

Introduction: Recently we received an email from a brother with whom we had co-labored in the campaign to declare to the world that salvation would end on May 21, 2011. This brother was responding to an email describing our ongoing efforts to distribute gospel tracts to different parts of the world. Our friend and brother proceeded to say,

Remember when Noah got into the Ark, and he had 7 days (7,000 Years) then the door was Shut! So, May 21, 2011 is exactly 7,000 years later and the exact same day on the Hebrew calendar (The 17th day of the second month). I know you don't want to stop bringing the gospel, but the 17th day of the second month is NOT a coincidence. The door is shut.

In deference to our friend, the evidence in the months leading up to May 21, 2011 indeed seemed very strong that Christ would visibly return on May 21, 2011, bringing with him all who had previously died in Christ, and raise up the believers while instantly changing their bodies into a glorified, spiritual, incorruptible body, as God promises in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15. The Biblical evidence (including the 7,000-year timeline mentioned above) appeared to indicate that God's 13,023-year salvation program would come to an abrupt end on that date. This would then be followed by a five months' period during which the unsaved which remained on this sin-cursed earth would be tormented (Revelation 9:5,10), culminating on October 21, 2011 with the annihilation of the heavens and the earth by fire, and creation of new heavens and new earth, in accordance with 2 Peter 3:7-13, Isaiah 65:17, Revelation 21:1, and many others.

However, Christ did not visibly return on May 21, 2011, and there was no bodily resurrection of the believers. The world continued on, at which point our late beloved Bible teacher Mr. Camping began to teach that the day of Judgment was spiritual and that the believers would be present during this final five months, with no possibility of salvation for the unsaved, culminating with the destruction of this present sin-cursed universe by fire and creation of new heavens and new earth on October 21, 2011. But when October 21, 2011 came and went without incident, after considerable soul-searching Mr. Camping and many others publicly acknowledged that our understanding was incomplete, and that salvation would continue until the last day when we see Christ appear on the clouds with power and great glory. That has been our official position ever since, and this study is motivated by the desire to demonstrate that truth from the scriptures. As we have continued to explore this most important question, we have discovered absolute proof in the Bible not only that Christ is saving until the last day, but that the scope of God's magnificent salvation program will be increasingly greater as we approach the end.

Let us begin our study with Matthew 24:21-27

²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. ²³ Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. ²⁴ For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. ²⁵ Behold, I have told you before. ²⁶ Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is

in the secret chambers; believe it not. ²⁷ For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

In this passage, Christ, who is the Word that became flesh, who is the author of the whole Bible, is teaching that this period called great tribulation shall be characterized by false Christs and false prophets, which shall arise and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. **Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**

What God is teaching is that we will know we have reached the end of the great tribulation when we see Christ coming as lightning shines from east to west. Christ's coming will not be in secret, or very quietly, as those who teach the no-more-salvation position would have us believe. The opposite is true. When Christ comes, the Bible teaches there shall be supernatural activity in the heavens and in the earth, and the peoples of the world shall see Christ coming in the clouds with power and great glory, and shall behold as the true believers are caught up into heaven, which we call the Rapture. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth as the unsaved realize that they have been shut out of the kingdom of God. None of that happened on May 21, 2011.

A major emphasis of the Bible is, **“the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.”** We learn in Matthew 20 this statement applies both chronologically and spiritually to this time of great tribulation. The blueprint for the salvation program of our day is found in the book of Jonah, where God sent Jonah to that great wicked city of Nineveh, a city of 120,000 completely outside the nation of Israel, with a warning that God would overthrow the city in forty days. The reaction of the king and the people was such that they believed God, and sat in sackcloth and ashes, and cried mightily to God for mercy. And God did have mercy on them. God tells us in Jonah 4:11

¹¹ And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and *also* much cattle?

And in Matthew 12:41 we get absolute evidence they were truly saved:

⁴¹ The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

The account of the salvation of Nineveh has many parallels to what occurred during the May 21, 2011 campaign. First, there was the cry that went forth, **Behold, the bridegroom [Christ] cometh, go ye out** [of spiritual Babylon, churches and congregations] **to meet him** (Matthew 25:6). Effectively, that is what Jonah was preaching to the people of Nineveh. Christ is coming as the Judge of all the earth, go ye out from that in which you have placed your trust, fear the LORD, and depart from evil. Second, there was no religious institution involved in the salvation of Nineveh, even as today, there is a great multitude which no man can number being saved outside the churches through the word of God faithfully preached outside the churches. Third, there was very little time or understanding of doctrine required for God to save them.

God had prepared the hearts of the people of Nineveh, otherwise they would never have repented in a way that was pleasing to God. God is the author of salvation, and apart from God's intervention, no one of themselves will repent and turn to God in a way that is pleasing to God. God is absolutely sovereign in choosing who he will have mercy upon and how and when and where God will apply his word to save them.

We read in Revelation 3:7-8

⁷ And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; ⁸ I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Today, God has set before us an open door that shall not be shut until the last day when we see Christ appear with power and great glory in the clouds.

In Mark 13:24-26 we read:

²⁴ But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, ²⁵ And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. ²⁶ And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

We read in the parallel passage in Matthew 24:29-30:

²⁹ Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: ³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

The Greek word *eutheōs* translated “**immediately**” in Matthew 24:29 is translated immediately 35 times, straightway 35 times, and forthwith 7 times in our King James Bible. Those who teach no-more-salvation would have us believe that Mark 13:24-25 and Matthew 24:29 were fulfilled on May 21, 2011. However, the Bible teaches that these events coincide with the literal return of Christ and the rapture of the believers at the last day. Let examine several passages that speak of the sun and moon being darkened. We shall begin with Joel 2:

**¹ Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for *it is nigh at hand;*
² A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, *even to the years of many generations.*
³ A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land *is* as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.**

4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.

5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.

6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.

7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:

8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.

9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

10 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:

11 And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

These verses are describing the believers at the time of the Rapture when Christ visibly returns, who are spoken of as **a great people and a strong** (verse 2), as a **strong people set in battle array** (verse 4), who **shall run like mighty men, climb the wall like men of war and shall march every one on his ways, and not break their ranks** (verse 7), who **when they fall on the sword, shall not be wounded** (verse 8), who **shall run upon the wall, climb up upon the houses, and enter in at the windows like a thief** (verse 9). Please note the phrase, “**like a thief.**” We read in 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3, **For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.** Thus, we have assurance that these verses identify altogether with the literal return of Christ as the Judge of all the earth.

Joel 2:10 declares: **The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.** Thus, we have assurance that these verses identify altogether with Mark 13:24-25 and Matthew 24:29.

Joel 2:11 declares: **The LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great.** This verse identifies with 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the chief messenger [who is Christ], and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.** In other words, these verses in Joel 2 identify with literal appearing of Christ and the resurrection of the believers, not with May 21, 2011.

The Bible teaches in 1 Corinthians 2:13, **Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.** That is, we compare scripture with scripture, in order to discover truth.

Joel 2:1-11 identifies with Revelation 19 that is describing the coming of Christ who is called Faithful and True, and his eyes as a flame of fire, riding on a white horse, who in righteousness doth judge and make war (verses 11-12), with his army of believers riding on white horses (verse 14) to execute judgment on the unsaved, which culminates in the false prophet and the beast who is Satan being cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (verse 20).

These events can occur only after the believers have received their resurrected, spiritual bodies, and have entered into the marriage (Revelation 19:7; Matthew 25:10) and are therefore qualified to partake in what the Bible calls the marriage supper of the Lamb in Revelation 19:9 and the supper of the great God in Revelation 19:17. This is the final judgment.

The language of Joel 2:1-11 also identifies with Revelation 9:1-12 that speaks about the locusts that are let out of the bottomless pit to bring destruction and torment on the unsaved for five months. The locusts are referring to the believers at the time of the Rapture.

Revelation 9:2 **And he [Christ, the bright and morning star, Revelation 22:16] opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.** In other words, the sun was darkened, which identifies with Joel 2:10.

Revelation 9:7-9 is speaking of horses in battle, very similar to Joel 2:4 and Revelation 19:11,14

⁷ And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. ⁸ And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. ⁹ And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

The emphasis in these verses is on the locusts which were like horses prepared unto battle, typifying the believers at the Rapture. This is not a literal battle, but it is spoken of as a battle. Revelation 9 continues:

³ And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴ And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. ⁵ And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

The torment described in verse 5 is best illustrated by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in John 16. In that account, the rich man lived sumptuously while poor Lazarus ate of the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. They both died, and as the rich man lay in the grave, he lifted up his eyes (remember, this is a parable) and saw Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham. In that setting, the rich man, declared, "**I am tormented in this flame,**" in verse 24 and Abraham acknowledged, "**thou art tormented**" in verse 25. The Greek word *odunaomai* translated "torment" in these two verses is translated "sorrowing" in Luke 2:48 and in Acts 20:38. The rich

man was sorrowing, as he recognized that he was shut out of the kingdom of God. This is the torment that the unsaved shall suffer in the day of judgment. Since God speaks of being tormented five months twice, in verses 5 and 10, this may be a literal period of time.

Joel 2:10, **The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining**, identifies altogether with Matthew 24:29 and Mark 13:24-25, and is reinforced in a number of other verses with respect to the earth quaking and the powers of heaven being shaken. Therefore, the sun being darkened and the moon not giving her light identify with the Rapture.

Joel 2:11, where God declares, **the LORD shall utter his voice before his army**, identifies with 1 Thessalonians 4:16, **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel [literally, chief messenger, who is Christ], and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds.**

We know that the resurrection is the last day (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54), and so we see that Joel 2:1-11 is in the setting of the Rapture of the believers on the last day. This in turn coincides with the sun being darkened and the moon not giving her light.

Another passage where God describes the sun being darkened and the moon no longer giving her light is Revelation 6:12-15

¹² **And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;**

¹³ **And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.**

¹⁴ **And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.**

¹⁵ **And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;** ¹⁶ **And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:** ¹⁷ **For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?**

Please note this language speaking about the sun becoming black, the moon as blood, the stars falling to the earth, the heavens departing as a scroll and every mountain and island being moved out of their places, very similar to Mark 13:24-25 and Matthew 24:29. None of these events occurred on May 21, 2011, but they shall occur when Christ appears as the Judge of all the earth.

This language identifies in turn with Revelation 16:17-21

¹⁷ **And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.** ¹⁸ **And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.** ¹⁹ **And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in**

remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. ²⁰ And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹ And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

God is describing in verse 18 voices and thunder and lightning, reminding us of Matthew 24:27, **For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**

God continues in verse 18, **And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.**

This language is speaking about the same event, that of the day of judgment in which Christ and all the believers who have died in Christ shall descend out of heaven, and the believers shall be raised and instantly changed into a glorified, spiritual body.

The worldwide earthquake described in Revelation 16:18 and Revelation 6:14 was prefigured by the local earthquake that took place as Christ was hanging on the cross in A.D. 33 and cried with a loud voice and yielded up the spirit in Matthew 27:50.

God declares in Matthew 27:51-53

⁵¹ **And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;**

⁵² **And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,**

⁵³ **And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.**

Here the graves were opened and many bodies of the saints arose and went into the holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, as we read in Revelation 21:2. When Christ visibly returns on the last day, there shall be a great worldwide earthquake, the graves shall all be thrown open, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, followed by those who are alive and remain, as we read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

As we continue looking at verses that describe the darkening of the sun, we read in Joel 3:14-17:

¹⁴ **Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of ~~decision~~ [Hebrew: *charuts*, **threshing**]: for the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of ~~decision~~ [Hebrew: *charuts*, **threshing**].**

¹⁵ **The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.**

¹⁶ **The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD *will be* the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.**

¹⁷ **So shall ye know that I *am* the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.**

These verses are speaking about the same event, that is, a great earthquake that shall be taking place when the LORD returns in judgment at the last day, and raises up the bodies of the true believers in the sight of their enemies. This did not occur on May 21, 2011.

