:5 we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.

Dan 9:20 Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,

Dan 9:21 yes, **while I was speaking in prayer**, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

Dan 9:22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, **I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.**

Dan 9:23 At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and **I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, <u>and understand the vision</u>**:

Dan 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message *was* true, but the appointed time *was* long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.
Dan 10:2 In those days I, **Daniel, was mourning three full weeks**.

Dan 10:3 I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

Dan 10:11 And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, **understand the words that I speak to you**, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.

Dan 10:12 Then he said to me, "Do not fear, **Daniel, for from the first day that <u>you set your heart to understand</u>**, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.

Dan 10:13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.

Dan 10:14 **Now I have come to make you understand** what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision *refers* to *many* days yet *to come*."

Yes, after humbling himself before God, it took 21 days for Daniel to receive the understanding he was seeking.

-Revelation means reveals, not hide

Rev.1:1 The ***<u>Revelation</u>*** of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to ***<u>show</u>* <u>His servants</u>**—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

2 who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.

3 ***Blessed is he who reads*** and **those who hear the words** of this prophecy and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

According to ***Thayer's Definition*** the word ***Revelation*** (apokalupsis) means:

1) laying bear, making naked

2) a disclosure of truth, instruction

Also, the word **'show'** (deiknuō) from ***Thayer's Definition*** means:

1) to show, ***expose*** **to the eyes**.

2) metaphorically; 2a) to give evidence or proof of a thing. 2b) to show by words or teach

The purpose of the book of Revelation is not to conceal, but to reveal—to uncover and make known the things that must soon take place. God Himself declares, "***Blessed*** is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near" (Revelation 1:3). Prophecy, then, is intended as a blessing for God's servants.

God has also appointed prophets—His chosen watchmen. The role of a true prophet is to help interpret and explain biblical prophecies in greater depth, often understanding their meaning before others do. They are given the gift of prophecy to serve the Church by making God's message clear.

"Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7) Prophets are then able to relate their revelations to current events, helping others recognize how prophecy is unfolding in real time. They serve as watchmen, warning God's people about what is soon to come. As Jesus commanded, they highlight the signs to watch for and provide guidance—whether to escape or to endure the coming tribulations.

True prophets also call the world to repentance, urging people to turn from sin and return to God. As we draw closer to Christ's return, God will empower His witnesses with supernatural authority to proclaim His final message, ***the Eternal Gospel*** (Revelation 14:6). Through them, He will reveal the True and Eternal God to both His people and the world. These witnesses will complete the final phase of the ministries of Elijah and Moses, fulfilling their prophetic roles in these last days.

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, **having the everlasting gospel** to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, 7 saying with a loud voice, "**Fear God and give glory to Him**, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship **Him who made** heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.

Each of us has a role to fulfill. The prophet must sound the warning, and the servant must listen and remain alert. The message of Jesus is clear and unmistakable: **Watch!**

God's servants are repeatedly urged to stay watchful. Ignoring this command is not without consequence, disobedience will lead to devastating results.

Luk 21:36 Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Christ's disciples should understand the prophetic warnings He gave, recognize the developments He said would precede His coming, and remain spiritually vigilant and prepared rather than being caught unaware.

Mat 25:13 "**Watch** therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

Mar 13:33 **Take heed**, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.

Mar 13:34 It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to **watch**.

Mar 13:35 **Watch therefore**, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning.

Mar 13:37 And what I say to you, I say to all: **Watch!**"

Though we do not know the exact day or hour, Jesus expects us to discern the signs of the times and respond accordingly.

Mat 16:1 Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven.

Mat 16:2 He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, *'It will be* fair weather, for the sky is red';

Mat 16:3 and in the morning, *'It will be* foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, **but you cannot *discern* the signs of the times**.

-The Lesson of the Fig Tree

Mat 24:32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer *is* near.

Mat 24:33 So you also***, when you see all these things***, know that it is near, ***at the doors***!

Mat 24:34 Assuredly, I say to you, this **generation** will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

Christians are then expected to know when hard times will occur, and when Jesus is near at the door. They are instructed to pray for the strength and courage to escape the tribulations that lie ahead.

-Conclusion

So, the first key to being prepared is to pray continually, staying in close communion with God and seeking His guidance daily. Fasting is also essential, as it humbles the flesh and sharpens spiritual discernment.

We must obey God's Word and live by the two great commandments Jesus gave us: *to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves* (Matthew 22:37–39).

Above all, we must remain humble and teachable, always willing to be corrected, refined, and led by the Holy Spirit. These foundational practices will keep our hearts aligned with God and prepare us to stand firm in the days ahead.

Second Key: Understanding Fundamental Biblical Principles

The basic method to study scriptures involves 3 skills: **Observation, Interpretation and Application.**

-Observation

Observation teaches you to carefully identify exactly what a passage says. It forms the foundation for accurate interpretation and proper application. Observation answers the question, "What does the passage say?" To observe effectively, ask the five W's and one H: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

a. Who is speaking, and to whom are they speaking?
b. What subject, topic, or event is being discussed in the chapter?
c. When did, does, or will the events take place?
d. Where did, does, or will this occur?
e. Why is this statement, instruction, or event being mentioned?
f. How is it happening, or how will it come to pass?

-Interpretation

a. Apply the following guidelines, keeping the rules of context in mind. Consider each verse in light of the following:

- The surrounding verses and immediate context
- The book in which the passage is found
- The overall message of God's Word as revealed throughout Scripture

-Application

a. *What does the passage teach?*
b. *Does this section of Scripture expose any error in my belief or in my behavior*?
c. *What is God's instruction to me as His child*?
d. ***When Applying Scripture, Beware of the following:***

- Applying cultural Standards rather than biblical standards
- Attempting to strengthen a legitimate truth by using a Scripture incorrectly.
- Applying scripture out of prejudice from past training or teaching.

<u>Very Important Principles:</u>

-Trust Scriptures to Interpret Scriptures

Where should you turn to learn the truth? Jesus, in His heartfelt prayer the night before He was crucified, prayed for His disciples: "Sanctify them by Your truth. **Your word is truth**" (John 17:17).

All of God's Word, the Bible, is absolute truth. It is the unchanging foundation upon which we can build our understanding of life, purpose, and destiny. If you want to understand the future God has prepared for you and for all humanity, you must turn to the Scriptures. The Bible reveals God's plans, His promises, and the unfolding of His divine timeline. It is the only reliable source for truth in a world full of confusion and deception.

-Let the Bible Explain Itself: Vital Principles for Interpreting Scripture

The Bible is a vast and complex book, containing a wide variety of material, ranging from historical narratives and poetic psalms to prophecy, law, parables, and symbolic visions. At times, its meaning is direct and literal; at others, it uses metaphor, allegory, or symbolic imagery. Understanding how to properly interpret Scripture is essential for gaining an accurate picture of God's truth and plan.

1. The Bible Interprets Itself

One of the most important principles to remember is this: **the Bible interprets itself**.

Far too often, people isolate a single verse and attempt to interpret it without considering the broader context. This leads to misunderstandings and sometimes even false teachings. Instead, we must let Scripture explain Scripture.

It's crucial not to force personal ideas or preconceived beliefs into the text. Many make the mistake of "reading into" the Bible, imposing their own interpretations, rather than drawing out the original and intended meaning. This is called *eisegesis* (reading into the text) rather than *exegesis* (drawing the meaning out of the text).

Likewise, it's dangerous to base conclusions on just one or two verses taken in isolation. **The Bible is a unified whole**, and every part must be interpreted in light of the whole. Only then can we truly understand the meaning of difficult or unclear passages.

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation." (*2 Peter 1:20)*

2. Consider the Context and the Audience

Correct interpretation always requires **context**—both immediate and extended.

- **Immediate context** includes the verses directly before and after a passage.
- **Broader context** includes the chapter, the entire book, the author's overall message, and ultimately, the whole Bible.
- **Cultural and historical context** includes understanding who the original audience was and what the situation was at the time of writing.

A verse taken out of context can appear to mean something entirely different from what the author intended. Most doctrinal errors arise from taking verses out of their proper context.

"Whom will He teach knowledge? And whom will He make to understand the message? ... For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little." (*Isaiah 28:9–10)*

3. Use Clear Scriptures to Interpret Difficult Ones

Some verses in the Bible may seem confusing or even contradictory at first glance. In such cases, we should allow **clear, straightforward passages** to help us understand those that are more symbolic or difficult. **Scripture does not contradict itself; it complements and confirms itself when interpreted properly**.

For example, we read in Genesis 3:4 that "you will not surely die." From this verse, people could infer that man already possesses immortality, that the soul already has eternal life. But such an interpretation would contradict other plain scriptures (compare 1 Timothy 6:14-16; Romans 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:53). Yet the context of the paragraph explains that it's the serpent (Satan the devil, Apoc. 12:9), who lied, saying that man would not die. The correct teaching was related by God a few verses earlier:

"Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die**" (Genesis 2:16-17).

We see that it's not enough to quote an isolated scripture; we must keep in mind its setting. In this case the point is resolved by reviewing the entire passage. We can avoid much confusion by applying this important context principle. At other times it is necessary to consider the context of the book itself.

-Examine All Scriptures on the Subject

Also, vital to understanding is taking the time to look up **all the related verses on a subject** before coming to a conclusion. The apostle Paul set an admirable example in this regard when he taught certain truths about Jesus by referring to many passages in the Bible of his day, the Hebrew.

Scriptures or what we know as the Old Testament: "So, when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at is house, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening" (Acts 28:23). To prove his point, Paul carefully expounded the scriptures that dealt with Christ as the Messiah.

We see from Paul's example, that to properly understand a subject, we must take *all* related scriptures into account.

Comparing various verses on the same subject can clarify our understanding of biblical teachings. **Often, we will find that different verses complement each other,** with each verse telling part of the story.

For example, many people believe, based on John 3:16— "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"—that simply believing in Jesus is all we need to do to inherit eternal life.

But is this the whole story? Clearly not, for James 2:19 tells us that "even the demons believe—and tremble!" Certainly, more than simple belief is required. **We must look at other scriptures to understand more fully what God expects and requires of us.**

Certainly, salvation is God's wonderful gift to us. But gifts can have conditions. And the Bible shows in several places that God *sets certain conditions* for receiving salvation. Some conditions *enable us* to receive that gift, and other conditions *disqualify us* from receiving it.

Since Jesus is the author of our salvation, let's examine a few of His statements that tell us what we must do to receive the gift of eternal life in God's Kingdom.

In Matthew 7:21 Jesus says, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but ***he who does the will of My Father*** *in heaven."*

Christ made it clear that merely acknowledging Him as Lord and Master—saying "Lord, Lord"—is not enough. To inherit the Kingdom, **we must *do something***. We must *do the will of the Father,* as He clearly stated. Our conviction that He is our Savior must be more than just a warm, comforting thought or intellectual concept. So, Jesus warns that simply calling on His name or recognizing Him as "Lord" is not enough.

At some point a wealthy young man asked Jesus how he could receive eternal life. "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" the man asked (Matthew 19:16). Christ's reply, in verse 17, '(it might shock some who think obedience to God's law is unnecessary). Jesus responded, "If you want to enter into life, *keep the commandments."* ***But the question is Which Ones?***

In the Old Covenant, made with physical Israel, God gave them 10 commandments, which included the observance of the physical Sabbath (or Rest), in Remembrance of God's 7th day rest. He gave them many more physical observances like the 7 Feasts, tithes, clean food, and all the other rituals.

The Law of GOD WAS THEN DIVIDED IN 2 PARTS, The Moral law and the Ritual law. 9 of the 10 commandments fall into the Moral law and the Sabbath, Feast, sacrifices, etc..., fall into the Ritual law.

As believers who have accepted Jesus's sacrifice, we have entered into God's rest through Him. Because of this, the ritual aspects of the Law of Moses no longer apply to us. Those rituals were shadows—temporary symbols meant to point forward to Christ. Now that we have the reality, the substance, we no longer need to observe the shadows.

Through Christ, we live in continual communion with God. This ongoing relationship means that we are no longer required to observe certain practices—such as the Sabbath rest—as physical ordinances. We are already living in the spiritual reality those symbols foreshadowed.

In Christ, we rest not just one day a week, but continually, as we abide in Him and His finished work.

See Heb. 4 and Gal 3:24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Gal 3:25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Nonetheless, we are under the Law of Christ, which is the Royal Law of God. This Law is also the Law of Christ.

Mat 22:37 Jesus said to him, **'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'**

Mat 22:38 **This is the first and great commandment**.

Mat 22:39 **And the second is like it: 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'**

Mat 22:40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Joh 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

When Jesus was asked what one must do to receive eternal life, He didn't simply say that belief in Him was all that was required. Instead, He told the young man that obedience to God's commandments was necessary. Notably, Jesus listed specific commandments related to moral conduct—such as not murdering, not committing adultery, honoring parents, and loving one's neighbor.

It's important to observe that Jesus did **not** mention the Sabbath observance among the conditions for eternal life. This omission highlights a distinction between the **moral law**, which reflects God's unchanging standards for human behavior, and the **ritual or ceremonial laws**, which were tied to the old covenant and pointed forward to Christ.

In this exchange, Jesus affirmed the ongoing relevance of the moral law while not requiring adherence to ceremonial observances that were shadows fulfilled in Him.

Jesus also gave another condition to receive God's gift of eternal life. In Mark 16:16: *"He who **believes** and is **baptized** (in water) will be saved;* but he who does not believe will be condemned." Water baptism—by full immersion—is a symbolic act representing the death of our old self and the beginning of a new life of serving God and striving to avoid sin. (Romans 6:1-23).

Baptism is also followed by ***the laying on of hands*** of God's servant, which allows us to receive God's Holy Spirit and truly belong to Him through Christ (see Acts 8:17; Romans 8:9). Unless we surrender our lives to God through baptism and the laying on of hands to receive His Spirit, as instructed, we fail to meet His requirements to receive His gift of salvation.

In Matthew 10:22 Jesus listed another condition we must meet to receive God's gift of salvation: "***He who endures to the end*** will be saved." We can lose out on salvation if we fail to endure to the end (see also Hebrews 2:1- 3; 6:4-8; 10:26-31). Once we have committed ourselves to obeying God and surrendering ourselves to Him, we must stay the course to the end and not look back (Luke 9:62; 1 Corinthians 9:27).

We see, from this example, that we need to look at far more than one isolated verse to understand the Bible's teaching on a subject. Only by looking at all the relevant scriptures do we get a full and complete picture.

By thoughtfully comparing all related passages before drawing conclusions on any biblical subject, we can avoid confusion and error. This simple yet powerful principle helps resolve most instances where people assume the Bible contradicts itself. In truth, the Bible is consistent—its various authors, all inspired by the Holy Spirit, complement and reinforce one another.

-Gaining an overview

For the broad overview necessary to understand the Bible in its particular verses, it is crucial that we read through it, topic by topic as well as book by book.

A topical approach to reading Scripture will help us to see all that God's Word has to say on a given subject. Effectively studying this way requires other study tools such as a concordance or a topical index.

Book-by-book reading is rather straightforward. A great deal of Scripture is presented simply as a story. The beginning of the first book, Genesis, gives us an account of God's creation of the heavens and the earth and all physical life, including mankind. It proceeds with the story of the first man and woman and follows their descendants down to the time of a great worldwide flood.

Some parts of the Bible—like the laws of Moses, poetic books, and prophetic writings—require deeper study to fully understand. The New Testament letters also contain complex teachings, sometimes made harder to grasp by historical context. While topical studies are helpful, they can overlook key passages. Reading the entire Bible ensures a fuller understanding of its message. Since we naturally forget things, it's important to read the Bible regularly—both in parts and as a whole—throughout our lives.

Third Key: Understanding Biblical Symbolism

Now we come to one of the most interesting parts of understanding the bible, which is, prophecy. One third of the bible is prophecy, and though many prophecies have been fulfilled, most of them are still for the end time.

-General Symbol Definition

A symbol is a real thing that represents or stands for something else, often an idea, concept, or quality, rather than just its literal form. Their meaning goes beyond their physical appearance.

"It should be remembered that a sign/symbol does not represent itself."

1. What is a *sign* or *symbol*?

A **sign** or **symbol** is something **that stands for, represents, points to, something else**.

- **Dove** – symbolizes peace, not the literal bird.
- A **red traffic light** is a sign that tells drivers to stop.
- **Red rose** – symbolizes love or romance, not just a flower.

2. What the phrase means

When we say *a sign/symbol does not represent itself*, we mean that:

- The **meaning** of a sign is **not contained in the sign itself**, but in what it refers to.
- A **sign points beyond itself ,** it is a vehicle for meaning, not the meaning itself.

For instance:

- The **cross** in Christianity is not the wooden object itself, but a symbol of faith, sacrifice, and redemption.

3. Why it matters

This distinction helps us understand that **language and symbols are representational**, not literal. **Confusing a sign with what it signifies can lead to misunderstanding**, for example, treating a flag as the country itself, or mistaking words for the reality they describe.

4. In semiotics (the study of signs)

Semioticians like **Ferdinand de Saussure** and **Charles Peirce** emphasize this:

- The **signifier** (the form of the sign, like the word or image)
- The **signified** (the concept it refers to) They are **linked by convention**, not by natural connection.

In short: A **sign/symbol** points *toward* something it **represents** but **is not identical to** what it represents. The *map is not the territory*, and the *word is not the thing*.

-Key points about some symbols in the Bible:

In the **Bible**, a **symbol** is something that **represents or points to a deeper spiritual truth or divine reality** rather than just its literal, physical form. Biblical symbols often carry layers of meaning and are used to convey messages, teachings, or aspects of God's character in a way humans can understand.

1. **Representation of spiritual truth:**
   - Symbols point to God, His principles, or spiritual realities.
   - Example: The **olive branch** represents peace or reconciliation (Genesis 8:11).
2. **Not literal:**
   - Its meaning comes from what it signifies.
   - Example: **Bread and wine** in the Lord's Supper symbolize Christ's body and blood (Matthew 26:26–28).
3. **Teaching and revelation:**
   - Symbols help convey truths in a way that engages imagination and memory.
   - Example: **Light** often symbolizes God's presence or truth (John 8:12).
4. **Common biblical symbols:**
   - **Lamb** – Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb of God (John 1:29)
   - **Water** – cleansing, life, or the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:26; John 7:38)
   - **Rock** – God's strength and reliability (Psalm 18:2)
   - **Rainbow** – God's promise (Genesis 9:13–17)

In short: In the Bible, a symbol is **a tangible thing, action, or image used to reveal something else or point to spiritual truths**.

-The Bible's self-interpretation of symbols

Many of the prophetic truths in the Bible are conveyed by God through the use of symbols. The book of Daniel, for example, is rich with symbolic imagery—featuring both real and fantastical creatures and objects. Some of these symbols are clearly explained, while others remain mysterious.

Some symbols were not intended to clarify the message, but rather to conceal it, reserved for understanding only when God chooses to reveal their meaning, often at or near the time of the end. (Daniel 12:8-9).

For centuries, people have attempted to interpret these symbols based on their own ideas, often leading to confusion and conflicting conclusions. A crucial principle for understanding biblical prophecy is that the symbols must be interpreted by the Bible itself—either within the immediate context or elsewhere in Scripture. Human interpretation, apart from God's revealed Word, holds no real value. We must seek and rely on God's own explanation, not our own assumptions.

Take the book of Revelation, for instance. It is filled with symbolic language, such as the vision of the glorified Messiah, the Son of Man—standing among seven lampstands. We read:

“He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength” (Revelation 1:16).

What do these stars and lampstands represent? We don’t have to guess, the Bible gives us the answer!

“The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: **The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches**, and the **seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches**” (v. 20).

In biblical symbolism, **stars often represent angels**, while **lampstands symbolize churches**. The author of Revelation goes on in the next two chapters to deliver God’s messages and warnings to the seven churches located in Asia Minor, an area that is part of modern-day Turkey.

You are also probably familiar with how Daniel not only described the king’s dream but, by God’s revelation, explained its meaning. This dream wasn’t just a personal message for Nebuchadnezzar—it was a prophetic outline of world history, revealed through powerful symbols.

“You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image’s head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces” (Daniel 2:31–34).

-What did this statue symbolize?

Daniel explained to King Nebuchadnezzar, **“You are this head of gold”** (Daniel 2:38), identifying the head as the **Babylonian Empire**. Through this prophecy, God revealed the rise and fall of **four great world-ruling empires**:

- The **head of gold** represented **Babylon** under Nebuchadnezzar’s rule.
- The **chest and arms of silver** symbolized the **Medo-Persian Empire** (558–330 BC), which would follow Babylon.
- The **belly and thighs of bronze** stood for the **Greco-Macedonian Empire** led by **Alexander the Great** (333–31 BC).
- The **legs of iron** portrayed the **Roman Empire** (31 BC–476 AD), known for its strength and dominance.
- The **feet and toes, part iron and part clay**, represent a **future revival of the Roman Empire**, made up of a fragile alliance of nations—strong in some areas but divided and unstable.

History confirms that the first four empires unfolded exactly as foretold, underscoring the accuracy of biblical prophecy.

This vision is a clear example of how the Bible often uses **symbols** to communicate deeper truths. In the same way, the **Holy Spirit** is frequently symbolized by physical elements—such as **wind**, **fire**, or **oil**—to convey aspects of His power and presence.

Examples include:

- **Water** – Symbolizing cleansing, life, and the renewing work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5; Ephesians 5:26; 1 John 5:6; Revelation 22:1, 17).
- **Fire** – Representing purification, testing, and the power of God's presence (Acts 2:3; 1 Peter 1:7; Revelation 3:18).
- **Wind** – Symbolizing the invisible yet powerful movement of the Spirit (John 3:8; Acts 2:2).

Each of these elements—**water**, **wind**, and **fire**—are essential or transformative forces in the physical world, and they are used in Scripture to represent the dynamic and life-changing power of the **Holy Spirit**.

- **Water** gives life and purifies.
- **Wind** sustains life and moves unseen.
- **Fire** refines and cleanses, or in judgment, it consumes.

Additionally, **light**—whether from the **sun** or **stars**—is also used as a symbol. Light often represents truth, guidance, and the revealing presence of God (Psalm 119:105; John 1:4-5; Matthew 5:14-16). Just as physical light illuminates the darkness, so the Spirit of God brings spiritual understanding and direction.

-Here are a few additional biblical symbols

The Serpent

A clear example of the Bible interpreting its own symbols is found in the symbol of the **serpent**.