We also read in Isaiah 24:17-23

¹⁷ Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. ¹⁸ And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. ¹⁹ The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. ²⁰ The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. ²¹ And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. ²² And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. ²³ Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

These verses paint a picture of supernatural activity taking place in the heavens and on the earth. Note in verse 23 **the moon shall be confounded, and the sun being ashamed** identify with the LORD of hosts reigning in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously. The LORD of hosts shall indeed reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously, at the resurrection of the last day, when God's plan of salvation comes to fruition.

Or, as we read in Isaiah 13:9-13,

⁹ Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

¹¹ And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

¹² I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

¹³ Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

Are these verses speaking about something that occurred on May 21, 2011? Under no circumstance! Those who teach no-more-salvation would have us believe that the foregoing verses that speak of the sun being darkened are to be understood spiritually as having occurred on May 21, 2011. When God brought the flood in Noah's day, was that a literal flood that covered the face of the earth and destroyed everything with the breath of life? When God brought down fire and brimstone on Sodom, was that a literal fire? When God brought the waters of the Red Sea down on Pharaoh's army, did that literally happen? When God caused the earth to

swallow up the families of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram for their wickedness, did that literally happen? If we say no to any of these statements, we make God a liar.

Likewise, the Bible insists there is going to be a literal appearing of Christ, a literal resurrection of the believers, literal signs in the heavens, a literal earthquake, a literal darkening of the sun and the moon, and a literal consumption by fire that shall destroy this present sin-cursed heavens and earth. God will then create new heavens and a new earth, wherein righteousness dwells. The creation itself shall be redeemed, as we read in Romans 8:19, 21

¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

²¹ Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Thus, we can expect that immediately following the present great tribulation, the events we have been discussing shall occur. Let us proceed now in our study by examining two key passages that have reference to the time when the door to the kingdom of God shall be shut, and ask, when does the context indicate this shall take place? The first passage is Luke 13:23-30

²³ Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, ²⁴ Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. ²⁵ When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: ²⁶ Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. ²⁷ But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. ²⁸ There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. 0

In verse 25, the master of the house, who is Christ, has risen up and shut to the door. Those who are standing without are knocking at the door, saying, **Lord, Lord, upon unto us**; and he shall answer and say, **I know you not whence ye are**. Christ repeats this in verse 27, saying, **I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity**. This passage is making reference to the shutting of the door to salvation, no one can argue with that. The question is, *when is this happening?* The key is verse 28. When shall the unsaved “see” Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and themselves thrust out? Clearly, that can only happen at the resurrection of the last day. It most certainly did not happen on May 21, 2011. The unsaved who are not elect of God will only know they are shut out from the kingdom of God at the resurrection as they witness the believers being caught up into heaven, as the Bible teaches in Revelation 11:12, **And they [two witnesses, true believers] heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them**. Their enemies include all who are not elect of God.

God declares in 1 Thessalonians 4

¹³ But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel [chief messenger], and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

The phrase, “**them which are asleep,**” in verse 13 and, “**them also which sleep in Jesus,**” in verse 14, refers to those who have physically died in Christ, and who, with a few exceptions like Enoch, Moses and Elijah who went bodily into heaven, have left their body and gone into the presence of Christ in their soul existence, as we read in 2 Corinthians 5:8

⁵ Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. ⁶ Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: ⁷ (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) ⁸ We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:14, God declares, **them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him,** and that would include Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets (note: a prophet is simply one who declares the word of God, which applies to all believers). Then we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the chief messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

This passage tells us that when Christ appears, all the believers shall be caught up together with Christ in the air, but with what kind of a body shall they be raised? In 1 Corinthians 15 God describes the kind of a body the believers shall be raised with. The entire chapter is discussing the importance of the resurrection and the difference between our present earthly, corruptible bodies, and the heavenly, incorruptible bodies we shall receive when Christ appears. **⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. ⁵¹ Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?**

1 Corinthians 15:50 sets forth a fundamental principle: **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.** This underscores the importance of the believers receiving their spiritual, incorruptible bodies when Christ appears. Today the believers are still present in their sin-cursed bodies. But when Christ literally appears, **we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.** This instantaneous change shall take place at the resurrection of the believers.

When shall the believers bodily ascend up to heaven in the sight of their enemies? There can be no misunderstanding about this. The Bible teaches in John 6 *four times* the believers shall be raised up at the last day.

³⁹ And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

⁴⁰ And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁴⁴ No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁵⁴ Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

God is driving home the point that the resurrection of the believers is the last day. And since the resurrection of the believers coincides with the door being shut (Luke 13:25-28), therefore, the door shall be shut at the last day. Note, there is no possibility of a lapse of time between verses 25-27 and verse 28 in Luke 13, because it is only at the resurrection of the last day that the unsaved shall be made aware that they have been shut out of the kingdom of God.

There are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last (Luke 13:30)

Before we leave Luke 13, we should examine verses 29-30 where God declares,

²⁹ And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

The declaration of verse 30, **And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last**, is repeated in several places in the Bible (see also Matthew 19:30; 20:16; Mark 10:31). This principle can be understood both spiritually and chronologically. That is, it applies spiritually in the sense that those who have left houses, lands, brethren, etc. for the gospel's sake, who are the outcasts, the despised, the offscouring of the churches and the world, shall be first in the kingdom of God, whereas those who have had the blessings of the gospel for a long time and who desire to be first, yet never became saved, shall be last. While this holds true at any time in history, it is especially true in our day when the true believers have been scattered into the world outside the churches, and are being saved outside the churches. This chronological aspect of the principle, **"the last shall be first,"** is illustrated beautifully in Matthew 20.

In **Matthew 20**, Christ sets forth a parable in which a **householder**, who is also called **the goodman of the house**, went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard, and agreed with these labourers for a penny a day. These labourers are a picture of the messengers who are sent forth by Christ to share the gospel with the world. At about the third hour, the householder sent forth more labourers into his vineyard, then again at about the sixth hour and the ninth hour of the day. Then at about the eleventh hour, the householder sent forth yet more labourers into the vineyard, saying, whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

Then we read in Matthew 20:8-9:

⁸ So when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. ⁹ And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

At the end of the day, when it came time for their wages to be paid, the goodman of the house, who is a picture of Christ, began with the last, that is, those who were sent out about the eleventh hour, and gave them a penny, then proceeded to give a penny to those who had been sent out earlier in the day. Then we read in verses 10-12:

¹⁰ But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. ¹¹ And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house, ¹² Saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

Christ is associating the term “**one hour**” in verse 12 with those who were sent out about the eleventh hour. The phrase “**one hour**” is used in two primary ways in the Bible. One is in reference to the time that Christ was in the garden of Gethsemane as the hour drew near for him to be betrayed and taken by the temple servants and put to death. In that context, Christ declared in Matthew 26:40 (repeated in Mark 14:37 as well)

And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

There is a parallelism between Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, on the one hand, and the believers during the great tribulation, no, not in the sense of paying for sins, that is uniquely Christ’s work, but the Bible does say in Colossians 1:24

²⁴ Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

For example, in Acts 7:11 God makes reference to Jacob’s great affliction in being forced to leave the land of Canaan, a land that typified the kingdom of God, with his family as a result of a dearth or famine, even as the believers during the present great tribulation are forced and commanded to leave their local congregations as a result of a spiritual famine, as in Amos 8:11

¹¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: ¹² And they

shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.

The famine that God has brought into the churches is one of hearing the words of the LORD. Unless God the Holy Spirit is present to apply the word of God to a person's heart, no one will be saved within those churches. The word of God alone is not sufficient for salvation. It requires the Holy Spirit to apply the word of God and give them spiritual ears.

We read in Deuteronomy 4:30

³⁰ When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, *even* in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; ³¹ (For the LORD thy God *is* a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them.

The great tribulation is a time of affliction for the true believers, as God's chastening is upon them, and they are driven out from the churches and scattered out into the world. In Luke 22:53, Christ also declared unto the chief priests, which were come to take him by force, **When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.**

Similarly, we find the phrase "**one hour**" used in reference to the great tribulation, as we find it in Revelation 17:12; 18:10,17,19. We read in Revelation 17:1-3

¹ And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: ² With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. ³ So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

The great whore that sitteth upon many waters refers to spiritual Babylon, the churches and congregations, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with her false gospels. God continues in verse 12:

Revelation 17:12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

Satan is typified as ten kings, which receive power as kings "**one hour**" with the beast, which identifies with Satan being loosed and empowered by God to rule in the congregations during the great tribulation. Revelation 13:7 says: **And it was given [by God] unto him [the beast, Satan] to make war with the saints [true believers], and to overcome them: and power was given him [by God] over all kindreds, tongues, and nations.** To make war with the saints, and to overcome them, must be understood as silencing and driving the true believers out of the congregations, and the one who is empowering Satan to do this is God himself.

Then in Revelation 18:9-10 we read:

⁹ And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰ Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

The judgment that is come is upon spiritual Babylon, the churches and congregations, during the great tribulation and culminating in the return of Christ as the Judge of all the earth. Outside the churches, salvation continues until the last day.

Therefore, going back to our text in Matthew 20, when God declares in verse 12, **These last have wrought *but one hour***, and follows in verse 16, **So the last shall be first, and the first shall be last,** we have Biblical validation to understand that this principle applies not only spiritually but *chronologically* to the present great tribulation period. That is, the present great tribulation identifies with the eleventh hour of Matthew 20:9 and the “one hour” of Matthew 20:12. This gives us great encouragement as we send out the true gospel in our day.

Let us proceed to a second passage that makes reference to the door to salvation being shut. We read in Matthew 25:10

¹⁰ And while they [foolish virgins] went to buy, the bridegroom [Christ] came; and they that were ready [wise virgins] went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. ¹¹ Afterward came also the other [foolish] virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. ¹² But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

These verses are virtually identical to Luke 13:25-27, with the exception that in verse 10, we learn that the door is shut coincident with the coming of the bridegroom, and they that were ready going in with him to the marriage. God picks up on this language in Revelation 19:7-9

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. ⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. ⁹ And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

When we examine Revelation 19, we find that the chapter is dealing with the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the language ties directly back to Matt. 25:10. The marriage union of Christ and the believers is described in Ephesians 5:30-32

³⁰ For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. ³¹ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. ³² This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

The church that God has in view consists of all those who are born from above; it is the invisible, eternal church, as distinguished from the visible, external church. God is using language emphasizing the intimacy of the union of the believers with Christ, of being members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. The question is, have the believers which have not yet

experienced the completion of our salvation been joined literally unto Christ as described in these verses? The answer is, No. True, we are seated with Christ in the heavenly places. True, the Spirit of Christ indwells us. But the intimacy spoken of in Ephesians 5:30-32, which encompasses the union with Christ in our whole personality, both body and soul, can only come to full fruition when the true believers have received their resurrected, spiritual bodies. Only then can we enter into the marriage with Christ as described in Matthew 25:10 and Revelation 19:7. Only then shall we have a spiritual body that is compatible with Christ's body in every sense of the world, as we read in 1 John 3:2 **Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.**

That is why God declares in Revelation 19:7 **Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.**

To be ready implies that his wife has received her glorified, spiritual body that is compatible with Christ's body.

To get the full context of this passage in Matthew 25, let us back up and begin with verses 1-4:

¹ Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. ² And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. ³ They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: ⁴ But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

The wise virgins typify the true believers, who have oil in their lamps, a figure of being indwelt by God the Holy Spirit (Psalm 45:7; Acts 10:38), whereas the foolish virgins, who are not true believers, have no oil in their lamps, that is, they are not indwelt by God the Holy Spirit, and yet they are corporately or externally identified with the kingdom of God as represented by the churches and congregations. It is true that Revelation 14:4 declares

⁴ These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.