In **Genesis 3**, the serpent appears as the creature that deceives Eve in the Garden of Eden. While the serpent is not explicitly identified as Satan in that chapter, the Bible later clarifies its symbolic meaning.

In **Revelation 12:9**, we read:

"So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

This verse clearly reveals that the **serpent** in Genesis was not just an animal, but a symbol of **Satan**, the deceiver.

This is another strong example of how the Bible explains its own symbols, providing clarity and consistency throughout its message.

The *Mountain* of the LORD

“Isa 2:2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days *That* the ***Mountain*** of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.

Isa 2:3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Isa 2:4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. ” (Isaiah 2:2–4).

In this prophecy, as in many others, the “Mountain” clearly symbolizes God’s government. It is likely both literal and symbolic. The Bible foretells that God’s temple—His earthly headquarters—will be on the Mount of Olives, which will be split in two during the final great earthquake (Zechariah 14:4-9).

When the passage says the Lord’s house will be established “on the top of the mountains,” it means God’s kingdom will be supreme above all the major world powers. Being “exalted above the hills” signifies that it will also be exalted above all lesser nations.

As we saw, Stars are used as symbols for angels (Revelation 9:1). In the vision of Jesus Christ which John saw (Revelation 1) there were “in His right hand seven stars” (Revelation 1:16). Here is an example of how the Bible interprets the Bible. By merely reading on through the description of all that John saw, you come to verse 20, which says,

“20 The mystery of the **seven stars** which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: **The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches**, and the **seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches**.” (Revelation 1:20). **Jesus Christ is referred to as “the bright and morning star**” (Revelation 22:16; 2:28). Stars are usually referred to as angelic beings, **good or bad**.

A **Beast**, or wild, ravenous creature, is usually used to indicate a **Gentile government**, or **kingdom**. In Daniel’s seventh chapter, for example, **four great beasts are pictured**. Let’s take a look at the description:

“**Dan 7:4 <u>The first was like a lion</u>**, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

Dan 7:5 And suddenly another beast, **<u>a second, like a bear</u>**. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'

Dan 7:6 After this I looked, and **<u>there was another, like a leopard</u>**, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

Dan 7:7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, **<u>a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong</u>**. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

Dan 7:8 I was considering the **horns**, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of **a man,** and a mouth speaking pompous words.

Dan 7:9 I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; (Daniel 7:4–9).

Now, notice how the Bible interprets itself by revealing the meaning behind these different creatures.

Continuing to read through chapter 7, we come to verse 17:

“**Those great beasts, which are four, <u>are four *kings*</u>** which arise out of the earth.”

That a king stands for his kingdom is absolutely conclusive by reading the second chapter of Daniel. Here, we see the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, and the great image described in Daniel 2:32–35.

Daniel, through a miracle, was given the interpretation of the dream and revealed it to Nebuchadnezzar. He said;

Dan 2:37 You, O king, *are* a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;

Dan 2:38 and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given *them* into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—<u>you *are* this head of gold</u>.

Dan 2:39 But after you shall arise <u>another kingdom inferior to yours</u>; then <u>another, a third kingdom of bronze</u>, which shall rule over all the earth.

Dan 2:40 And <u>the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron</u>, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, *that kingdom* will break in pieces and crush all the others.

Dan 2:41 Whereas you saw the feet and toes, **partly of potter's clay and partly of iron**, **the kingdom shall be divided**; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

Dan 2:42 And *as* the **toes** of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, *so* the kingdom shall be **partly strong and partly fragile**.

Dan 2:43 As you saw **iron mixed with ceramic clay**, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

Dan 2:44 **<u>And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed</u>**; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Daniel 2:37–44).

Can anything be clearer? The head of the image represents Nebuchadnezzar, but it's evident that the king and the kingdom are interchangeable, meaning the same thing.

It says, "But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth." (Daniel 2:39).

Biblical scholars and historians widely agree on the clear succession of the four world-ruling Gentile empires: Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greco-Macedonian, and Roman.

What many overlook, however, is that both the great image in Daniel chapter 2 and the fourth beast in Daniel chapter 7 culminate in the Second Coming of Christ. This means the fourth beast—the Roman Empire, including its various revivals throughout history—will still be present in some form at the time just before Christ's return.

It is **"in the days of these kings"** (Daniel 2:44) that Jesus Christ will come again. Here, **"these kings"** refer to the ten toes of the great image in Daniel 2, symbolizing the final, divided kingdom that exists at the end of the age.

-Notice the biblical corroboration:

Rev 17:12 The **<u>ten horns which you saw are ten kings</u>** who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

Rev 17:13 These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful." (Revelation 17:12–14).

That there will be ten nations united in a super-dictatorship in Central Europe by the time of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, there can be no doubt.

"***Horns***" on the creatures are symbols of the leaders of the state, either civil or religious. It is obvious that the "little horn" of Daniel 7 refers to the papacy which overthrew various governments during the Middle Ages.

-A Woman

Physical Israel (including both the House of Israel and the House of Judah) is often pictured as a woman. Actually, Almighty God pictured Israel as the bride and Himself as the suitor in proposing the Old Covenant. God "proposed" by giving Israel His laws and promising to become Israel's protector, sustainer, and provider. When Israel accepted the terms and conditions of God's law, it constituted a covenant, or an agreement, between them.

God used the analogy of a "marriage agreement" and said, "I was a husband to them" (Jeremiah 31:31–32).

When Israel broke the terms and conditions of the covenant, God called it whoredom, or harlotry. Read the entire chapter of Ezekiel 16, where God depicts Israel as a young, beautiful woman whom He found as an abandoned child, caused her to "***multiply as the bud of the field***" (Ezekiel 16:7), but who forsook Him and "did trust in your own beauty, and played the harlot" (Ezekiel 16:15).

Ezekiel 23 is another important chapter, where the House of Israel (the northern ten tribes) is called "Aholah" and Jerusalem, symbolic of the House of Judah, "Aholibah."

Another important representation is that the church in the Bible is depicted as a woman. **God in the bible uses a woman, a virgin, who is the bride of Jesus, as a symbolism for the Church**.

Rev_12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the ***woman*** (the church), and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Eph_5:23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the ***church***; and He is the Savior of the body.

Rev_21:9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the ***bride***, the ***Lamb's wife***."

-God also uses the symbol of a harlot, or a fallen woman, to depict the great false, universal church!

Isa 47:5 "Sit in silence, and go into darkness, **O daughter of the Chaldeans**; For you shall no longer be called The Lady of Kingdoms.

Isa 47:7 And you said, 'I shall be a lady forever,' *So* that you did not take these *things* to heart, Nor remember the latter end of them.

Isa 47:8 "Therefore hear this now, *you who are* given to pleasures, Who dwell securely, Who say in your heart, 'I *am,* and *there is* no one else besides me; I shall not sit *as* a widow, Nor shall I know the loss of children';

Isa 47:9 But these two *things* shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments.

The Great Harlot in Revelation 17:3–18.

Rev 17:3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a **woman sitting on a scarlet beast** *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Rev 17:4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.

Rev 17:5 And on her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE **MOTHER OF HARLOTS** AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Rev 17:6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

Rev 17:7 But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

Rev 17:12 "The **ten horns** which you saw are **ten kings** who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

Rev 17:13 These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful."

Rev 17:18 And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth."

In conclusion, the Bible consistently provides its own interpretations for the symbols it uses, showing that we do not need to rely on human theories, traditions, or outside sources to understand its prophetic messages. God's Word is designed to be understood by those who carefully study it, guided by the Holy Spirit. Whether it's **stars representing angels**, **beasts symbolizing kingdoms**, or **elements like water, fire, and wind** portraying the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, the Bible gives us the tools to unlock these meanings within its own pages.

This principle, *letting Scripture interpret Scripture,* is foundational to rightly understanding biblical prophecy. The Bible is a unified whole, with symbolic language explained either in the immediate context or elsewhere in the text. For example, the **serpent** in Genesis is revealed to be **Satan** in Revelation, and the mysterious **woman on the beast** in Revelation 17 is later identified as a **great city, (the false church's headquarter)** with global influence. These examples underscore the importance of letting the Bible speak for itself.

Failing to follow this approach opens the door to speculation, personal bias, and doctrinal errors. Throughout history, countless false teachings have emerged from misinterpreting biblical symbols without scriptural support. That's why it is not only helpful, but essential, to search the Scriptures diligently, comparing passage with passage, and allowing God's Word to unfold its meaning in His own way and time.

When we let the Bible interpret its own symbols, we can approach prophecy with clarity, confidence, and conviction—grounded not in opinion, but in the truth of God's revealed Word.

Fourth Key: Foundational Biblical Concepts — Foreshadows, Types, and God's Methodology of Revelation

- "Here a little, there a little"

No single verse of Scripture should be used to establish doctrine on its own. To understand true doctrine, we must examine and weigh all relevant passages on a given topic. This approach—gathering the full counsel of Scripture, is affirmed in Isaiah 28, where we are instructed to learn "precept upon precept, line upon line."

Those who are called to the truth understand that, apart from the guidance of God's Spirit, true understanding of Scripture remains hidden. Christ often spoke in parables, deliberately concealing deeper meanings from the world. This principle extends to the entire Bible: without divine revelation, its full meaning remains veiled.

The Bible is written in a way that defies understanding on the physical level. With this in mind, let's read Isaiah 28:9-10: "Whom shall He teach knowledge? And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; *line upon line, line upon line;* ***here a little, and there a little."***

We must diligently examine verses throughout the Bible to gain knowledge and understand doctrine. This requires being led by God's Spirit.

Let's continue in **Isaiah 28**: "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom He said, This is the rest wherewith you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (**vs. 11-12**).

These verses show an intentional hiding of the meaning (as if it were a foreign language). But they also show a *willful rejection* of the truth: "they would not hear."

Verse 13 continues, "But the word of the Lord was unto them **precept upon precep**t, precept upon precept; **line upon line**, line upon line; **here a little**, and **there a little**; *that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken*." Again, we see the unmistakable hiding of the meaning.

-No contradictory verses, they supplement each other

The following example demonstrates the importance of studying Scripture *precept upon precept, line upon line*. What some perceive as contradictions often prove to be complementary when examined in full context. This principle is clearly illustrated in the differing accounts of the inscription placed on the stake where Christ was crucified.

Let's read four different verses that critics say are contradictions. We will find them to be otherwise.

Matthew 27:37 *"And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him:* ***THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."***

Mark 15:26 "And the inscription of His accusation was written above: **THE KING OF THE JEWS."**

Luke 23:38 "And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."**

John 19:19 "And Pilate wrote a title and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was: **JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING**

OF THE JEWS."

Put together, the complete sentence is: **THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS**.

Rather than contradicting one another, these four Scriptures together—when studied *precept upon precept and line upon line*—reveal a fuller picture. By comparing the four Gospels, we can see how each account complements the others, working in harmony to provide a complete understanding.

Another explicit example is from 1 Thess. 4:16-17

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the **trumpet** of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Now the question is: ***Which Trumpet?***

No need to speculate as the same author, Paul, in **1 Cor. 15: 52 gives us the answer** in relation to the same event.

"in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the *last* trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed".

This last trumpet is the 7th one as we see in Rev. 8:6 "So, the seven angels who had the **seven trumpets** prepared themselves to sound".

When the **last trumpet, the 7th one, will sound**, (*not before*), the Bible tells us that the saints will be resurrected or changed to immortality if they are alive.

Unfortunately, many have taken 1 Thessalonians 4:16 out of context to promote the false doctrine of the rapture, claiming that this event will occur before or at the sounding of the first trumpet. However, if we apply the proper principle of letting Scripture interpret Scripture—carefully examining all related passages—we will not be misled concerning the true meaning of any verse or teaching.

By the way, Jesus himself said in Mat. 24:29-31 that this trumpet will sound ***AFTER*** the tribulation, not before.

Mat 24:29 "Immediately **after the tribulation** of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

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

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

-Jesus's voice sounds like a Trumpet

Rev 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

Rev 1:11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," ...

Joh_5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear **<u>the voice</u> of the Son of God**: and they that hear shall live.

Joh_5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the **graves shall hear <u>his voice</u>**,

- God's DUALITY principle

Throughout Scripture, we find that certain prophetic statements have more than one fulfillment, a principle often referred to as **"duality."** This concept means that a single prophecy can have both an **immediate or partial fulfillment** in the historical context of the prophet's time, and a **future or ultimate fulfillment** that extends to later events, sometimes even to the end times.

The physical creation in **Genesis 1** points forward to the new creation described in **Revelation 21 and 22**. The first Adam, formed from the dust of the earth, foreshadowed the second Adam, **Jesus Christ,** who is of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 15:47–49).

Another example of **duality** is seen in Christ's two comings, His first to atone for our sins, and His second to reign as **King of kings**.

Such dual themes are common throughout Bible prophecy. Jesus Himself referred to the dual fulfillment of certain prophecies in **Matthew 17:11–12**. When questioned about the prophecy of *"Elijah,"* who was to come before the Messiah (Malachi 4:5), Jesus answered:

"Indeed, **Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already** …" (Matthew 17:11-12).

The disciples recognized that the "Elijah" who had already come was **John the Baptist** (verse 13). Jesus Himself explained that John, already deceased when Christ spoke, fulfilled the prophecy of Malachi in a first, partial sense.

However, Christ also clearly implied that another Elijah would precede His second coming, serving as a forerunner just as John the Baptist did before His first coming. While John could no longer act in the future, he had already fulfilled, at least in part, Malachi's prophecy.

Another prophecy with dual application is **Jesus' Olivet prophecy** (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21), named because He delivered it from the Mount of Olives, overlooking Jerusalem. Many of the conditions He described were fulfilled in the years leading up to the Roman siege and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Yet Christ also made it clear that similar conditions would arise again shortly before His return.

Another example of **dual fulfillment** is in references to the "Day of the Lord" such as in Isaiah 13:6: "Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty."

Verse 1 of that chapter identifies the time setting as when the Babylonian Empire threatened the kingdom of Judah (Babylon invaded Judah and captured Jerusalem in 586 B.C.), and it is in this setting that Isaiah wrote about *that* "the day of the LORD.

However, he again mentioned the Day of the LORD in Isaiah 13:9: "Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it." His subsequent inspired words, though, show that he is writing about the time of the end:

“For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine.

“I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold, a man more than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth will move out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts and in the day of His fierce anger” (Isaiah 13:10-13).

In the Olivet prophecy, Jesus spoke of an “abomination of desolation.” Daniel’s prophecy about the abomination of desolation was fulfilled in 167 B.C. by Antiochus Epiphanes, but Jesus pointed out that the prophecy would have a future fulfillment.

We must carefully examine the context of prophecies to understand their meaning and discern whether the prophecy seems incomplete after its first fulfillment. It is equally important to avoid reading duality into passages that do not support such interpretation. We should take great care to properly discern whether duality is a factor in any particular prophecy.

- Foreshadows, shadows, types, and Antitypes (fulfillments)

In the Bible, there is much foreshadowing. The word *foreshadow* means to represent, indicate, or typify beforehand: prefigure.

Typology in Christian theology and Biblical exegesis is a doctrine or theory concerning the relationship of the Old Testament to the New Testament. Events, persons, or statements in the Old Testament are seen as **types** pre-figuring or superseded by **antitypes**, events or aspects of Christ or his revelation described in the New Testament.

For example, Jonah may be seen as the **type** of Christ in that he emerged from the fish's belly and thus appeared to rise from death. In the fullest version of the theory of typology, the whole purpose of the Old Testament is viewed as merely the provision of types for Christ, the antitype or fulfillment.

To put it simply, *a type* is a story, an object, or a person in the Old Testament (but also in the New Testament), which can be seen as having a prophetic dimension or meaning.

As an example, when we say that we must "get out of Egypt", we do not speak of the actual Egypt, we refer ourselves to the story in the Old Testament where the Hebrew were taken out of Egypt by God. In this case the word Egypt is, for example, synonymous with Sin and slavery.

We can further argue that "to be in Egypt" represents, for us Christians, spiritual slavery in sin. When we are in the world, we live in spiritual bondage. The story of the Hebrews being freed from Egypt is prophetic because it announces the freedom we can gain in Christ. We can be freed from Egypt i.e. freed from spiritual slavery and sin.

To summarize, a "Type" then is some "person," or "event," or "ceremony" that is recorded to "foreshadow" some future "person," or "event," or "ceremony."

For illustration:

TYPICAL PERSONS, like Adam, Cain, Abel, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Jonah.

TYPICAL EVENTS, like the "Flood," the "Plagues of Egypt," the "Passover," the "Brazen Serpent," "Crossing the Jordan," "Cities of Refuge."

TYPICAL CEREMONIES, like the "Offerings," "Ceremonial Cleansing," "Feasts," "Year of Jubilee," "Day of Atonement."

To which might be added-**"Typical Structures,"** like the "Ark," the "Tabernacle," the "Temple." **"Typical Furniture,"** like the "Brazen Altar," the "Laver," the "Seven Branched Candlestick," the "Table of Shewbread," the "Altar of Incense," and the "Ark of the Covenant" with its "Mercy Seat." **"Typical Colors,"** like "Blue," "Red," "White," "Purple," "Scarlet," "Green." **"Typical Numbers,"** like "one," "three," "four," "seven," "twelve," "forty," "seventy."

In studying the "Types", the two comparative words **"As"** and **"So"** are forcibly called to our attention.

The word **"As"** is used for the "Type," and the word **"So"** for the Antitype.

The first is **historic**; the second is **prophetic**.

"For **As** in Adam all die, even **So** in Christ all shall be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:22.

"But **As** the days of Noah were, **So** also will the coming of the Son of Man be." Matt. 24:37.

"And **As** Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even **So** must the Son of Man be lifted up," John 3:14.

"For **As** Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, **So** will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. " Matt. 12:40.

The above "***Types" with their "Antitypes***" stand out so prominently in Scripture that their meaning is clear to the most superficial reader. But there are "Types" in the Old Testament whose "Dispensational Teaching" does not lie on the surface and is never seen by the superficial reader.

For illustration take the story of ISAAC AND REBEKAH, Gen. 24:1-67.

In this story;

I. ABRAHAM IS A *TYPE* OF "GOD."

II. ISAAC A *TYPE* OF "CHRIST."

Both Isaac and Christ were **CHILDREN OF PROMISE**. Gen. 15:4. Isa. 7:14.

Both births were **PRE-ANNOUNCED**. Gen. 18:10. Luke 1:30-31.

Both were **NAMED BEFORE THEIR BIRTH**. Isaac- Gen. 17:19. Jesus- Luke 1:31.

-Bible Study Methodology: The Big Picture First

A crucial key to understanding prophecy and the book of Revelation is recognizing the methodology God uses throughout the Bible. Without this understanding, it is easy to misinterpret Matthew 24, and the 7 Seals, the 7 Trumpets, and the 7 Vials. Across Scripture, God consistently follows a pattern: He presents the big picture first, then gradually adds details, often ending with a micro-level view of each section.

Essentially, God outlines the overall vision, then expands on it with specific elements, ultimately breaking down the prophecy into detailed sections.

A clear example of this method can be seen in the book of Daniel. God chose Daniel to reveal the sequence of earthly kingdoms from the Babylonian Empire through the final Roman Empire, which would pave the way for the establishment of God's eternal Kingdom.

- In Daniel 2, the big picture is presented: four major kingdoms that will rule the earth until the "Rock" (Jesus) shatters the statue.
- In Daniel 7, 8, and 11, these same kingdoms are described in greater detail, represented by different beasts. The final beast with ten horns is later referenced again in Revelation.

This "**big picture first**" approach is also found in **Matthew 24**, where Jesus describes the end times. He starts with an overview and then provides more detailed explanations of each event, adding elements to the larger picture through the 3 Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

The same methodology is evident in the Book of Revelation:

- The **7 Seals** introduce the overarching events of the final 3½ years, known as the Great Tribulation.
- The **7 Trumpets** provide a more detailed perspective of the final seven years.
- The **7 Vials** (or final plagues) offer a micro-level view of the events in the seventh and final year.

In summary, this pattern, "**big picture first**", followed by **increasing detail**, is consistent across Daniel, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Revelation. Understanding this approach allows us to interpret God's prophecies with clarity and accuracy.

Fifth Key: Interpret the Bible literally (*Normally*) - Hermeneutic Approach

Definition:
To interpret the Bible **literally** means to understand the text in its **normal, plain sense,** just as you would naturally understand any other form of communication, **unless the context clearly indicates** that figurative or symbolic language is being used.

-Key Principles of the Literal/Normal Hermeneutic Approach

1. **Literal Does Not Mean Wooden**
   - "Literal" doesn't mean ignoring figures of speech.
   - It means interpreting **figurative language as figures**, and **historical narrative as history**.

   Example: When Jesus says, *"I am the door"* (John 10:9), we don't imagine a wooden door, we understand it as a metaphor: He is the entryway to salvation.
2. **Context Determines Meaning**
   - Every word should be understood in light of its **context,** grammatical, historical, cultural, and literary.
   - This prevents taking verses out of context or over-allegorizing them.
3. **Genre Awareness**
   - Interpret prophecy differently from poetry, and poetry differently from epistles.
   - Prophetic books (like Daniel and Revelation) often include **symbolism**, but those symbols have explanations or consistent biblical meanings.
4. **Scripture Interprets Scripture**
   - When figurative or symbolic language is used, other parts of the Bible provide the key to its interpretation.
5. **Clarity and Consistency**
   - The literal method seeks **clear understanding**, not hidden or mystical meanings.
   - It encourages a **consistent application** of interpretive principles across all Scripture.

Application to Prophecy

Using this method with biblical prophecy means:

- **Take prophetic statements at face value** unless the text gives reason to see it as symbolic.
- **Identify symbols** and interpret them using biblical cross-references.
- **Avoid spiritualizing** prophecies unless the text or context demands it.

Example:
In Revelation 13, the "beast from the sea" is clearly symbolic. The surrounding context and cross-references (e.g., Daniel 7) help identify it as a symbol for a kingdom or power, not a literal sea creature.

Summary Statement

We interpret the Bible in a literal or normal sense, taking its plain meaning within context while allowing for figurative language where clearly intended. This approach recognizes metaphors, symbols, and figures of speech as part of the text's natural expression, while maintaining that Scripture should be understood through Scripture itself.

Among the many principles within the hermeneutical approach, this paper will focus on this key aspect, interpreting the Bible literally (or normally) while acknowledging the legitimate use of figurative language.

-What Does a Text Mean?