That is, they are not defiled with false gospels. But there is a formal marriage that God is preparing all the believers for that involves our whole personality. When we first become saved, we have received a resurrected soul, and are seated with Christ in heavenly places, but because we have an earthly, terrestrial, corruptible body that still lusts after sin, we are not yet qualified to enter in to the marriage with Christ.

That is why God tells us in 1 John 3:2

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3:2 tells us that when he (Christ, the bridegroom) shall appear, we shall be like him and shall see him as he is. That statement can only come to pass when the believers have received a resurrected, incorruptible, spiritual body that is compatible with Christ's body. When shall Christ appear? We have already learned, he shall appear at the last day, at which time 1 Corinthians

15:50-53 tells us we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, from corruption to incorruption, from mortal to immortal, from earthly to heavenly.

God provides us with a human analogy in Mary, who gave birth to the Lord Jesus, in her relationship to Joseph, the step-father of Jesus. Mary was espoused to Joseph, they were married, and yet Mary and Joseph could not come together as one flesh until after Jesus was born. Exactly the same situation is true of the marriage of the true believers and Christ. The believers shall not enter into the marriage with Christ until after having been resurrected and receiving their brand-new, spiritual, incorruptible bodies, which occurs at the resurrection of the last day.

It is no surprise, then, that Hebrews 11 tells us:

¹³ These all [referring to children of God who have gone before] died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth

³⁹ And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: ⁴⁰ God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect [or, complete].

The “**better thing**” that God has in mind, is the completion of our salvation, that is, the receiving our spiritual, incorruptible bodies, and the receiving of the new heaven and new earth as co-heirs with Christ. That is, when God’s salvation plan has come to full fruition, then all the believers, both those who have died and gone to heaven throughout history, as well as the believers which are alive and remain at Christ coming, shall experience the completion of our salvation, and enter into the marriage with Christ. Then, and only then, shall the door to salvation be shut.

Does the Bible anywhere indicate that there shall be a period of time prior to Christ’s return when there shall be no salvation available? No, the opposite is true.

We read in Romans 9:22-23

What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: ²³ And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy.

These verses make it clear that the only reason that God endures with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, is that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy. There is not one shred of evidence anywhere in the Bible that God will continue this world in its present state for a period of time after having saved all the elect.

According to the verses cited above in Hebrews 11, it is God’s plan that the completion of our salvation, which involves the believers receiving their resurrected, spiritual bodies and entering into the marriage with Christ, shall occur *simultaneously* for all the believers, namely at the resurrection of the last day. That is why Revelation 19:7-9 says

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. ⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed

in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. ⁹ And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The marriage supper of the Lamb has to do with the final judgment that the believers shall partake in after having received our resurrected bodies, which shall culminate with the casting of the beast and the false prophet into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. Therefore, when we compare Revelation 19:7 with Matthew 25:10, we have further evidence that the door is shut at the resurrection of the last day. Now let us return to the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 and continue with verse 5.

⁵ While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

Normally in the Bible, slumbering and sleeping identifies with those who are either physically or spiritually dead, but that will not fit with this verse, because this verse is saying, **they all** (both the wise and the foolish virgins) **slumbered and slept**. This language is reminiscent of the disciples who were asleep in the garden of Gethsemane as Jesus was in agony and praying as he was already experiencing the wrath of God, no man having yet laid a hand on him.

The Biblical solution to this apparent problem is to understand that prior to the end of the church age, the wise virgins (true believers) had not been awakened as yet to understand the truths concerning the end. God had declared in Daniel 12:4,9

⁴ But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. ⁹ And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

These verses point to what can be called “progressive revelation,” that is, there are truths that God sealed up in the Bible that shall not be revealed until the time of the end.

In Daniel 8:18 and Daniel 10:9, Daniel was in a vision in which he was in a deep sleep, with his face toward the ground, whereupon he was “touched” and made to stand upright, and to understand the things concerning the end (Daniel 10:14). Daniel typifies the true believers in our day, and when he was in a deep sleep, it refers to the church age, prior to the true believers being awakened to understand the things concerning the end.

This understanding is further reinforced by Matthew 13:25, where we read, **But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.** The sowing of tares, that is, those who were not saved, yet identified externally or corporately with the kingdom of God, identifies altogether with the church age. God declares in Matthew 13:30 **Let both [wheat and tares] grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers [the true believers who are sharing the gospel outside the churches], Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.** God goes on to declare in Matthew 13:39 **...the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the [messengers].** The Greek word *angelos* should be translated “messengers,” not “angels.” The reapers are the true believers who are messengers sent forth on behalf of Christ to declare the gospel of salvation.

In Matthew 25:30, the separation of the wheat from the tares shall not take place until **the time of harvest**, which, verse 39 tells us, is **the end of the world, and the reapers are the messengers** (not angels). The end of the world effectively began on the 13,000th anniversary of the world, on the day before Pentecost in A.D. 1988, at which point the separation of the wheat from the tares officially began. Then, following a brief period of 2300 days (Daniel 8:14) during which the temple was being cleansed and God hid his face, God poured out the Holy Spirit **again the second time** on the first day of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar in the year 1994, a Jubilee day in a Jubilee year. The year 1994 marked the official end of the church age and the start of the latter rain during which God is saving a great multitude which no man can number outside the churches.

Going back to our text in Matthew 25, verse 6 represents a transition to the end of the church age and the beginning of the great tribulation, because there we read: **And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.**

This verse identifies with the end of the church age, and the beginning of the great tribulation, which is spoken of in 1 Peter 4:17 as the time that **judgment must begin with the house of God**. It also identifies with the cry that went forth, and continues to go forth, until Christ appears, namely, **Go ye out** of spiritual Babylon, the churches and congregations, where Satan is ruling, and flee to the mountains, as we read in Matthew 24:15-16, the mountains being a figure of God himself. It was at this time in history that God unsealed the truths concerning the end time, so that the true believers, typified by Daniel the prophet, were awakened to understand the spiritual truths that identify with the end, such as the separation of the wheat and tares, God's judgment on the local congregations, and the importance of time and judgment as they relate to the end of the world and the return of Christ.

The term "**midnight**" identifies with God's judgment coming down on the churches and congregations in accordance with 1 Peter 4:17, **For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?**

It is exceedingly important that we differentiate the use of the word "**midnight**" in Matthew 25:6 from the darkening of the sun and the moon which occurs immediately after the tribulation of those days in Matthew 24:29. The '**midnight**' of Matthew 25:6 is focusing on the judgment that came down upon the churches, whereas outside the churches, *the light of the gospel is still shining* in the lives of those who are becoming saved during the great tribulation.

The destruction of the firstborn of Egypt at midnight, a picture of the great tribulation

The antecedent that God gives us is in Exodus 12:29, where we read that at **midnight** God smote all the firstborn of Egypt, which resulted in the children of Israel being thrust out of Egypt, in parallel fashion to the believers being thrust out of the churches during the great tribulation. The firstborn of Egypt which were slain at midnight typify the local congregations that came under judgment at the beginning of the great tribulation. We read in Hebrews 12:22-23, **But ye are come...To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven,**

and to God the Judge of all..., Christ himself being the **firstborn from the dead** (Colossians 1:18). And in Revelation 11:8, God spiritually calls the end-time churches Sodom and Egypt:

⁷ **And when they** [two witnesses, true believers] **shall have finished their testimony** [within the churches], **the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.** ⁸ **And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.**

The great city where our Lord was crucified is Jerusalem, typifying the churches and congregations in our day. The true believers are overcome and killed in the sense of being silenced and driven out of the congregations. After God smote all the firstborn of Egypt at **midnight**, the children of Israel were thrust out of Egypt (out of the churches), and were pursued by the army of Pharaoh into the Red Sea. In that setting we read in Exodus 14:

¹⁹ **And the angel** [Hebrew: *malak*, messenger] **of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:** ²⁰ **And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.**

These verses emphasize the wonderful protection provided by the law of God to the believers in our day and the separation between light and darkness that exists in our day between the true believers who are outside the churches and those who remain in the churches. The pillar of the cloud and fire signifies God's judgment; the pillar of fire provides light by night to the true believers who are outside the churches, and salvation to those who are being saved outside the churches, and is a cloud and darkness to the unsaved who remain in rebellion and unbelief.

Another passage that helps us to understand the operation of the word of God to blind those who are in the churches, is found in Genesis 19:1-11, where the LORD in the person of two messengers came to wicked Sodom to rescue Lot, whose righteous soul was vexed with the sin of Sodom (2 Peter 2:8), and his family, from the fire and brimstone that was to be poured out on Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim (typifying the churches, see Jeremiah 23:14; Revelation 11:8). When the men of the city surrounded and pressed sore upon Lot, intending to abuse him and the messengers of the LORD, the messengers pulled Lot into the house and shut the door, and struck the men of Sodom with blindness, so that they wearied themselves to find the door. Christ declared in John 10:7,10: **I am the door of the sheep. If any man enter in, he shall be saved.** Therefore, in the same way, the word of God is used today to blind the churches who are in opposition to Christ.

We are also reminded of the separation of light from darkness in Exodus 10

²¹ **And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.** ²² **And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:** ²³ **They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.**

These verses highlight the separation and delineation between the darkness in the land of Egypt (churches, congregations), and the light in the dwellings [Hebrew: *môshāv*, habitations] of the children of Israel, who typify the true believers. We know that the habitation of the true believers is the LORD himself. He is our rock of refuge, and our everlasting habitation.

We read in Psalm 73

¹ In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion. ² Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me. ³ Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou *art* my rock and my fortress.

However, when the Bible teaches in Matthew 24:29, **Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light**, that is speaking about the literal, visible return of Christ at the last day, which shall be accompanied by the sun being darkened and the moon ceasing to give her light. The same is true of another verse that relates to the time when salvation comes to an end, which is John 9:4, there we read: **I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work**. This verse must be understood as referring to the last day when Christ appears.

Moreover, if we examine the next verse, John 9:5, there we read: **As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world**. The Spirit of Christ, who is the light, indwells each and every believer; therefore, as long as there are true believers in the world who are faithfully sharing the gospel, the light of the Gospel continues to shine, and possibility of salvation still exists outside the churches. This understanding is reinforced in Matthew 28:19-20 where we read: **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them** [the action of the word of God washing away sins, see Ephesians 5:26] **in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen**. These verses underscore that the believers are to **Occupy til I come** (Luke 19:13), or as Deuteronomy 15:11 puts it, **For the poor** [the elect of God who hunger and thirst] **shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land**, or as John 7:37-38 puts it, **In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water**.

There is yet another very significant passage that is in the setting of **midnight**, and involves the shutting of the door, in which God is giving great encouragement to those who are desiring salvation on behalf of themselves or those to whom they are witnessing the gospel. That passage is Luke 11:5-13. The setting is established in Luke 11:1-4, where Christ is teaching us to pray:

¹ And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. ² And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. ³ Give us day by day our daily bread. ⁴ And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

This prayer of our Lord is fundamentally a prayer for salvation: **Give us our daily bread.** Jesus is the bread of life. **And forgive us our sins.** Jesus is the author of salvation, and our redeemer. **And lead us not into temptation** (or, trial, 1 Peter 4:12); **but deliver us from evil** (the evil of the wages of sin which is death). It is imperative that we recognize this emphasis on salvation in our Lord's prayer if we are going to properly understand verses 5-13 that follow.