Biblical interpretation carries several key implications. The human authors of Scripture wrote to specific audiences within distinct historical and cultural contexts, using their own languages, styles, and literary forms. Yet, because the Bible is divinely inspired, its ultimate unity and meaning come from God—"Interpretations belong to God" (Gen. 40:8).

In today's postmodern world, many challenge the idea of absolute truth in Scripture, saying things like "That's just your interpretation" or "The Bible can mean anything." Such statements reflect modern skepticism toward objective meaning and highlight the ongoing importance of hermeneutics—the study of how to interpret the Bible faithfully and accurately.

<u>So, as a basic rule, let's interpret the Bible literally (or normally) allowing for normal use of figurative language.</u> Take the plain meaning of the text at face value. *When the literal does not make sense*, you probably have a figure of speech.

The Bible communicates clearly, it says what it means and means what it says. For instance, when Jesus refers to feeding "the five thousand" in Mark 8:19, sound principles of hermeneutics lead us to interpret that number literally. Likewise, when Jesus promises that faithful servants will be given authority over ten or five cities as their reward in His Kingdom, we should understand those words as a literal language, not mere symbolism.

Luke 19:11 Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

13 So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this *man* to reign over us.'

15 And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.'

17 And he said to him, 'Well *done,* good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'

18 And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.'

19 Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

First, let's look at the context. The Context is Jesus rewarding his Faithfull servant. He will evaluate what they did with their spiritual gifts (minas) and reward them accordingly. We also know that Jesus is going to rule the World for 1000 years. In **Rev 2:26** Jesus said He will give us authority over the Nations.

And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him *I will give power over the nations*.

With this basic framework, we are then able to assess that Jesus meant what He meant. He will give literal authority over 10 cities to the Faithfull servant who produced 5 more minas. He received 5, produced 5 more, he then received authority over 10 cities.

Another example is in Isaiah 55:12 where it states the trees of the field will clap their hands. Since trees do not have hands or claps this must be a figure of speech. **Look for words such as "like" or "as"** which can also communicate a figure of speech. Figures of speech and illustrations give the Bible a powerful and colorful means of expression. They are an important part of the normal expression of language.

Another crucial law of biblical hermeneutics is that passages must be interpreted historically, grammatically, and contextually. Interpreting a passage historically means we must seek to understand the culture, background, and situation that prompted the text. Interpreting a passage grammatically requires one to follow the rules of grammar and recognize the nuances of Hebrew and Greek.

-Recognizing Figurative Language in the Bible

One of the most frequently asked questions about how to read the Bible is how to tell whether statements in the Bible are to be understood literally or figuratively.

In part, however, the question about figurative language is made more pressing by extreme positions that many people take on the matter. On the one hand, some ultra-conservative readers of the Bible assume that everything in the Bible should be taken literally except when a literal interpretation seems to them to be impossible. On the other hand, liberal readers of the Bible commonly assume that nothing in the Bible should be taken literally except when not doing so appears to them to be impossible.

While both of these extremes are faulty, the liberal extreme of denying the literal truth of most of the Bible is by far the more destructive error. In reality, their approach to the Bible involves claiming that anything they don't like was not meant to be taken literally.

The key challenge, then, is learning how to recognize when biblical language is genuinely figurative and when it is meant to be understood literally.

-Figurative Language: Factors to Consider

Broadly speaking, we need to be aware of three factors that are relevant to whether specific words, expressions, or narratives in the Bible are to be interpreted figuratively: genre, subject, and usage. More than one of these three factors are often relevant in the same passage.

1. **Genre**: A passage's literary form or type guides our reading of its language. For example, references to a "road" in an historical narrative would normally be taken as referring to a physical road; references to a "road" in poetry might be taken as referring to a way of life. Thus, some genres are more likely to contain figurative language than others.

2. **Subject**: Knowing something about the subject matter of a passage may help us to know whether a statement is literal or figurative. For example, knowing that rocks are inanimate objects naturally leads us to interpret Jesus' statement about the rocks crying out (Luke 19:40) as figurative, as a way of saying that the truth about Jesus will be made known no matter what.
3. **Usage**: Sometimes we can recognize that a particular expression is figurative because we have seen it used in the same way in other places. For example, Mary's question to the angel Gabriel about how she could become pregnant, "seeing I know not a man" (Luke 1:34 KJV), can be easily recognized as using "know" in a figurative way to mean that she had not had sexual relations with a man. One reason we can be sure of this is that the word is used in the same way many other places in the Bible (e.g., Genesis 4:1, 17, 25; 1 Samuel 1:19; see also Matthew 1:25).

-Figures of Speech

The original languages of the Scriptures were intended to be read and understood by people of average education and intelligence. Most words should be understood according to their ordinary meaning at the time they were written. Legitimate interpretation is discovering what was intended by the writer, not what we think he should have meant. Ordinarily we expect the words to convey their primary meanings, but sometimes it is evident that the writer intended a secondary meaning, i.e., figurative. **It is very important to understand that the purpose of figures of speech is to help us understand or to give emphasis to what is literally true**.

Words are often used as comparisons:

***Similes* are figures of speech** in which it is specifically stated that one thing is "**like**" another, or "**as**" another. The purpose of such comparisons is to clarify or emphasize some characteristic(s) of the thing being considered. For example, Jesus said, "Again, **the kingdom of heaven is like** a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Matt. 13:45f). His use of "is like" leaves no doubt that He is making a comparison. The purpose also seems obvious. The kingdom is to be sought and is of greater value than all else, obviously the kingdom is not literally a small white stone from a mollusk.

***Metaphors* are also figures of speech used for comparisons.** They are different from similes in that they are not introduced as such. Instead, it is expected that the reader/hearer will easily recognize the terms are being used in a comparative sense. Jesus is described as "the Lamb of God." Obviously, He is not a four-legged wool covered young sheep. Jesus said His people are "the salt of the earth," meaning nothing about their mineral composition, but that they are similar to the element in its preservative power.

In most cases, ***common sense*** **readily recognizes figurative comparisons**. It simply doesn't make sense to imagine a man to be a literal sheep. By knowing the Old Testament sacrificial system and knowing what would be the purpose in Christ's death, the idea of His being "the Lamb of God" fits perfectly. Another example is in Jesus' response to Herod. He said, "**Go tell that fox** . . ." (Luke 13:32). No one would imagine He meant **the king was an actual fox**.

The Bible also teaches with ***symbolism***. **This involves the conveyance of ideas that are real by things that not real**. Revelation is a book of symbols. In the KJV reading of verse one it is said that the things revealed were "signified." The word can be altered to "sign-i-fied" so as to remind us that it is a book of "**signs**." **The message taught in Revelation is literally true**, **but its truth is often presented by verbal pictures of objects and events that are not real**. Many baseless notions and outlandish theories have arisen from failure to

distinguish between what is symbolic and what is real. **It should be remembered that a sign/symbol does not represent itself.**

In Scripture, as well as in everyday speech, ***hyperbole***, **meaning *exaggeration* for the sake of emphasis**, is a frequent figure of speech. It is something that if meant literally would be a falsehood, but as hyperbole it makes a strong impression. For example, in Psalm 58:3 the wicked are described as going "astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." That at the moment born they would actually speak lies, or anything else, is hardly possible. Instead of being literal this exaggeration is used to emphasize their lifelong evil character.

Another important distinction is in **the figure of speech** called ***synecdoche***. **This is the practice of referencing the whole by naming a part**. A frequent use of synecdoche is in various passages pertaining to salvation from sin. For example, reference is made to the time when Roman Christians "first believed," meaning when they were converted. "Believed" is not used to exclude obedience, i.e., "belief only," but as part of the whole process of conversion (Rom. 13:11; 6:17f).

Closely related is ***metonymy***, **a figure which names something connected with a thing to represent it**. For example, "the cup" is used to represent what is in the container, i.e., "the fruit of the vine" which is in the cup.

Literary scholars have numerous definitions of different kinds of figures of speech. In most cases, the average reader will recognize when figurative language is being used and will grasp the point being made. Some basic points to remember are:

1. **Figurative** interpretations must always be in harmony with the context, including the entire context of Scripture. **Symbolism must not contradict plain Bible truth**.

2. **It is figurative if the literal meaning involves an impossibility**. For example, Jesus said, "Let the dead bury the dead." Here, "dead" is figurative in one instance and literal in the other. Obviously, literally "dead" persons cannot bury anything.

3. **It is figurative if the literal sense would demand wrong actions or forbid doing right**. For example, Matthew 5:29-30 should not be understood as a requirement to mutilate one's body to avoid sin.

-Parables

Parables are a form of figurative speech. They are stories that are used to illustrate the truth but hidden for the average person. There are parables in different parts of the Bible, but Jesus was the master of them, and many are found in the gospels. How then should we interpret the parables?

***First**, determine the context that prompted the parable*. Parables always arise out of context. For example, the Pharisees disdain for Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners prompts Jesus to tell a parable about how God loves a lost sinner who repents (Luke 15).

***Second**, understand the story's natural meaning which is often taken from real life situations in first century Palestine*.

***Third**, ascertain the main point or truth the parable is trying to give and focus on this*.

Only interpret the details of the parables if they can be validated from the passage. Many details may only be there for the setting of the story. Jesus stated: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest garden plant and becomes a tree, so that the wild birds come and nest in its branches" (Matt 13:31-32). The parable is an illustration of the kingdom of heaven which starts small but grows to be very large in size and will give residence to many.

-Not Everyone is called today

***Many*, *not most* or *all*, are called today!**

Joh 6:44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Most are blinded until the End time

Mat 13:10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "**Why do You speak to them in parables**?"

Mat 13:11 He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, **but to them it has not been given**.

Mat 13:12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

Mat 13:13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

Mat 13:14 **And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled**, which says: 'HEARING YOU WILL HEAR AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND, AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE;

Mat 13:15 FOR THE HEARTS OF THIS PEOPLE HAVE GROWN DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM.'

The Parable of the Wedding Feast – 3 groups called at different times

Mat 22:1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said:

Mat 22:2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,

Mat 22:3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.

Mat 22:4 Again, he sent out other servants, saying, **'Tell those who are invited**, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding." '

Mat 22:5 But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business.

Mat 22:6 And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*.

Mat 22:7 But when the king heard *about it,* he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

Mat 22:8 Then he said to his servants, **'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.**

Mat 22:9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'

Mat 22:10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests.

Mat 22:11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.

Mat 22:12 So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.

Mat 22:13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Mat 22:14 "**For many are called, but few are chosen**."

Laborers in the Vineyard - 4 groups called at different times

Mat 20:1 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early **in the morning** to hire laborers for his vineyard.

Mat 20:2 Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

Mat 20:3 And he went out about the **third hour** and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

Mat 20:4 and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went.

Mat 20:5 Again he went out about the **sixth** and the ninth hour, and did likewise.

Mat 20:6 And about the **eleventh hour** he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?'

Mat 20:7 They said to him, **'Because no one hired us**.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.'

Mat 20:16 So the last will be first, and the first last. **For <u>many</u> are called, but few chosen."**

The Lord Will Pour Out His Spirit on the last Day

Joe 2:28 "And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.

Joe 2:29 And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

Joe 2:30 "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.

Joe 2:31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, **Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.**

Joe 2:32 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

-Conclusion

We have covered just some basic principles here that are helpful to understand the Bible and prophecies properly. There are many other principles in the Hermeneutic approach that we could mention; you can find them by doing some research on your own.