In verses 5-13 Christ sets up a parable to teach us the importance of seeking God in prayer for the salvation of those to whom we are witnessing during this time of spiritual darkness in the churches. He begins in verses 5-6 by declaring:

⁵ And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶ For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

The word "friend" is the Greek word *philos*, which can refer to a friend or loved one. Christ taught in John 15:14, **Ye are my friends [*philos*], if ye do whatsoever I command you.** Christ is the friend [*philos*] of sinners, Luke 7:34. The emphasis on **midnight** indicates that Christ is speaking about our day, inasmuch as we have learned that midnight identifies with judgment coming down on the churches at the beginning of the great tribulation. Christ is the Friend who is being asked, **Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.** The number three signifies God's purpose, and the loaves signify the gospel, Christ himself, who is the bread of life.

The phrase, "**and I have nothing to set before him,**" is particularly curious language. It is as if he is saying, I have no bread, no gospel, to set before him. This begins to sound very much like a portent of the no-more-salvation teaching of our day, and indeed it is. Then verse 7 goes on:

⁷ And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

In the original Greek, the verb tense goes like this: **the door has been shut, and my children are with me in bed, I can not rise up to give to you.** This response reflects the current no-more-salvation teaching, which asserts that the door to salvation has been shut since May 21, 2011. The phrase, **my children are with me in bed,** conveys the impression, my elect children are safe and secure, resting in Christ, with the implication being, there is no room remaining for more. **I cannot rise and give thee,** is effectively saying, my resurrection is of no avail for you, it is too late for salvation. These verses reflect the no-more-salvation teaching in every aspect.

Christ sets the record straight in verse 8, and here we set forth the literal rendering:

⁸ I say unto you, Though having risen up he will not give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity [shameless persistence] he having risen will give him as many as he needeth.

We should first note the emphasis on the phrase, "**having risen**" which occurs twice in this verse. This is emphasizing the importance of the resurrection of Christ, who the Friend in this parable represents, from the dead, for without the resurrection there is no salvation for anyone.

The word **'importunity'** is a compound Greek word *anaideia* consisting of two parts, *aidos*, and the alpha-privative *an* [meaning, *without*]. The term *aidos* is translated "shamefacedness" in 1 Timothy 2:9 and as "reverence" in Hebrews 12:28. Therefore, "importunity" literally means, "without shame," or, "without reverence." Thus, we can paraphrase Luke 11:8, **Though having risen up, he will not give him because he is his friend, yet because of his [shameless persistence] he having risen will give him as many as he needeth.**

An excellent example of this shameless persistence is blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10

⁴⁶ And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. ⁴⁷ And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. ⁴⁸ And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

Bartimaeus, who was physically blind, is a picture of anyone who is spiritually blind. We see Bartimaeus sitting by the highway side begging, **Jesus of Nazareth, Son of David, have mercy on me.** When many charged him that he should hold his peace, he cried the more a great deal, **Son of David, have mercy on me.** What was Christ's response? Did Christ say, Trouble me not? The door is now shut? I having risen cannot give thee? No! On the contrary, Jesus commanded him to be called, and asked him, **What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?** Christ granted his request and gave the blind man his sight, a dramatic picture of the giving of salvation to one who is spiritually blind. The shameless persistence of blind Bartimaeus resulted in the receiving of his sight, and that is precisely the principle that Christ is teaching in this parable of Luke 11.

Now returning to Luke 11, we read in verses 9-12:

⁹ And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. ¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. ¹¹ If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? ¹² Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

In these verses, we see the application of the shameless persistence exemplified by blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10. Christ is teaching that those who are God's children are expected and even commanded to come to their heavenly Father to ask for those things which are needful, even as a child comes to his earthly father to ask for those things that are needful. And even as we human fathers, evil though we may be by nature, give good gifts to our children, so our heavenly Father gives good gifts to his elect children.

In Hebrews 4:15-16 God declares:

¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

This is the principle being taught in Luke 11:5-13, and let us be reminded, the setting of this parable is **midnight**, which points directly to our day when the hammer blow of God's judgment has fallen on the churches and congregations worldwide.

In Luke 5:13 Christ summarizes the parable

¹³ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

The giving of the Holy Spirit is part and parcel with the gift of salvation. No one can argue with that. The Holy Spirit is the seal, the earnest, the down payment, the guarantee, of our salvation.

God declares in Ephesians 1:

¹³ In whom ye also, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also having believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ Which is the earnest [pledge] of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Romans 8:9 says: **But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.**

The Holy Spirit is the earnest or pledge or guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, which is a reference to the resurrection of the last day, when our salvation shall be completed and we shall receive the promise of an incorruptible, spiritual body, and the creation itself shall be redeemed from the bondage of corruption (Romans 8:21).

On the so-called doctrine of “delayed drawing” by God

Those who teach the no-more-salvation position are well aware that Luke 11:5-13 poses a serious problem for them, for it discloses that salvation is still available today. To counter that, they in their zeal to keep their position intact have come up with another doctrine of their own making, the so-called “delayed drawing” doctrine. This doctrine teaches that God has saved individuals prior to May 21, 2011 and that God continues to draw these individuals to himself after having saved them. The inherent assumption is that these individuals still need to be shepherded and drawn through the preaching of their man-made doctrines. Such an individual is presumed to have heard the gospel and become saved prior to May 21, 2011.

What is the problem? The problem is, the Bible nowhere teaches that God draws individuals *after* having saved them. After we're saved, we continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord as the Holy Spirit enlightens our understanding of the word of God, which may be very minimal. When the Bible says in John 6:44, **No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him**, or John 12:32, **And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [who are to be saved] unto me**, are these verses talking about God drawing individuals who have already become saved? Or, are these verses teaching that God irresistibly draws his elect who are not yet saved to himself, to the intent that they might become saved? And once God has truly saved an individual, is that individual unaware of having become saved? Or, will there be immediate evidence in that individual's life?

The Bible teaches that when an individual becomes saved, he has been translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son (Colossians 1:13); he has become a new creation in Christ; old things have passed away, Behold all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17); he is indwelt by the Spirit of Christ (Ephesians 1:13-14); he has experienced the first resurrection (Revelation 20:5,6), that is, the resurrection of his soul, and is seated in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3,20; 2:6); he has received a new heart and a new spirit (Ezekiel 36:25-27); he has been born from above (John 3:3,7; 1 Peter 1:23). Can such a person be unaware that he has become a new creation in Christ?

As an illustration, let us examine the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who was a Pharisee, trained under the law, who was persecuting the believers unto death. When Saul encountered Christ on the road to Damascus, he was blinded for three days, at which point God sent Ananias, who laid hands on Saul, and prayed that he might be filled with the Holy Spirit, at which point we read in Acts 9:18 **And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized** [washed of his sins through the operation of the word of God]. Then we read in Acts 9:20, **And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.**

You may recall that in Matthew 24:29, we learned that the word **immediately** in that verse is the Greek word *eutheōs* that always conveys something that takes place without delay of any kind. Here the same word *eutheōs* is translated **immediately** in Acts 9:18 and as **straightway** in Acts 9:20. When God saved Saul, **immediately** the scales fell from his eyes, and **straightway** he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

The salvation of anyone who has become saved is no less dramatic than the conversion of Saul in Acts 9 in terms of the fact that a total transformation has occurred in that person's life. The evidence is that such an individual will turn away from sin and begin to walk in God's statutes because he is now indwelt and being directed by God's holy Spirit, whereas prior to his salvation, he was a slave of Satan and obeyed the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. 1 John 2:9 puts it this way: **Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.** That is, in his soul essence, he cannot sin. The Bible also says, **If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** (1 John 1:8-9). That is, we still have a body that is not saved as yet, and are commanded and empowered through the Spirit to put to mortify, put to death, the sins of the body, which were already paid for by Christ (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5). We are no longer being drawn to salvation; that idea is foreign to the teaching of the Bible.

On the drawing of the net filled with fishes in John 21

A passage the no-more-salvation people like to use to justify their "delayed drawing," man-made doctrine is the account of the 153 fish that were drawn to shore in John 21. In that account, we read that Jesus, after having been crucified and raised from the dead, was on the shore directing the disciples where to cast the net. In verse 3, the disciples had entered into a ship, fished all night, and caught nothing. We read in verse 6, **And he said unto them, Cast the net on the**

right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

It is significant and noteworthy that they who were in the ship were unable to draw the net for the multitude of fishes. The Greek word translated “ship” in verse 3 and in verse 6 is *ploion*, which is translated *ship* 66 times in the New Testament. This we understand to signify that the churches today, typified by the ship *ploion*, are no longer being used of God to draw in God’s elect, typified by the fish, and that in fact, Christ is only using individual believers outside the churches to draw the elect to shore where Christ is.

That this is so is indicated in verses 7 and 8, where we read that Simon Peter wearing only his fisher’s coat (for he was naked) cast himself into the sea, and that other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. Here in verse 8 God uses a different Greek word *plouarion* which is a derivative of *ploion* that is found only 6 times, of which in 3 of those occurrences it is translated “little ship” or “small ship” (Mark 3:9; 4:36; John 21:8). Thus, the other disciples in the “little ship,” together with Peter who had cast himself into the sea, were able to drag the net to shore, whereas those in the ship *ploion* were unable to do so. We also want to note in verses 9 and 10

⁹ As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

¹⁰ Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

We want to note especially the phrase, “**Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.**” Recognizing that every word and every letter of every word in the original Greek is important, we note that this phrase is literally rendered, **Bring of the fish which you took just now.** The phrase “**just now**” is an adverb signifying that it is only when the fish have been brought to shore, taken out of the water, and laid on a fire of coals that they are considered to have been “caught.” The sea is frequently used in the Bible to signify the unsaved of the world, and it is only when those fish are taken out of the sea that they physically suffocate and die, even as when someone becomes saved, that individual is said to have been baptized into Jesus’ death. There are many verses supporting the fact that when we become saved, we are dead; that is, the old man has passed away, and we are dead to the law by the body of Christ. Secondly, those fish were laid on a fire of coals. What does that signify? God is a consuming fire, and the only means by which we can be saved is to first endure the wrath of God.

Leviticus 16:11-12

¹¹ And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself:

¹² And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil:

The coals of fire represent the sin offering, the atonement, made by Christ on behalf of his elect. To summarize, only when the fish have been brought to shore where Christ is and are dragged out of the sea and laid on the coals of fire, are they “caught,” typifying those who become saved.

Those fish which were still in the net in the sea and yet could not be drawn to shore were not caught; hence, they do not represent the elect who are saved. The drawing of the fish to shore is something that God does in order that we might be saved, not after we're saved.

On the significance of May 21, 2011

In this study, we are developing verses showing that God is still saving until the last day, and specifically, to dispel the notion that God's salvation program ended on May 21, 2011. As we reflect on the significance of that date, we are led to wonder what might be the significance of the calendar of the Bible appearing to converge on that date as the day Christ would return?

There are two observations that might be offered. The first being, the prophecy of Matthew 25:6 **And at midnight, a cry was made, Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him,** was literally fulfilled during the months leading up to May 21, 2011, and continues to be fulfilled right up to the last day when Christ returns, which according to all the evidence, is imminent.

The second is that May 21, 2011 focuses our attention on the salvation of Nineveh, that great city, that wicked city, in the book of Jonah. Jonah was instructed by God to declare to the people of Nineveh that the city would be destroyed in 40 days. Was God lying to Jonah? Of course not. It is simply that God chose not to reveal His complete plan to Jonah at that time, which is entirely God's prerogative. Was God lying to us when all of the prophecies of the Bible seemed to converge on May 21, 2011 as the day salvation would end? No, of course not. Let God be true and every man a liar. God simply chose not to reveal His complete salvation plan to the true believers at that time. God prepared the hearts of the Ninevites to humble themselves and repent. God did not destroy the city because He still had many left to save...**much cattle**, as we read in Jonah 4:11

¹¹ And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

In the Bible, the believers are spoken of as sheep, and Christ is the good shepherd that shall keep or preserve his sheep. When God speaks of **much cattle**, God is speaking of the salvation of our day. Prior to May 21, 2011, God prepared the hearts of many in the world to repent. A great many did repent because God had saved them. And God did not return to initiate Judgement Day because He still has many remaining to be saved...**much cattle**. That was God's plan all along. The salvation of Nineveh is an absolutely unique and outstanding illustration of the mercy that God is presently showing to those who are outside the churches, whose hearts God has prepared, even as God prepared the hearts of the people of Nineveh.