Sixth Key: British Israelism and Prophecy

The identity of Israel:

Most people are unaware that after the death of King Solomon, the ancient nation of Israel was divided into two separate kingdoms. **The northern Kingdom of Israel consisted of 10 of the original 12 tribes**, while the **southern Kingdom of Judah was composed primarily of Judah and Benjamin**. The northern kingdom was eventually conquered by the Assyrian Empire, and its people were taken into captivity. Over time, these tribes disappeared from the biblical and historical record and became known as the "**Lost Ten Tribes of Israel**." According to some historical interpretations, many of these tribes migrated into regions of northern Europe and other areas once associated with Assyria, where they gradually assimilated into various nations.

Amos 9:9 "For surely I will command, And will sift the house of Israel among all nations, As *grain* is sifted in a sieve; Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground.

The two tribes that formed the Kingdom of Judah were also taken into captivity, but unlike the northern tribes, they largely preserved their national and ethnic identity. Their descendants, known today as the Jews, have remained identifiable throughout history and are now found throughout the world, with many residing in the modern State of Israel.

For the sake of space here, I'll will not cover in detail what happened to the lost 10 tribes, instead I will focus on the descendants of Joseph, the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh.

Manasseh is identified with the United States, while **Ephraim** is associated with the British-descended nations, including Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as a part of South Africa.

Putting together the information available from biblical and secular history as well as prophecy, we can be reasonably certain that other tribes are located as follows: **Reuben**—France; **Dan**—Republic of Ireland and a branch of Denmark that mixed with the northern tribes; **Benjamin**—Norway and Iceland; Zebulun—Holland (the Netherlands); **Issachar**—Finland; **Gad**—Switzerland; **Asher**—Belgium and Luxembourg; **Naphtali**—Sweden; **Levi** and **Simeon**—scattered among the other Israelite nations.

Of course, these identifications are generalities. It should be noted that gentiles of many nations have also settled among these nations, especially in the big cities. In addition, national borders do not always constitute ethnic boundaries. However, national traits and histories suggest these identifications are accurate in the main.

-Britain (Ephrain) and the United States (Manasseh) Inherit Joseph's Birthright

"And the Lord has declared … that he will set you in praise, fame and honor high above all the nations … as he promised" (Deuteronomy 26:18-19, NIV).

After approximately five centuries on the Eurasian steppes following the fall of the northern Kingdom of Israel, the descendants of those exiled tribes, by then known as the Scythians, began another major migration, driven by mounting pressures and invasions from neighboring peoples.

At this time, pressure from hostile peoples in Asia and the Near East, combined with significant climatic changes across the Eurasian steppes, began driving them westward, just as the biblical prophets had foretold

(1 Kings 14:15; Isaiah 49:12; Hosea 12:1). This great westward migration started around 200 B.C. and continued through the fifth century A.D.

Yet during this period, in the first century A.D., when Christianity was still in its infancy, the Jewish historian Josephus recorded that many of the deported Israelites were still living beyond the Euphrates River. Writing in his day, he stated: "the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers" (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XI, Chapter V, Section 2). This testimony indicates that, centuries after the Assyrian captivity, large populations of Israelites still existed as a distinct people in regions east of the Euphrates.

The apostle James likewise confirms that the dispersed tribes had not yet been reunited with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin in Palestine. In the opening of his epistle, he specifically addresses his message "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1). This greeting indicates that members of all twelve tribes were still living in various regions outside the land of Judea during the first century.

Although God promised that the ten lost tribes of Israel would continue to exist, He also declared that they would be sifted among the nations (Amos 9:9). For centuries, this dispersion continued as they were scattered throughout various lands. Yet God had also foretold that He would eventually lead them to territories lying north and west of ancient Israel, where He had promised to establish them once again.

It was as if a powerful, unseen hand was steadily guiding them—along with their tribes and clans—across the vast Eurasian plains and the Scythian steps toward Northwest Europe, where the Celts, a related group of tribes, had already begun to establish themselves.

Though less well known than the great European migrations that began in the 16th century and led to the establishment of colonies in North America, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, this earlier movement of peoples was similar in many important respects.

While many different clans and tribal groups converged upon Europe during these migrations, most of those who eventually settled in Northwest Europe shared common ethnic roots and cultural characteristics. **Many historians have acknowledged the important role of the Anglo-Saxon peoples in the development of several modern Western nations, particularly Great Britain and the United States**. Evidence of their migrations and influence is documented in numerous historical sources.

-Promises of greatness for Joseph's descendants

Before his death, the patriarch Jacob, under divine inspiration, prophesied what would happen to the descendants of his twelve sons in the "last days" (Genesis 49:1). Special attention is given to Jacob's prophecy concerning Joseph. Joseph's modern descendants are often considered the most readily identifiable among the so-called lost tribes of Israel, because the blessings assigned to them are described in distinct and recognizable terms compared to those of the other tribes.

God promised to Joseph's descendants, through his sons Ephraim (associated here with Great Britain) and Manasseh (associated here with the United States), the full scope of the birthright blessings, including national greatness and abundant prosperity. These birthright promises are referenced in 1 Chronicles 5:1–2 and are understood as setting Joseph's descendants apart from the other tribes of Israel (Genesis 49:22–26).

Deuteronomy 33:13–17 further describes these blessings: "His glory is like a firstborn bull, and his horns [military might] like the horns of the wild ox; together with them he shall push the peoples to the ends of the

earth; they are the ten thousand of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." Within this framework, the passage is understood as describing God's direct involvement in bestowing significant physical strength and national expansion upon Joseph's descendants.

From this perspective, the modern descendants of Joseph are identified with the peoples of the United States and Great Britain. Over the past several centuries, it is argued that these nations have experienced remarkable material prosperity and global influence consistent with the birthright blessings described in Scripture. The Anglo-Saxon and Celtic peoples are seen as playing a central role in the formation and development of British and American culture.

In addition, it is understood that God has provided them with opportunities to serve as spiritual witnesses in a world marked by confusion and moral decline. However, as with ancient Israel, only a minority are seen as responding to this calling and responsibility.

-The role of Joseph's descendants

God is understood to have granted the promised birthright blessings to Joseph's modern descendants in Britain and the United States. At the same time, He has made available to all of Israel's descendants, and indeed to all humanity, the knowledge of His spiritual expectations.

This knowledge has been faithfully preserved in the Bible and is accessible today to anyone willing to read it, regardless of ethnic background, whether Israelite or Gentile. Through this revelation, God's standards and way of life are made known to all people.

God gave the promised birthright blessings to Joseph's modern descendants in Britain and America. At the same time, He has made available to Israel's descendants, and indeed the whole world, the knowledge of what He expects of them spiritually. He has accurately preserved this knowledge in the Bible, and today that knowledge is available to anyone willing to read it, whether ethnically Israelite or gentile.

-God makes His Word available

The British and American peoples are viewed as instruments through which God has made His Word widely available throughout much of the world. While the Bible is often taken for granted today, and many homes in the United States and Britain contain multiple copies, this was not always the case.

For many centuries, Scripture outside of its original Hebrew and Greek languages was largely limited to Latin translations, with access tightly controlled by ecclesiastical authorities. As Neil Lightfoot notes in *How We Got the Bible* (1986, p. 76), "it was in England, so long deprived of the living Word, where the battle was fought and won for the right of the common man to have his Bible in his own language."

Following earlier translation efforts in the 1500s, the 1611 publication of the King James Version, authorized by King James I of England, marked a major milestone. Produced by a large team of Hebrew and Greek scholars working from the original languages, it quickly gained a reputation as one of the most influential and widely respected English translations.

For nearly four centuries, the King James Bible remained the most recognized English translation and served as a foundation for many later Bible translations in other languages. It has had a profound impact on the English-speaking world and on global biblical translation efforts.

In the centuries since, the Bible has been translated into thousands of languages. English-speaking nations, particularly those of British descent, have played a significant role in printing and distributing hundreds of millions of copies worldwide.

In addition, the policies, resources, and global influence of Britain and the United States have contributed to the worldwide proclamation of the Christian message, including the spread of biblical literature and missionary efforts. These conditions have supported religious freedom, provided financial means, and enabled large-scale dissemination of Scripture.

Many people incorrectly assume that modern nations such as the United States, Britain, Canada, France, and others are not represented in the Bible. However, when the descendants of Ephraim, Manasseh, and the other tribes are properly identified, many major end-time prophecies can be understood as relating to these modern peoples.

Within this interpretive framework, Germany is also associated with the descendants of ancient Assyria. It is further understood that they will play a central role in the end-time instrument of punishment described in Scripture as "the Beast," which is used by God in dealing with the descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel, the House of Judah, and the House of Israel.

This Beast is described symbolically as a confederation of ten kings in Europe, often interpreted as the final revival of the Holy Roman Empire.

Conclusion

Taken together, these perspectives present a unified narrative in which the history of the ancient tribes of Israel is seen as extending far beyond the biblical period and into modern times. The promises given to the patriarchs, particularly those concerning Joseph and his descendants, are understood as continuing to unfold through historical migrations, national developments, and the rise of modern nations.

Within this interpretive framework, the birthright blessings, prophetic warnings, and promises of preservation are viewed as key to understanding both ancient events and present-day global dynamics. The Bible is therefore seen not only as a record of past history, but also as a guide to identifying the unfolding of long-term prophetic patterns among the nations.

Ultimately, this view emphasizes continuity between ancient Israel and the modern world, the enduring relevance of biblical prophecy, and the belief that God's plan remains active in guiding the course of human history.

***Seventh Key*: <u>Understanding the 7000 years God's Plan and Timeline</u>**

We now arrive at one of the most essential keys to understanding prophecy, the Bible as a whole, and God's plan: understanding God's timeline. Once we grasp this timeline, we can piece together the entire Bible and gain a clear, cohesive understanding of His purpose.

The table below illustrates how God structured His plan around the number seven, which symbolizes His perfection and completion. Every aspect of God's plan is rooted in this number.

As demonstrated in the table, the seven-day week of creation serves as a blueprint for the fulfillment of His entire plan, providing a template for His divine work.

Isa 46:10 ***<u>Declaring the end from the beginning</u>***, And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure.

So, God based all of his plan on the number 7; -A week of days, - A week of weeks, -A week of months, -A week of years, -A week of Millenniums, -A week of weeks of years, -A week of decades, -A week of weeks of Decades. The initial week of creation which included seven 24-hour days, on *a* day for *a* 1,000 years basis, each of those days would then portrays God's plan based on a period totaling 7,000 years.

Jesus would then come at the end of the first 6000 years (*allowed to Satan*) to establish God's Kingdom on Earth and reign for the 7th millennia (foreshadowed by the Sabbath day).

2 Co_4:4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Eph.2:2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

Psa_90:4 For a **<u>thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday</u>** when it is past, and like a watch in the night.

2 Pe 3:8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that **<u>with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day</u>**.

- Difference between Solar and **Prophetic years**.

Now, it's important to understand that a prophetic year is different from a regular solar year. A **solar year** has 365 days, and a **prophetic year** has 360 days.

The way to know which kind of year is involved is quite simple. When the Bible talks about a year time period, it is a year of 365 days. But when the Bible uses another language *like* week(s) of days, it refers to a year of 360 days.