Let us continue our study with Matthew 25 verses 7-9

⁷ Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. ⁹ But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

Both the wise and the foolish virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. The word ‘**trimmed**’ is the Greek word *kosmeō* which means, to put in order, prepare, adorn. That activity is presently going on both inside and outside the churches, but unfortunately, the churches are unaware that they no longer have the blessing of God and are under the judgment of God. In verse 8, the foolish virgins said unto the wise, **Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.** This underscores the spiritual bankruptcy of the churches, which are bereft of the Holy Spirit and ruled over by Satan. We see this in action today as the churches have fallen away and seek to please men rather than God, drawing in people with the false promise that they will show them how to get themselves saved by doing good works and engaging in outward acts of worship, which are a stench in God’s nostrils.

The last phrase in Matthew 25:9, “**but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves,**” is language that identifies with Revelation 13:17, **And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.** That is, in the churches, the only ones who can bring the gospel, that is, buy or sell, are those who are under Satan’s authority. How awful! And yet, this is the word of God, straight from the mouth of God.

We now come full circle back to Matthew 25:10-12

¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. ¹¹ Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. ¹² But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

In verse 10, the shutting of the door is simultaneous with the coming of the bridegroom, and with they that were ready going in with him to the marriage. As described earlier in this study, these events shall take place when Christ returns and raises up the believers and gives them their resurrected bodies, and not before, as 1 John 3:2 declares, **when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.**

The final judgment (marriage supper of the Lamb)

One assertion made by those who say the door is now shut is that beginning on May 21, 2011, we entered into the day of judgment. Is this possible?

Let’s look at Jude 1:14-15 in the light of what we have already learned.

¹⁴ And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, ¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

When shall the Lord come with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all? 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 teaches that Christ shall come bringing with him them which sleep in Jesus, that is, all the believers who have previously died and are absent from the body, and present with the Lord, and shall bodily raise up all the believers in the sight of their enemies (Revelation 11:12). 1 Corinthians 15:50-55 teaches we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of any eye. It is important to recognize that until we get to the resurrection of the last

day, the believers are not qualified (a) to enter into the marriage union with Christ (which we have already discussed) or (b) to stand in final judgment over the unsaved, why? As long as we are living in our present sin-corrupted bodies, we are unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10) whose duty it is to be a faithful witness of the gospel, an ambassador of the kingdom of God (2 Corinthians 5:20). As we faithfully share the word of God, we are the saviour of life unto life, in them that believe, and of death unto death, in them that perish (2 Corinthians 2:15-16). There is not one who is worthy of salvation. Our heart's desire as children of God is that our unsaved neighbor might have the highest good, namely salvation, even as our heavenly Father has shown mercy to us even though we have rebelled against him.

All of that will change at the last day, when the believers shall be raised up to be with Christ in the air in the sight of their enemies, and shall receive a spiritual body in which there shall no longer be any vestige of sin, at which point, there shall no longer be any identification with the unsaved of the world. As Isaiah 65:17 declares, **the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind**. Only then shall the believers be qualified to partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb in Revelation 19

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. ⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. ⁹ And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. ¹⁷ And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; ¹⁸ That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men*, both free and bond, both small and great.

Revelation 19:7 ties directly with Matthew 25:10, **the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut**. Here in Revelation 19:7 and following God is picking up on that language, and now the focus is going to be on God's righteous judgment on the unsaved who remain on this sin-cursed earth at the resurrection of the last day. The resurrection of the believers is itself an integral part of the judgment of the last day. The Bible teaches that the unsaved shall be in terrible consternation and torment, as they see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and themselves thrust out, even as the rich man who died and was buried in the parable of Luke 16:20-25, lift up his eyes and saw poor Lazarus afar off in the bosom of Abraham, and was in torment.

In Revelation 19, Christ is riding on a white horse, signifying strength and purity, and his armies which followed him (**ten thousands of his saints**, Jude 1:14-15) riding on white horses, to execute judgment on them which were gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. These are the unsaved which remain on this earth when Christ appears on the last day and raises up the believers to be with him in the air, in the sight of their enemies. Then shall the supper of the great God take place, culminating with the casting of the beast and the false prophet and those who worship his image into a lake of fire burning with

brimstone. The following are a small sampling of the verses that speak of this terrible day of judgment, and please note, none of these events took place on May 21, 2011.

Isaiah 13

⁹ Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. ¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. ¹¹ And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

Revelation 6

¹⁴ And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; ¹⁶ And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: ¹⁷ For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Revelation 16

¹⁸ And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great. ¹⁹ And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. ²⁰ And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹ And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

These verses, and there are a great many others sprinkled all through the Bible, teach that when Christ appears at the last day as the Judge of all the earth, at that time the sun, and the moon shall not give their light, and the heavens and the earth shall be in convulsions. Christ's coming shall be as lightning that shines from east to west (Luke 17:24; Revelation 16:18), and the unsaved shall witness the believers ascending up to be with Christ in the air. The bodily resurrection of the true believers on that day shall be a condemnation of the unsaved and an integral part of the judgment process. Matthew 12:41 declares: **The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.** By no means will it be business as usual, as we see it today.

God declares the following in Luke 17

²⁶ And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. ²⁷ They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. ²⁸ Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they

built; ²⁹ But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. ³⁰ Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. ³¹ In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. ³² Remember Lot's wife. ³³ Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. ³⁴ I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. ³⁵ Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. ³⁶ Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. ³⁷ And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

These verses are a stark reminder that the revealing of Christ as the Judge and as the Saviour shall overcome all other activities. That shall take place at the last day.

The feast of tabernacles and the LORD's release in relationship to the latter rain and the end of the world

As we continue our study, we mentioned that four times in John chapter 6, Christ tells us the believers shall be raised up at the last day. There are only four other places in the Bible where the phrase, "last day" is used, and two of them are in direct reference to the feast of tabernacles, also called the feast of ingathering. To develop that, it is well to remind ourselves of what Colossians 2:16-17 teaches, namely:

¹⁶ Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: ¹⁷ Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

God is teaching that the ceremonial feast days that were to be observed by ancient Israel are a shadow of things to come. There were three primary feast days in the year: first, the feast of unleavened bread, with the killing of the lamb, pointing to the sacrifice of Christ our Passover; second, the feast of firstfruits, also called the feast of weeks, that occurred at Pentecost, which identifies with the church age; and third, the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, and identifies with the latter rain, that is, the end-time gathering of God's elect outside the churches in our day. There are two places where "last day" is used in connection with the feast of ingathering, and they both identify with the end of the world.

The first of these citations is John 7:37

³⁷ In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. ³⁸ He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. ³⁹ (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Note the promise of the Spirit to them that believe, which is entirely inconsistent with the notion that salvation shall end prior to the last day. Remember also that the Holy Spirit was poured again a second time in the year 1994 to begin the latter rain.

The second reference to the last day in connection with the feast of tabernacles is Nehemiah 8:18
¹⁷ And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. ¹⁸ Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *was* a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

In these verses, the booths, or tabernacles, are highlighting the protection provided by the law of God, as we read in Isaiah 4:5-6

⁵ And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory *shall be* a defence [cover]. ⁶ And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

These verses are reminiscent of the passage we read in Exodus 14:19-20, when the messenger of the LORD, which went before the camp of Israel (true believers), removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians (churches, congregations) and the camp of Israel (true believers); and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night. This is the protection that the law of God provides light by night to those who are being saved outside the churches during this period of great tribulation.

Note as well the reference in Nehemiah 8:17 to the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity. We find this language in many passages of the Bible, speaking of those who today are outside the churches, who are scattered and taken captive to secular Babylon, in the same way that Daniel was taken captive to Babylon in the days of Jeremiah. God declares in a number of places that he will bring again, or turn back, the captivity of his elect in this day.

We read in Amos 9

¹¹ In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: ¹² That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this. ¹³ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. ¹⁴ And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. ¹⁵ And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.

When we read of the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and the raising again of the ruins, it is a veiled reference to the desolation of the churches in our day, which spiritually have become a total shambles in God's sight. To build the waste cities and raise up his ruins is a reference to the salvation of the great multitude who are being saved in our day outside the churches, which is a fulfillment of the prophecy of Simeon in Luke 2:34, "**this child [Christ] is set for the fall and**

rising again of many in Israel.” The fall refers to the falling away of the churches. The rising again refers to the salvation that is going on outside the churches today. God commanded that the feast of tabernacles, or the feast of ingathering, is to be observed in the end of the year.

In Exodus 23 we read:

¹⁴ Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. ¹⁵ Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) ¹⁶ And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, *which is* in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.

And in Exodus 34:22 we read

²² And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end.

Spiritually speaking, the year that God has in view is the “**acceptable year**” of Isaiah 61:2

¹ The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; ³ To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

The acceptable year is associated in these verses with the proclamation of liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, which has everything to do with the salvation of God in our day. The feast of tabernacles is in the end of the acceptable year, which is identified with the latter rain, the final harvest that is going on outside the churches in our day.

God declares in Deuteronomy 11

⁸ Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it; ⁹ And that ye may prolong *your* days in the land, which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land that floweth with milk and honey. ¹⁰ For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, *is* not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst *it* with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: ¹¹ But the land, whither ye go to possess it, *is* a land of hills and valleys, *and* drinketh water of the rain of heaven: ¹² A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God *are* always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

The land that floweth with milk and honey is the kingdom of God. It is a land that drinketh water of the rain of heaven, which is the gospel (Deuteronomy 32:1-3). It is a land which the LORD thy God careth for, from the beginning of the year even unto the **end of the year**. The end of the year is a direct reference to the feast of tabernacles, or the feast of ingathering.

God continues in verse 13 of Deuteronomy 11

¹³ And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹⁴ That I will give *you* the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

The “**latter rain**” is the period we are living in today and shall continue until Christ appears on the last day. It is a time when the blessings of the gospel are being poured upon those who heretofore have been the outcasts, the escaped of Israel, who are outside the churches, in accordance with the principle, “**there are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last.**”

God shines a further spotlight on the feast of tabernacles in Zechariah 14:16-20

¹⁶ And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. ¹⁷ And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. ¹⁸ And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that *have* no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. ¹⁹ This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zechariah 14 is speaking of events that relate to the end of the world. When God speaks of every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem going up from year to year to keep the feast of tabernacles, God is making reference to the ones who are being saved in our day, who previously were in opposition to the true gospel. This is the mercy of God. God is associating the feast of tabernacles in these verses with the sending forth of rain. Rain in the Bible is a picture of the proclamation of the gospel as we see in Deuteronomy 32

¹ Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. ² My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: ³ Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

We of course do not literally observe the feast of tabernacles, but spiritually, the feast of tabernacles has everything to do with a deep respect for the law of God, and the gathering of God’s elect in this day just prior to the literal return of Christ. God ominously declares of those that keep not the feast of tabernacles, **even upon them there shall be no rain**, that is, no mercy.

There is yet another major emphasis in connection with the feast of tabernacles, which is that God associates this feast with the law of the LORD’s release in Deuteronomy 31:10

⁹ And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰ And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, ¹¹ When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy

God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

The law of the LORD's release is defined in Deuteronomy 15.

¹ At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. ² And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth *ought* unto his neighbour shall release *it*; he shall not exact *it* of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release.

In the historical setting, every seven years the children of Israel were to release their brethren from any and all debts or obligations. They were not to exact a payment from them. Spiritually, this equates to the believers sharing the gospel, free of charge as it were, with our brethren who are spiritually impoverished. God continues in verse 7 of Deuteronomy 15:

⁷ If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: ⁸ But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, *in that* which he wanteth. ⁹ Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee. ¹⁰ Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. ¹¹ For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

When God speaks of a poor man in these verses, Christ himself identifies with the spiritually impoverished. Christ was laden with the sins of all those that he came to save. We read in 2 Corinthians 8:9 **For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.**

God is commanding the believers in Deuteronomy 15:11 to **open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.** This is an imperative of God; this is not an option. When God declares, **the poor shall never cease out of the land**, it is indicating that God's elect who are the spiritually poor, who need to hear the gospel in order to become saved, shall never cease out of the land. This is another way of saying, **Occupy till I come** (Luke 19:13).

When we share the gospel with the spiritually poor, we are ministering to Christ himself, as we read in Matthew 25:

³¹ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: ³² And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: ³³ And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ For I was an hungred, and ye gave

me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: ³⁶ Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. ³⁷ Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? ³⁸ When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? ³⁹ Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? ⁴⁰ And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, **Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.**

The clear teaching of these verses is that as we minister the gospel to the spiritually poor, the spiritually sick, the spiritually thirsty, the spiritually naked, those who are spiritually in prison, and those who are strangers to the kingdom of God, we are ministering the gospel to Christ himself. Christ continues in verse 41 of Matthew 25:

⁴¹ Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: ⁴² For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: ⁴³ I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. ⁴⁴ Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? ⁴⁵ Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. ⁴⁶ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

These verses emphasize our obligation as believers to share this precious gospel with the spiritually impoverished. That is how we pay our debt to God and to our fellow man.

Romans 13:8 says: **Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.**

The highest expression of love is the sharing of the Gospel of salvation.

As we continue our study, let us examine an outstanding passage in Isaiah 60 that is focusing on the salvation outside the churches in our day. Isaiah 60 starts out:

¹ Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. ² For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. ³ And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. ⁴ Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at *thy* side.

The darkness that shall cover the earth identifies with the judgment that came down upon the churches in A.D. 1988, in accordance with 1 Peter 4:17 **For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.** Earlier in this study, we saw that the term ‘midnight’ as we find it used in Exodus 12:29, Matthew 25:6, and Luke 11:5 identifies with the spiritual darkness

that fell on the churches at the beginning of the great tribulation. Note, this was not the end of salvation! The Bible teaches that for a brief period of time (2300 days according to Daniel 8: 14), God hid his face, so that virtually no one was being saved, as we read in the following verses:

Isaiah 54

⁷ For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. ⁸ In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

Ezekiel 39

²³ And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel [churches and congregations] went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword. ²⁴ According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them.

This brief period during which God hid his face and virtually no one was being saved is spoken of as silence in heaven about the space of half an hour in Revelation 8:1

¹ And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

We saw earlier that God typifies the great tribulation as “**one hour.**” Here God talks about silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. This identifies with the 2300 evening-mornings of Daniel 8:14

¹³ Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain *saint* which spake, How long *shall be* the vision *concerning* the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? ¹⁴ And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

That is why we read in Matthew 24:21-22

²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: But for the elect's sake, those days [during which no flesh should be saved] shall be shortened,

and so, we read in Ezekiel 39:25 and following:

²⁵ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again [turn back] the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; ²⁶ After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made *them* afraid. ²⁷ When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; ²⁸ Then shall they know that

I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.

²⁹ Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

In verse 25, the turning back of the captivity of Jacob has to do with God having mercy on the true believers in our day, after having scattered the true believers out into the world (outside the churches). In verse 29, the pouring out of God's spirit upon the house of Israel **again the second time** occurred on the first day of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar, a Jubilee day, in the Jubilee year, A.D. 1994, which was 2,000 years from the time that Christ was born, which was also on a Jubilee day (tenth day of seventh month, the day of atonement) in a Jubilee year (7 B.C.) (see chapter 9 of *Time Has An End*, available at searchinghisword.com), which underscores there are two Jubilees that are in view. The first Jubilee identifies with the birth of Christ, and with the first pouring out of the Holy Spirit that began the church age in A.D. 33; the second Jubilee identifies with the second pouring out of the Holy Spirit in A.D. 1994. The Jubilee is defined in Leviticus 25:10 as the proclamation of liberty throughout the land and every man returning to his possession, which spiritually is referring to God himself. Mankind was created in the image of God and driven from the presence of God when he failed the test in the garden of Eden and disobeyed the command of God. The Jubilee is an integral component of God's salvation plan, even as the other feast days, which are a shadow of things to come, are an integral part of God's salvation plan. Christ is the very essence of the Jubilee. The Jubilee was observed every fiftieth year (Leviticus 25:8) beginning in 1407 B.C. when the children of Israel entered the land of Canaan. Thus, the year 7 B.C. and the year 1994 A.D. were Jubilee years.

Returning to Isaiah 60:5, God gives us an indication of the sheer magnitude of the salvation going on outside the churches in our day

Isaiah 60

⁵ Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

While there are and have been multitudes identified corporately or externally with Christianity throughout the church age, we know from the Bible itself that a great percentage of them are/were tares, or weeds, that is, not saved. But now that we are beyond the end of the church age, we know from the Bible itself there is a great multitude which no man can number who are being saved outside the churches. In Isaiah 60:6-7, God highlights his blessing today on those who heretofore have been largely left outside the covenant:

⁶ The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD. ⁷ All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, and all they from Sheba, refer to the descendants of Keturah (1 Chronicles 1:32), who was the wife of Abraham after Sarah died. The flocks of Kedar, and the rams of Nebaioth, refer to the descendants of Ishmael (1 Chronicles 1:29), who was Abraham's firstborn son by Hagar, Sarah's handmaid. We wonder, why is God making specific reference in this passage to the descendants of Keturah and of Ishmael, and saying they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD, and shall come up with acceptance on mine altar? It goes back to the promise, "**there are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last.**"

Historically, throughout the church age, the focus was on God's covenant with Isaac, who was the progenitor of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh, and on Sarah, who, though well beyond the age of child-bearing, gave birth to Isaac, and is spoken of as Jerusalem above, which is free, and the mother of us all (Galatians 4:26). Sarah herself is a picture of the end-time salvation that is going on outside the churches, as we shall see presently.

In the historical setting, in Genesis 25:5-6 we read that after Sarah died, Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac, but unto the sons of the concubines (which included Keturah), which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived. And Ishmael and his mother Hagar are used in Galatians 4 as an example of those who are in bondage to the law.

Thus, throughout the church age, the focus has been on the descendants of Isaac and of Sarah. And yet, today, God's judgment has come upon the churches and congregations, whereas, God's blessing today is particularly on those who have been largely excluded from the covenant. This is in perfect harmony with the principle, "**the last shall be first, and the first shall be last,**" and with such verses as:

Isaiah 65:1, **I am sought of *them that asked not for me*; I am found of *them that sought me not*: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that was not called by my name.***

Hosea 2:23, **And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to *them which were not my people*, Thou *art* my people; and they shall say, *Thou art* my God.**

Let us continue with verses 9-11 of Isaiah 60. There we read:

⁹ Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. ¹⁰ And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. ¹¹ Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that *men* may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and *that their kings may be brought.*

When God declares in verse 9, **Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first**, it is a reference to the ships of Tarshish that were sent out in the days of Solomon, typifying the gospel as it was sent forth during the church age, bringing back gold and silver

(true believers). These were the **firstfruits** of God's salvation plan, hence, the reason why God says, the ships of Tarshish **first**. But then we read in a number of passages that the nation of Judah engaged in unholy alliances with the kings of Israel, resulting in the ships of Tarshish being broken, as we read in Isaiah 23

¹ The burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them. ¹⁴ Howl ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.

This language underscores that the strength of the churches has been laid waste in our day. Then in Isaiah 60:10, the text says, "**the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls,**" that is, the walls of salvation (Isaiah 26:1; 60:18).

Isaiah 26:1 **In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. ² Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.**

And in Isaiah 60:18 we read

¹⁸ Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

The sons of strangers emphasize that it is those who have been strangers to the covenant who are ministering the gospel outside the churches, and who are building again the waste places and raising up its ruins. They are typified by the strangers in the land of Israel who were used to construct the physical temple. In the historical allegory, David commanded (1 Chronicles 22:2) to gather together the **strangers** that were in the land of Israel for the purpose of constructing the temple of God, and we read (2 Chronicles 2:17) that Solomon numbered them and there were 153,600, which breaks down into $3 \times 100 \times 512 = 3 \times 100 \times 2^{3 \times 3}$, where 3 = purpose, 100 completeness, and 2 the custodians of the word of God. The construction of the physical temple in the days of Solomon was a portrait of the spiritual temple that God is building in our day, using the sons of strangers, signifying the principle, **the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.**

Isaiah 61:4-5 also emphasizes the role the strangers have in ministering the gospel in our day:

⁴ And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. ⁵ And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

The Bible has much to say about the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless as typifying those who shall be saved particularly in our day outside the churches. We see this in the book of Ruth the Moabitess, for example, as we read the reaction of Ruth, who was of the nation of Moab, a cursed nation (Deuteronomy 23:3), who was incredulous at the kind words spoken to her by Boaz, a mighty man of wealth, a picture of Christ, in whose field Ruth happened to be gleaning.

Ruth 2:10

¹⁰ Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I *am* a stranger?

When God declares in Isaiah 60:10, “**for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee,**” this refers, as explained earlier in this study, to that brief period during which God hid his face, which was followed by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit **again the second time**.

Then God declares in Isaiah 60:11

Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.

This verse declares **the gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night**.

When we see this language, we reference back to Genesis 8:22

While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Note that while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, **shall not cease**. *Seedtime and harvest identify directly with sowing the gospel and with salvation*. This verse also declares, while the earth remains, day and night shall not cease. Therefore, Isaiah 60:11 is effectively teaching, thy gates shall be open *continually*, and shall not be shut day nor night, that is, *while the earth remains*.

God reinforces this covenant of salvation continuing day and night in Jeremiah 31:35-36

³⁵ Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: ³⁶ If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

God further emphasizes this covenant with day and night in Jeremiah 33:25-26

Jeremiah 33:25-26

²⁵ Thus saith the LORD; If my covenant *be* not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;

²⁶ Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.

A question that might be raised is, if the gates shall remain open continually for as long as the earth remains, then how do we explain the apparent teaching of Revelation 9:1-12 that there may be a finite period of time in the day of judgment during which the unsaved are being tormented

on this earth without the possibility of salvation? Shall the sun, the moon, and stars still remain in place? God does not give us a full description, except to say that the sun and the moon shall be darkened, the stars shall fall from heaven, the heavens shall depart as a scroll, and every mountain and island shall be moved out of their places. In other words, at that point, the normal physical laws that govern the universe shall be set aside, of that we can be very certain.

On the longsuffering of God

There is a passage in the Bible that we should take note of, and meditate on, in Romans 2

¹ Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. ² But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. ³ And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? ⁵ But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; ⁶ Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

It is the goodness of God that leadeth those who are becoming saved outside the congregations to repentance. God is also warning in these verses that those who despise the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and longsuffering are treasuring up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. This is a warning that those who believe and teach there is no longer salvation since May 21, 2011 should ponder very seriously.

We also read about the longsuffering of God in 2 Peter 3, which is talking about the destruction of this present universe by fire, and the creation of a new heaven and new earth.

¹² Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. ¹⁴ Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. ¹⁵ And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation. [2 Peter 3:12-15]

We can't say enough about the longsuffering of God, which is salvation, but we can express our thanksgiving by diligently and faithfully sending forth the true gospel into all the world. When we say the true gospel, we mean, a gospel that includes both judgment and salvation.