Also, when the Bible mentions a ***Time***, this is also equal to a year of 360 days. When the Bible uses the term month like 42 months, it refers also to 42 months of 30 days each, for a total of 3 ½ years of 360 days each.

-Here are some references about it:

The terms "time, times, and dividing of time", "42 months", have a prophetic flavor to them. And they are surrounded by symbolic language in the verses where they come from. Let's look at a couple of examples:

Daniel 7 …'And four great beasts came up from the sea … The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings … And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear … After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads … After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth … and it had ten horns … I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn … And he shall speak great words against the most High **and shall wear out the saints of the most High**, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a ***time and times and the dividing of time***.'

Revelation 12 …'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars … And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns … And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven … And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child … And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for ***a time, and times, and half a time***.'

Revelation 13 …'And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns … And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power … and power was given unto him to continue ***forty and two months***.'

Number 14:34 …'After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, **even forty days,** ***each day for a year***, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.'

Ezekiel 4:6 …'And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee ***each day for a year***.'

So, God confirms this ***day for a year principle*** in these Bible verses above.

It also looks like the number of years Moses lived (**120 years**) was **portraying the timeline as the total number of Jubilees since Adam sin until Jesu's Second Coming.**

Basically, **the 6000 years' time could be divided into 3 sections of 2000** years each. **40 jubilees of 50 years each**.

So, roughly, we have 2000 years from Adam's sin to Abraham, we have 2000 years from Abraham to Jesus and we have another 2000 years from Jesus's death to Jesus's second coming. We then have 120 (120x50) jubilees for a total of 6000 years.

The number 70 plays also a significant role in God's plan. Judah was delivered from Babylon 70 years after they went into captivity. This was prophesied in the book of Jeremiah;

Dan 9:2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years *specified* by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

Here we have proof that God reveals what he's going to do in advance. God does not change, the same applies today. He reveals His intentions to His servants the prophets and they in turn then reveal them to God's people.

Basically, God told Daniel that Judah would not have a complete restauration because they did not repent of their past, but Daniel did, so God did perform a partial restauration.

God then gave another prophecy to Daniel (the prophecy of the 70 weeks). Its purpose would be to bring God's people, and by extension, the world, to complete repentance. This prophecy would bring the human race on the complete verge of extermination unless Jesus comes back to save us.

Dan 9:24 "**Seventy weeks** are determined For your people and for your holy city, ***To finish the transgression***, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

When we apply the principle of one day representing one year, the 70 weeks span a total of 490 years.

After 7 weeks (49 years), there would be an unknown length of cut in time, and after that, there would be another 62 weeks (434 years). Then, the Messiah would be cut off.

After, there would be another cut in time that would last about 2000 years (referred to as the Church age) that would bring the end-times and the fulfillment of the last week (70th), which is called the tribulation week (a period of 7 years). The last 3 ½ years of the final week (7 years) is mentioned in Matthew as being the Great Tribulation. This is the period also referred to as the *Time, Times and half of time* in Rev. 12:14. At the end of this week or 7 years, Jesus will come back and fight at the battle of Armageddon and establish the Kingdom of God on this Earth.

The end of the 6000 years then coincides with the end of the 70 weeks of Daniel.

After the 6000 years (the 6th millennial days allowed to Satan to deceive the World, Apoc. 12:9), Jesus will come back to establish the Kingdom for a 1000 years which is the 7th Millennium depicted by the 7th day, the Sabbath day of the creation. The World will then enjoy God's rest by being allowed the opportunity to enter God's spiritual rest (Kingdom of God) through Jesus.

The book of Revelation with its 7 Trumpets essentially covers this final seven years period of the last week of Daniel's 70-weeks prophecy. God will bring the World to its knees and the people will recognize that without God we are destined to complete destruction. Jesus describes these times as a time of troubles and great tribulation like never before.

He commands us to watch and pray that we may have the strength and courage to escape all these things. He mentioned nothing about escaping the tribulation through a pre-tribulation rapture. He actually says that the one who perseveres till the end will be saved.

-The plan of God through the 7 Feasts of the Lord. (see p.53)

Another important aspect of understanding God's timeline is to understand that God reveals its plan of salvation for humanity through the 7 Feasts that He gave to physical Israel.

It looks like we could also relate each Feast of the plan with each day of Creation. For an example, On the 4th day, God placed the 2 great lights in the Heavens. After 4000, Jesus, the light of the World, came on to the scene. And the fourth Feast is the Feast of Trumpet which portrays Jesus's return on Earth.

Look at the chart below to see how everything relates to the other.

- The Last Great Day, the (7th) Feast of the Lord.

Something else that is shown through God's Plan is the *2 harvests* of physical Israel, which portrayed the *2 harvests of men in 2 different seasons*.

As surprising as it may be, God **does not try to save everybody <u>in this age</u>**. Just a small amount of people which constitute the Body of Christ (Jews and Gentiles) will be part of the *first* resurrection.

The Last Great Day, the 7th Feast pictures the amazing truth that God is not trying to save the Whole World now! If the Great God who made the universe was actually "trying" to save humanity, He would succeed. Yet the fact is that most people throughout human history have never subscribed to—or even been exposed to—any form of Christianity. And so, it remains this way until this very day! What is the real answer to this dilemma?

Jesus clearly identifies Himself as the only true way to salvation, describing Himself as both the "door" for His followers and the cornerstone rejected by men but chosen by God. Salvation is found in no one else. "This is the '**Stone**, which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:11–12).

So, you either accept Christ, the true Christ of the Bible, or you do not. And if you truly accept Christ as your Savior and your Lord, you will surrender yourself to Him and let Him rule your life. As Christ commanded, you will keep His Commandments as a way of life. You will let Christ live His obedient life in you through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20). And if you do not, you are not a Christian. Most of mankind has been blinded from the knowledge of the true God and the true Christ. And yet again, God's inspired Word tells us: "For there is no respect of persons with God" (Romans 2:11, KJV).

Is God contradicting Himself? Of course not! For God has never said that He is trying save everyone "**now**!" God has said: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). It is God's will that all "come to repentance"—but they certainly have not done so in this age! Notice also how the Apostle Paul wrote of "God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:3–4).

-It's simply a matter of timing.

For in God's time—as we shall see—all humans who have ever lived will be given a real understanding of God's master plan and purpose, and the vast majority will accept God's Truth ***<u>once their eyes are fully opened</u>***. No, this is not a "second chance" as some would like to protest. It will be the first genuine opportunity for these people to come to understand the true God and the true Jesus Christ and their great purpose!

The Bible speaks time and again <u>about a time of "judgment</u>" for all humanity. <u>And as used, the term "judgment" does not usually mean condemnation but, rather, ***a time of decision—a time of trial and testing*** (cf. 1 Peter 4:17).</u> Notice Jesus Christ's own statements to those cities of His own day who rejected Him and His teaching: "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes**. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you" (Matthew 11:21–22).**

The pagan cities that never heard of Christ will have a "more tolerable" opportunity in the coming day of judgment. To Capernaum He says: "But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you" (v. 24).

If God judges these people by the same standard as others, *which the Bible clearly indicates that He will,* then the ancient pagans would have no chance for eternal life because they clearly did not accept Christ as their Savior or obey God's ways. The only answer is that they will, in a coming judgment period, be given the opportunity to really understand God's great purpose to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and then—at that time—to be "judged" by how they respond based on this genuine first opportunity for salvation.

-But does the Bible indicates that such a time is coming?

Yes, it does! In Revelation 20, after describing the Millennium and the short period after the Millennium, when Satan is released for a "little while" (v. 3), God goes on to describe a time of "judgment" for the dead people who died before the Millennium began and had never been converted. After describing a great "white throne," notice what the Apostle John wrote under inspiration: "

And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged (in a period of "judgment" which seems to be, according to Isaiah, lasting 100 years.- **Isa_65:20 "No more shall an infant from there *live but a few* days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die *one hundred years old*, But the sinner being *one hundred years old* shall be accursed.)** according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works" (vv. 12–13).

When these dead peoples are seen "standing," this involves a resurrection! (Ezech. 37) And notice that verse 12 also says that the "books" were opened. The Greek word *biblia*, from which the word "Bible" is normally translated, is used here. So, these people—for the first time—have their minds and hearts open to the Bible. They also have opportunity to obtain salvation—to have their names written in the "Book of Life." In this "Great White Throne Judgment Period," they are truly being "called." after Satan is once again banished. Their minds are now open to real understanding. In this judgment period, even the inhabitants of Sodom and hundreds of other pagan or deceived cities of the past, may have a better opportunity than some who lived at the time of Christ, as these ancient pagans never before understood virtually anything about the true God and His ways. They were not responsible for being "blinded"!

Countless men and women of past ages could embrace the Truth with great zeal if they fully understood it, potentially becoming even more devoted servants of God than many of us who sometimes take His precious Truth for granted.

-How wonderfully clear this is!

God will resurrect (Ezech.37) the countless millions who lived and died long before Christ came and brought the full understanding of salvation. Additional billions who have lived and died since Jesus Christ, or who now live but are blinded to the knowledge of the true God and His purpose—all of these people will be brought to real understanding and repentance! They will be given God's Holy Spirit—the very nature and character of God will be imparted to them **after real repentance and baptism—just as it is to us today**. Then they, too, will have an opportunity for some years to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18) and bear fruits.

They will have an opportunity for full salvation—eternal life in the very Kingdom and Family of God. It is only a matter that the time of their "calling" is later than many of ours—but it is sure to come!

Then, finally, every single human being who has ever drawn breath will have had a genuine opportunity for salvation! And so the seventh of God's Holy Days, the mysterious "**eighth day**" coming immediately after the Feast of Tabernacles—but as a separate Festival (Leviticus 23:36)—pictures this wonderful time soon after the Millennium when all humanity will finally be given an opportunity to understand the Truth.

This is obviously the time Jesus was referring to in John 7: "<u>On the last day, that great day of the feast</u>, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water'" (vv. 37–38). In the Great White Throne Judgment, "anyone"—everyone who has ever lived—will finally have his or her eyes opened and be given the opportunity to respond to God and to receive His Holy Spirit.

With this seventh Festival, the picture of God's plan is now complete. In realizing the marvelous wisdom and mercy of God in all of His plan, we may truly say with the Apostle Paul in Romans 11:32–33: "For God has committed them **all to disobedience,** that He might have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

What an incredible plan of salvation God has designed for us. We, the sons of the First Resurrection, will then reign with Jesus for Eternity!

All others called after the Millennium will also have tremendous blessings, but the best resurrection is the first one, when Jesus will come back. We will rule on Earth with Him and help others to achieve Salvation.

At the end, when God the Father will come on the new Earth to be with us forever, we will then reign <u>on the entire universe</u>. Earth will become the Headquarters of the Universe. Praise the Almighty God Yehovah!

FINAL CONCLUSION

As we have seen, a proper understanding of the Bible, its prophecies, and God's plan for mankind's redemption requires grasping God's 7,000-year Timeline. When correctly understood, this Timeline serves as the Master Key, unlocking a complete understanding of Scripture. It allows us, among other insights, to discern the time and season of Jesus Christ's Second Coming.

Neglecting to apply these keys can lead to false doctrines, errors, and the great falling away foretold by Paul. This underscores the vital importance of using these keys correctly.

God is now preparing the Firstfruits, those who will assist Christ during the Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment—in helping humanity attain salvation. Together, they will reign with Jesus on Earth for 1,000 years.