More Biblical evidence of an end-time harvest going on outside the churches

Recently, as we were preparing a Christmas message based on the account in Luke chapter 2 detailing the birth of our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, we lighted upon the prophecy of a devout man by the name of Simeon, which has direct relevance to our present study. Speaking under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit, we read in Luke 2:25

²⁵ And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost *was* upon him. ²⁶ And it *was* revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, ²⁸ Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, ²⁹ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: ³⁰ For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, ³¹ Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; ³² A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. ³³ And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. ³⁴ And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; ³⁵ (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

The prophecy of verse 34, **Behold this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and a sign which shall be spoken against**, actually has a *double fulfillment, even as there are two Jubilees*. It applies in the first instance to the fall of the nation of Israel, and the rising again of the New Testament congregations, and in the second instance, the fall of the churches in our day, typified by the nation of Israel, and rising again of those who are becoming saved during the present latter rain outside the churches.

In Romans 10, the apostle Paul speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit declares ¹ **Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. ² For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. ³ For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.**

God continues in Romans 11

⁷ **What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. ⁸ (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. ¹¹ I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. ¹² Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?**

God is declaring that through the fall of Israel, salvation is come unto the Gentiles, and this was first accomplished through the sending forth of the gospel by the New Testament churches and congregations. Likewise, the falling away of the churches has resulted in salvation going to the Gentiles in even greater numbers, who historically have been outside God's covenant.

We read of the falling away of the churches in 2 Thessalonians 2

¹ **Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, ² That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. ³ Let no**

man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a **falling away first**, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. ⁵ Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

God is making a declaration, **the day of Christ shall not come, except there come a falling away first**, and that falling away is in all the congregations worldwide today, no exceptions. Those who want to insist there are still faithful churches are not reading the Bible carefully enough. For example, in Matthew 24:1 the disciples came to shew Jesus the buildings of the temple, to which Jesus replied (also in Mark 13:2; Luke 19:44; 21:6), **verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down**. Jesus was not making reference to the physical buildings. He used the same Greek word translated “building” in 1 Corinthians 3:9

⁹ For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

In 1 Corinthians 3, during the church age that spiritual building was made up of two kinds of materials: gold, silver, precious stones, and wood, hay, stubble. The gold, silver, precious stones are those who are brought through the fire by the mercy of God, like we read in Daniel 3:27 and Zechariah 13:8-9, whereas the wood, hay, stubble refers to those who shall be consumed by God who is a consuming fire.

In our day, the buildings of that spiritual temple, namely the churches and congregations, have been torn down completely, and today God is raising up the ruins as the gospel is proclaimed outside the churches. When God poured out his Holy Spirit **again the second time** outside the churches in A.D. 1994, it was the first Jubilee year following the fulfillment of the prophecy of Matthew 24:32-33, **When you see the fig tree put forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh: even so when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.**

The Biblical fig tree, national Israel, which Jesus cursed (Matt. 24:19; Mark 11:14), became a bona fide nation in A.D. 1948, thereby signifying that we are now experiencing the end-time events spoken of in Matthew 24. Summer identifies with harvest, and according to Matthew 13:39, **the harvest is the end of the world**. This is the harvest that is presently going on in our day.

Two pourings out of the Holy Spirit, two Jubilees

God poured out the Holy Spirit the first time in A.D. 33 at Pentecost to begin the church age. God poured out the Holy Spirit **again the second time** in A.D. 1994 a Jubilee year.

We read in Isaiah 11

¹¹ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. ¹² And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. ¹³ The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries

of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. ¹⁴ But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. ¹⁵ And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make *men* go over dryshod. ¹⁶ And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

The phrase, “**the LORD shall set his hand again the second time,**” is a reference to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit in A.D. 1994 **again the second time**. When we read, “**he shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah,**” in verse 12 and, “**there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people**” in verse 16, this is the language of salvation. But what is very unique to our day is that these verses refer to salvation coming to nations and peoples that historically are identified with the enemies of the kingdom of God: Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, Edom, Moab, Ammon, thereby again underscoring the principle, “**the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.**”

We find the phrase, **again the second time**, used as well in Joshua 5:2 where we read:

¹ And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which *were* on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which *were* by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel. ² At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.

The children which were born in the 40-year wilderness sojourn in the stead of all the men of war, which came out of Egypt, who perished in the wilderness, they typify those who are being saved today outside the churches during the great tribulation. God declares in Joshua 5:9 **And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.** That is, the reproach of the churches has been rolled away from off of these who are being saved outside the churches.

The falling down of the walls of Jericho in Joshua 6 features two Jubilees as well:

³ And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, *and* go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. ⁴ And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven ram's horns [Hebrew: *shophars*], of the Jubilees [Hebrew: *yobel, plural*]: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the ram's horns [Hebrew: *shophars*]. ⁵ And it shall come to pass, that when sounding the ram's horn [Hebrew: *shophars*] of the Jubilees [Hebrew: *yobel*], *and* when ye hear the sound of the ram's horn [Hebrew: *shophars*], all the people shall shout with a great Jubilee [Hebrew: *teruah*]; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

In Joshua 6:4 the word Jubilees in the original Hebrew is a *plural* word, pointing to the fact there are two Jubilees in view. Remember the first Jubilee is identified with the birth of Christ and the gospel going out during the church age, which ended in A.D. 1988. That terrible end was immediately followed by about a half hour of silence from Heaven (Revelation 8:1). That is, the end of the Church Age was the end of the first Jubilee. The first Jubilee in principle had begun when Christ was born. In reality, it identified with the wonderful task of sending the Gospel into the world that had been assigned to the local congregations throughout the Church Age.

But then there was a second Jubilee. It began as the latter rain. It identified with the sending of the true Gospel throughout the world by individuals outside of the local congregations. For 1,955 years, from A.D. 33 to A.D. 1988, the local churches were represented by Jericho, the city of palm trees, surrounded by walls of salvation. But before this second Jubilee could begin, this Jericho of the local congregations had to have its walls fall down. The Holy Spirit had to leave the divine institution of the local congregations. The city of the palm trees had to come under the judgment of God. The Rahabs - the true believers - within the city had to come out. Only then could the final conquest of the land of Canaan - the final sending forth of the Gospel - begin. Only then could the beautiful promise of Isaiah 11:11-12 come to pass.

¹¹ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. ¹² And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

In Joshua 6:3-4 the priests marched around Jericho thirteen times. The year A.D. 1988 marked the 13,000th anniversary of the history of the world, and it was in that year that God was finished utilizing the churches and transitioned to the great tribulation, and the harvest in the end of the world referenced in Matthew 25:39. After a brief period during which God hid his face, God poured out the Holy Spirit again the second time to begin the latter rain. Nothing in the Bible is incidental or random or haphazard. God's salvation plan was worked out in minute detail from the foundation of the world.

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former (Haggai 2:9)

In Haggai 2 God compares the salvation of our day to that of the church age.

³ Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? *is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?* ⁴ Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I *am* with you, saith the LORD of hosts: ⁵ *According to* the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. ⁸ The silver *is* mine, and the gold *is* mine, saith the LORD of hosts. ⁹ The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

In Haggai 2:3, the house in her first glory refers to the church age in her infancy, but in the same verse, God makes reference to the abysmal condition of the church age in our day. But then, in Haggai 2:4, God is encouraging us to be strong, all ye people of the land, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts. This language is reminiscent of the great commission given in Matthew 28:19-20, except that in this case, God is addressing those of us who are living at the end of the world. In verse 9, “**the glory of this latter house**” refers to the salvation of those today who are outside the churches and congregations, during the latter rain, in comparison to the glory of the church age. **The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD.**

The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall again say in thine ears, give place (Isaiah 49:20)

In Isaiah 49, God gives us a passage that is similar to Joshua chapter 5. Recall in Joshua 5, the men of war that came out of Egypt were consumed during the 40-year sojourn in the wilderness because of unbelief, and the children which were born in the wilderness in their stead were circumcised **again the second time**. We saw that the children born in the wilderness typify those who are being saved outside the churches today during the present great tribulation.

In Isaiah 49:20, God is addressing Zion, which typifies **Jerusalem above**, which is **free**, and is **the mother of us all** (Galatians 4:26). Our hearts are filled with joy as we read the following verses in Isaiah 49:

¹⁸ Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. ¹⁹ For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. ²⁰ The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. ²¹ Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? ²² Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. ²³ And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

The **waste and desolate places** in verse 19 refers to the present condition of the churches worldwide. In verse 20, the children which were lost identify with the tares, or weeds, in the churches who never did become saved and were not children of God. The **children which thou shalt have** are those who are being saved outside the churches in our day, who God has raised up in accordance with the principle, “**there are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last.**” God declares in verse 20, **the children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait [narrow] for me: give place to me**

that I may dwell. That is, the number of those who are being saved outside the churches today is such that there is barely sufficient space for them. This language agrees with Jeremiah 30

¹⁸ Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will bring again [turn back] the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwellingplaces; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner [law] thereof. ¹⁹ And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. ²⁰ Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.

And please note in Isaiah 49:23, **they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.** This underscores the longsuffering of God and ties directly with the declaration, “**there are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last.**”

We should also note the language of Isaiah 49:21, **I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro.** God speaks of those today who are outside the churches as the **desolate** and as those who are the **captives**, who are typified by Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who were taken captive to Babylon in the days of Jeremiah.

God declares in Jeremiah 29:10

¹⁰ For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. ¹² Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. ¹³ And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. ¹⁴ And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

When God speaks of bringing again [turning back] the captivity, God is referring to those who are being saved today outside the churches. When God speaks of visiting his people and causing them to return to this place, he is effectively saying, I will give my people repentance, and they shall be found of me. We read in Jeremiah 31:

⁸ Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. ⁹ They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. ¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. ¹¹ For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. ¹² Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall

flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.

The only way unsaved man will repent in a way that is pleasing to God is if God first grants them repentance and turns them, as we read in the following verses of Jeremiah 31:

¹⁸ I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself *thus*; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed *to the yoke*: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou *art* the LORD my God. ¹⁹ Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon *my* thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.

In Galatians 4:27, God makes reference to the children of the desolate

²⁷ For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

The barren, or the desolate, are typified by Sarah, who was well beyond the age of child-bearing, and had no children. In Galatians 4:26, God typifies Sarah as Jerusalem above, which is free, and is the mother of us all. And even as Sarah in her old age miraculously bore a son, the son of promise, through whom the Lord Jesus Christ would come forth according to the flesh, and through him a great multitude which no man can number, so today at the end of the world, God is gathering many children from outside the churches, who are many more than the children of the married wife, referring to those who were saved during the church age, and today are under bondage to the law. Galatians 4:27 is a quotation from Isaiah 54:1.

¹ Sing, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for [*many*] more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

The desolate in these verses are those who are being saved outside the churches in our day, whereas the children of the married wife are those who were saved during the church age, which today are under bondage to the law.

The Bible has wonderful prophecies concerning the barren who shall bring forth, which are being fulfilled in our day. Another passage that speaks of this is 1 Samuel 2

¹ And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. ² *There is none* holy as the LORD: for *there is none* beside thee: neither *is there* any rock like our God. ³ Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let *not* arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD *is* a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. ⁴ The bows of the mighty men *are* broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. ⁵ *They that were* full have hired out themselves for bread; and *they that were* hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

We see the principle, “**the last shall be first, and the first last**” illustrated in these verses. In verse 5, God is describing the focus of the salvation that is going on today outside the churches, as the barren, typified by Hannah, who hath born seven, where seven is the number of perfection.

God also speaks of the barren being blessed in Luke 23:29

²⁸ But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. ²⁹ For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. ³⁰ Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. ³¹ For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

In these verses, God is contrasting the blessing that has come upon the barren, typifying those who are being saved outside the churches, over against the curse that has come upon her that is with child, who is giving suck, typifying those who remain in the local congregations.

Zion as a woman in travail in our day

The body of believers today are typified as a woman in travail. God speaks of the body of believers as a woman giving birth in Revelation 12:1-2, 5 where we read:

¹ 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: ² And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. ⁵ And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

This woman is the body of believers, who are clothed with the sun (Christ is **the Sun of righteousness who shall arise with healing in his wings**, Malachi 4:2), and the moon under her feet (the moon being a picture of the law of God, which is a reflection of the glory of God), and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (the stars representing the true believers). Then in verse 5, she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. The man child is the Lord Jesus Christ, who according to the flesh came forth out of the tribe of Judah.

In relationship to this, we find a very curious passage in Isaiah 66:7-8

Isaiah 66

⁵ Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. ⁶ A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompence to his enemies. ⁷ Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. ⁸ Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

In verse 7, **Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child**, God characterizes the great tribulation as a time when Zion the body of believers is in travail, and before this she was delivered of a man child, namely the Lord Jesus Christ. Then in verse 8, God asks two rhetorical questions: **Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? shall a nation be born at once?** She solution is to recognize these two statements are pointing to the great tribulation that culminates in the rapture of the believers at the last day. We cited earlier in this study the account in Matthew 27 of the localized earthquake that occurred when Jesus was hanging on the cross and let out a cry and yielded up the spirit.

We read in Matthew 27:50-53

⁵⁰ Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. ⁵¹ And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; ⁵² And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, ⁵³ And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

The opening of the graves, and the bodies of many of the saints going into the holy city, that is, into heaven, is a prefigurement of the resurrection of the last day. When we get to the resurrection of the last day, it shall be attended by a great earthquake (Revelation 6:12; 16:18) that shall throw open the graves, and the bodies of the saints which have died prior to Christ's return shall all be raised incorruptible, and then we which are alive and remain shall be changed. When that occurs, it will be as though a nation has been born at once, since prior to this, no one knows who the believers are. They are hidden, as we read in Matthew 13:44

⁴⁴ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

In the last phrase of Isaiah 66:8 God declares, **for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children**. That can refer to this day during which there are a great multitude which no man can number who are being saved using sources outside the churches, that transitions into the literal appearance of Christ and the resurrection at the last day.

We also read in Isaiah 26:17 of Zion as a woman in travail:

¹⁷ Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD. ¹⁸ We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.

These verses have reference to the mindset of the believers in our day who from an external vantage point appear not to have wrought any deliverance in the earth. But Christ responds:

¹⁹ Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

This is a beautiful response indicating that though we die, yet shall we live, and that even as Christ's dead body was raised, so shall our dead bodies arise and be changed instantly into a brand new, spiritual body. The last phrase, "**and the earth shall cast out the dead,**" has reference to the unsaved whose carcasses are cast out like dung upon the earth during the day of judgment. God continues in Isaiah 26:

²⁰ Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. ²¹ For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

The chambers we enter into is a reference to Christ himself. To shut our doors and hide in Christ as it were for a little moment during this time when God's judgment has begun in the local congregations, does not negate that outside the congregations, salvation continues.

The words *meat regha* translated "little moment" in Isaiah 26:20 are found in Ezra 9:8-9

⁸ And now for a little space grace hath been *shewed* from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. ⁹ For we *were* bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

These verses are speaking directly about the salvation going on outside the churches today. In summary, even as judgment has begun in the local congregations, God is saving his elect outside the local congregations. In these verses, the house of our God and the desolations thereof that are being repaired is language pointing to the salvation of God's elect outside the churches in our day and continuing until we Christ appear at the last day.

That salvation is available only outside the churches today is emphasized in Micah 4:9-10

⁹ Now why dost thou cry out aloud? *is there* no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished? for pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail. ¹⁰ Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go *even* to Babylon; there shalt thou be delivered; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.

When we see references to a woman in travail it is language referring both to judgment and salvation at the end of the world. A woman in travail can do nothing, short of abortion, to stop that baby from being born. Even so, the churches and the unsaved can do nothing to prevent the judgment of God that shall come suddenly upon them and shall be caught unawares when Christ comes as the judge, as for example in 1 Thessalonians 5:3 and Jeremiah 50:43

1 Thessalonians 5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Jeremiah 50:43 The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, *and* pangs as of a woman in travail

However, in Micah 4:9-10, as well as Isaiah 26:17 and Isaiah 66:7-8, God is speaking of the true believers who have been taken captive, as it were, from Jerusalem (the churches, *spiritual* Babylon), even as Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were taken captive in 587 B.C., to *secular* Babylon where Daniel and his three friends faithfully served in a *secular* capacity under Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who is a type of Satan. Only outside the churches, in *secular* Babylon, also called the north country, are the true believers under the protection of God.

In Jeremiah 42 we read:

¹⁰ If [returning or turning back] ye will still abide in this land [secular Babylon, outside the churches], then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. ¹¹ Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: for I *am* with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. ¹² And I will shew mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land [the eternal kingdom of God].

Zion refers to Jerusalem above, which is free, and the mother of us all, bringing forth her children in one day, when a nation shall be born at once, at the resurrection of the last day. That is, the true believer shall be resurrected in the sight of their enemies, and shall receive their spiritual, immortal, incorruptible bodies.

Ezekiel 37 and the “four winds”

We read in Ezekiel 37: **¹ The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which *was* full of bones, ² And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and, lo, *they were* very dry. ³ And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. ⁴ Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵ Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath [spirit] to enter into you, and ye shall live: ⁶ And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath [spirit] in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD. ⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. ⁸ And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but *there was* no breath [spirit] in them. ⁹ Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath [spirit], and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. ¹⁰ So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath [spirit] came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.**

In this passage, the word “**breath**” in the KJV is the word “spirit,” and the phrase “**four winds**” in verse 9 can be shown (Jeremiah 49:36; Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27; Revelation 7:1) to be a

reference to the great tribulation. Verses 9-10 taken together indicate that during the great tribulation (the “**four winds**”) the Spirit from God entered into these dry bones, in which there was no spiritual life, and they stood up upon their feet, an **exceeding great army**.

This language identifies with Revelation 11:11, speaking of the two witnesses, who typify the true believers who prophecy outside the churches in our day

¹¹ And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

The three days and a half identify with the 42 months of Revelation 11:2 and 13:5. It is referring in all likelihood to the 2300 evening-mornings of Daniel 8:14. The entering in of the Spirit of life from God identifies with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit again the second time on the first day of the seventh month, a Jubilee day, in 1994 A.D., a Jubilee year. The two witnesses of Revelation 11 typify the true believers in our day. The entering into them of the Spirit of life from God corresponds to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit **again the second time** at the beginning of the latter rain.

Another passage where find the phrase, “**four winds**” is Jeremiah 49:34-36, there we read:

³⁴ The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against Elam in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, ³⁵ Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might. ³⁶ And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. ³⁷ For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil upon them, *even* my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them: ³⁸ And I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD. ³⁹ But it shall come to pass in the latter days, *that* I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

The “**four winds**” from the four quarters of heaven in verse 36 is a reference to the great tribulation. The number four signifies universality, that is, this is a worldwide phenomenon. The outcasts of Elam are a reference to the remnant which shall be saved, which are scattered toward all those winds. This language follows a familiar pattern of many passages that speak of the salvation taking place in our day outside the churches and congregations, namely that God begins by speaking about judgment coming upon the churches, typified here by Elam (verse 35, **I will break the bow**, or the strength, **of Elam, the chief of their might**, and verse 37, **I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them**), but ends by declaring, as in verse 39, **But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again [turn back] the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD**. Thus there is a remnant that shall be saved in our day outside the local congregations.

Matthew 24:31 also speaks of the four winds, there we read

³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹ And he shall send his messengers [true believers] with a great

sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds [great tribulation], from one end of heaven to the other.

Thus, the phrase, “**four winds**,” is a clue phrase pointing to the great tribulation. Revelation 11:11 is talking about the same thing that Ezekiel 37:9-10 is talking about, namely the pouring out of the Holy Spirit **again the second time** in the Jubilee year A.D. 1994, and the two witnesses standing up on their feet, an exceeding great army, is pointing to the believers sending forth the true gospel in our day. The phrase, “**and great fear fell upon them**,” is the language of salvation. This language also identifies with Revelation 14:7

Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Can those who are in the churches today be saved as we approach the end?

The best way to address this is to look at God’s dealings with Lot and his family, who were living in Sodom, an exceedingly wicked city. God spiritually likens the churches today, typified by Jerusalem where our Lord was crucified, to Sodom and Egypt in Revelation 11:8. Lot was a child of God, no question (see 2 Peter 2:7-8), and in Genesis 19, God, in the form of two men, took Lot by the hand, and the hand of his wife, and the hand of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful unto him, and led him forth out of Sodom prior to raining down fire and brimstone. Lot in that setting typifies those who God in his mercy will lead out from the churches before the end comes.

We also find much encouragement in Jeremiah 31:8-9, **Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. ⁹They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them...**

The “**woman with child and her that travaileth with child**” has reference to those who shall come out from the churches during the great tribulation. Matthew 24:19-22 declares:

¹⁹ And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! ²⁰ But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: ²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

Before Christ comes on the last day, God shall lead his elect out of the local congregations, either because they heard the gospel from sources outside the church and obeyed the command to depart out, or were driven out forcibly by those in the churches who do not want the truth. It is exceedingly dangerous to remain in the churches, given what God has disclosed to us in His word regarding the judgment of God that rests on the churches.

Conclusion: In this brief study, we have looked at a number of passages that relate to this most important question, Is Christ Still Saving? When we integrate all of these passages, the sum total shows overwhelmingly that the door to salvation shall remain open continually as long as the

earth remains in its present form, until the last day, when we shall see Christ coming with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment on the unsaved and to complete the salvation of the believers by raising them incorruptible in the sight of their enemies. Then shall the sun be darkened, and the moon not give her light, and the stars fall from heaven. Only then can the marriage of the bride and the Lamb, and the marriage supper of the Lamb, which is the final judgment, take place.

We have only begun to scratch the surface of what the Bible has to offer in terms of suggesting that today, a far *greater* number of people are being saved outside the churches than have ever been saved during any other period in history. The declaration of the Bible, “**Behold, there are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last,**” applies not only spiritually but chronologically to our day. The salvation of 120,000 Ninevites is a dramatic illustration of the salvation going on today outside the churches, demonstrating that God requires neither time nor an in-depth understanding of the doctrine. What is required is the presence of the Holy Spirit to apply the word and give spiritual ears to hear.

For those who are concerned for their salvation, Joel 2:12-14 declares: **Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye *even* to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:** ¹³ **And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.** ¹⁴ **Who knoweth *if* he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; *even* a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?**

The conclusion that God is no longer saving since May 21, 2011 will not square with the passages that have been examined in this study. Moreover, forcing that conclusion onto the Bible has resulted in the development of other doctrines that are contrary to the very nature of what salvation is all about, such as the so-called “delayed drawing” doctrine, which is man-made and has no Biblical validation. We pray that this study might be an encouragement to the true believers who have wondered whether God is still saving in this day. May this study also encourage those who have held back in terms of sharing their wherewithal in order that the gospel might go forth into the world. The urgency to send forth the true gospel is no less today than in the months leading up to May 21, 2011. Matthew 24:14 declares: **And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.** The believers have an obligation in this day to witness the gospel to the spiritually impoverished, that they, too, might have the wonderful gift of salvation. Fact is, one of the primary evidences of having become saved is that there shall be an intense desire that others who are spiritually impoverished might have that same salvation. That is and remains the number one priority for the true believers. We encourage everyone to go to our website and download the book, *Feed My Sheep*, which pertains more than ever to our situation today. Please also download the books, *I Hope God Will Save Me*, and *The End of the Church Age and After*.

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Please visit our **YouTube** channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@alamedabiblefellowship-abf4117> and visit searchinghisword.com to access studies (free of charge, Matthew 10:8):

[I Hope God Will Save Me](#) (literature)

[The End of the Church Age And After](#) (literature)

Please email any questions to: info@searchinghisword.com