Jesus also warns us severely to discern the Signs of the Times.

Mat 16:3 and in the morning, *'It will be* foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot *discern* the signs of the times.

He also warned us to WATCH and PRAY so that we may ESCAPE.

Mat 24:42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

Mar_13:33 Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.

Mar_13:34 It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.

Mar_13:35 Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—

Mar_13:37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

Though no one knows the day or the hour, Jesus says we could certainly know the season. Failure to recognize the signs of the times will bring disaster. So, let's make sure we understand them.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree – indicates the Season

Mat 24:32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer *is* near.

Mat 24:33 So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!

Mat 24:34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

Mat 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

1Th 5:1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

1Th 5:2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

1Th 5:3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

1Th 5:**4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.**

1Th 5:5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

1Th 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do,* **but let us watch** and be sober.

Paul gives us the same admonition that Jesus gave to us. The World will be caught by surprise, but we, true Christians, should not be caught in darkness so this day would overtake us.

Israel (the Fig Tree in context, **Joel** 1:6 For a nation is come up upon **my land**, strong, and without number, whose teeth *are* the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. **Joel 1:7** He hath laid my vine waste, and barked **my fig tree**: he hath made it clean bare, and cast *it* away; the branches thereof are made white.) came back to their land 70 years ago. They have blossomed and are about to get ready for the final phase that will trigger the final 7 years. They will soon achieve the peace deal of Daniel 9 for 7 years. Then, when they say; peace and safety…then…

Jesus said: This generation, *Israel*, will not pass away…

A generation in the bible is about 70-80 years.

Psa_90:10 The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, …

Let's pray and watch, that we may be accounted worthy, have the courage and strength to escape and to go through all that will happen, and stand before Jesus at His Second coming, ***at the end of the 7th Trumpet***.

1Co 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—

1Co 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Nonetheless, a word of encouragement; God promises his faithful children protection ***on Earth***, in the desert during the Great Tribulation, for the last 3 ½ years.

Rev 12:14 But the woman (*the Church*) was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

Luke 21:36 Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

1 Thessalonians 5:6, reminds believers to remain spiritually alert and self-controlled. It calls us not to drift into spiritual complacency like those who live without awareness of God's truth, but instead to stay awake—vigilant in faith, prayer, and righteous living. Being "sober" means having a clear mind and a steadfast heart, ready for Christ's return and focused on living in the light rather than the darkness of the world. In essence, it's a call to live with purpose, awareness, and spiritual discipline.

Bible Study Readiness Checklist

1. **Pray to get the proper understanding.** Prov. 2:1-5
    a. **Fast to get understanding of difficult doctrines or texts**. Dan. 9:2-23

2. **Understanding Fundamental Biblical Principles**
    a. **Remember the 3 skills.**
        i. **Observation**
        ii. **Interpretation**
        iii. **Application**
    b. **Trust Scriptures to Interpret Scriptures**
        i. **The Bible Interprets Itself**
        ii. **Consider the Context and the Audience**
        iii. **Use Clear Scriptures to Interpret Difficult Ones**
        iv. **Examine All Scriptures on the Subject**

3. **Understanding Biblical Symbolism**
    a. **Use the Bible's self-interpretation of symbols**

4. **Foundational Biblical Concepts — Foreshadows, Types, and God's Methodology of Revelation**
    a. **Here a little, there a little**
        i. **No contradictory verses, they supplement each other**
        ii. **God's DUALITY principle**
        iii. **Foreshadows, shadows, types, and Antitypes (fulfillments)**
    b. **Bible Study Methodology: The Big Picture First, Details after**

5. **British Israelism and Prophecy**
    a. **The identity of Israel: Britain (Ephrain) and the United States (Manasseh) Inherited Joseph's Birthright**

6. **Interpret the Bible literally (*Normally*) - Hermeneutic Approach**
    a. **Key Principles of the Literal / Normal Hermeneutic Approach**
    b. **Recognizing Figurative Language in the Bible**
    c. **Remember that not Everyone is called today**

7. **Understanding 7000 years of God's Plan and Timeline**
    a. **Difference between Solar** and **Prophetic years**
    b. **<u>WATCH and PRAY so that we may ESCAPE...</u>**
    c. **A generation in the bible is about 70-80 years**
    d. **Refer to the 7 Holy Days — God's Master Plan to save Mankind**
    e. **Understand God's 7,000-Year Salvation Plan for Humanity**

The 7 Holy Days — God's Master Plan to save Mankind

Feast	Old Testament meaning	New Testament meaning
Passover	A lamb was sacrificed, and its blood placed around the doors of Israelite houses in Egypt, which God "passed over" when slaying the Egyptian firstborn. (Leviticus 23:5)	Pictures Jesus Sacrificed as the Lamb of God for the expiation of our sins.
Feast of Unleavened Bread	A seven-day festival during which leavening (such as yeast, which causes bread to rise when baking) is put out of dwellings and is not eaten. (Leviticus 23:6-14)	Pictures the Christian's duty to "put out sin" from a life yielded to Jesus Christ
Day of Pentecost	A day celebrating the gathering in of the first (Firstfruits) and smaller of the two annual harvests; observed 50 days from a fixed point in the previous Feast. (Leviticus 23:15-22)	Pictures the first Christian's (the firstfruits) receiving God's Holy Spirit.
Feast of Trumpets	Called Rosh Hashana by the Jews; a day of rejoicing marked by the blowing of trumpets. (Leviticus 23:23-25	Pictures a time of war and plagues, concluding with Jesus Christ's Second Coming and the war of Armageddon
Day of Atonement	A day of fasting and repentance, known to the Jews as Yom Kippur (Leviticus 23:26-32) Azazel (Satan) is sent to the desert	Pictures the binding of Satan at the door of the Millennium and the world becoming at one with God.
Feast of Tabernacles	A seven-day celebration of the great fall harvest observed by living in temporary dwellings for the duration of the Feast. (Leviticus 23:33-43)	Pictures the Millennium, when the earth will be ruled by Jesus Christ and *His saints*.
The Last Great Day	Adjacent to the Feast of Tabernacles, this eighth day is considered a separate Feast. (Leviticus 23:36, 39)	Pictures the coming "Great White Throne Judgment" at which all of humanity ***not previously called*** will have their chance to hear the True Gospel and accept salvation.

7000 Years God's Plan of Redemption – 120 jubilees allowed to man…

Esa 41:26 Who has declared the End from the beginning, that we may know? And former times, that we may say, '*He is* righteous'?... **Psa 90:4** For a **thousand years** in Your sight *Are* like yesterday when it is past, And *like* a watch in the night.
2 Pe 3:8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a **thousand years**, and a **thousand years** as one day.
- The Biblical year begins during Springtime around March-April -

							White Throne Judgment	Earth's Purification	New Heaven-New Earth
Day 1	**Day 2**	**Day 3**	**Day 4**	**Day 5**	**Day 6**	**Day 7**	**100 Years**		
Light	**Water Separation**	**Land, Grass, Trees**	**Sun, Moon, Stars**	**Sea Life and birds**	**Animals and Man**	**God's Rest**			**New Jerusalem**
1000	**2000**	**3000**	**4000**	**5000**	**6000**	**7000**			**8000+**
***Adam* Age** **40 x 50 Jubilees = 2000 years**		***Abraham* Age** **40 x 50 Jubilees = 2000 years**		***Church* Age** **40 x 50 Jubilees = 2000 years**		**Millennial Age / Individual 100 years Judgment Period Es. 65:20**	**Judgment Period extended to all Es. 65:20**		**Eternity Age**
		Abraham, born around 2000bc	**Jesus's Birth 4bc - Jesus is the Light in the darkness**	**Jesus started His ministry on 27ad.** Jesus died 30ad. 40 years after, Temple Destruction 70ad. Jews' Dispersion.	Jews back in their land = Fig Tree **BLOOMING (*1948-53?*)** (Joel 1:6-7) **1953 – 2033 ? (*80 years*)** **A Generation = 70 - 80 years** (Psa 90:10 The days of our lives *are* **seventy years**; And if by reason of strength *they are* **eighty years**…)	**Jesus Reigns on Earth with His saints for a thousand year** Rev. 20:4			**God's Family, reign forever on New Universe** Rev.21:24-26
				3 days / 3 nights = 3000 years - Jesus resurrected at the end of the 3rd day			2nd Resurrection White Throne Judgment ***Great Harvest*** Rev. 20-11-12	3rd Resurrection Judgement The Wicked Destruction Rev. 20-13-15. Mal.3-4, John 5:29(b)	
				1st day = 1000 years	**2nd day = 1000 years**	**3rd day = 1000 years**			
				Jesus brought LIFE	6000 years end. Christ's Return / 1st Resurrection *The **Firstfruits***				
7 Feasts of the Lord represents GOD's Plan of salvation for mankind									
Passover	**Unleavened Bread**	**Pentecost**	**Trumpet**	**Atonement**		**Tabernacles**	**Last Great Day**	**Lake of fire**	
Jesus/ Light	**Separation with Egypt/World/Sin**	**The FirstFruits / (*Jesus-the seed*)**	**Signs in Sun, Moon, Stars**	**Church's Expansion – Church's deception in wilderness**		**Millenium**	**Salvation offered to all**		

Summary of the Weeks (the Seven) of Scriptures				
The Week	**Length**	**Description**	**Scripture**	**Comment**
1) A week of days (7 x 1 day)	7 days	God's basic time cycle. 6 days of toil followed by a Sabbath day of rest.	Gen. 1:31-2:3; Ex. 31:12-17	
2) A week of weeks (7 x 7 days)	49 days	The period of time between the Feast of First fruits and the Feast of Pentecost.	Deut. 16:9-12; Lev. 12:15-16	
3) A week of months (7 x 1 month)	7 months	The first seven months of the religious year contains all seven of the Jewish feasts.	Deut. 16; Lev. 23	
4) A week of years (7 x 1 year)	7 years	The Israelites were commanded to work the land for six years and then give the land a Sabbath rest every seven years.	Lev. 25:1-7	
5) A week of Millenniums (7 x 1000 years)	7000 years	The 7th Millennium will set the culmination of God's Plan to convert the Earth into His everlasting Kingdom	Rev. 20:4, 6	
6) A week of weeks of years (7 x 7 years)	49 years	The period of time between each celebration of the year of Jubilee every 50 years	Lev. 25:8-17	
7) A week of decades (7 x 10 years)	70 years	The life span allotted to man. The time that Juda was in captivity	Psalm 90:10	
8) A week of Weeks of Decades (7 x 70 years: 1 day = 1 year)	490 years	The time revealed to the prophet Daniel which would culminate after 69 weeks to the appearance of the Messiah on a donkey to be cut off. The Prince coming for the Peace deal for 1 week (the 70th one).	Dan. 9:24-27	

A Time = 1 year. See Nebuchadnezzar, 7 times will pass on you... That timeline referred to 7 years.
A Year = I literal year. Ex. Daniel referred to God punishing Juda for 70 years in Babylon captivity.

A week – see the table attached.
For example, the 70 weeks on Daniel in Dan. 9 refers to 70 weeks of days, = 490 years (1 day =1 year).
After the Decree, there were 7 weeks, and 62 weeks. Messiah was cut off after (at the end of) 62 weeks, So there is another week left that would be completed in the end time, after the Church age, the time when the gentiles can come in, and the final 7 years will be to punish the Jews and of course, by extension, all the world.