

# IN THE MOMENT OF PRESENT TRUTH “RAPTURE / ANTICHRIST”

Study Seven

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(All bracketed [ ] words inserted into the following scriptures are the author’s paraphrase.)

In this study we are going to begin looking at the prophecies dealing with end time events. I pray that you have an open heart for what you are about to hear. I am going to try to explain as the Lord gives me His wisdom, His understanding, His words, to convey to you things that I know in most denominational groups would be totally rejected. And yet I believe that I can stand before you on a solid foundation of biblical evidence for what I’m getting ready to share with you.

Two particular doctrines come into my mind when I think of end time events, that play such an important part in the way we interpret the book of Revelation. These two doctrines deal with the *rapture of the church* and the *antichrist*. How we look at those teachings is going to make a major difference in how we interpret the prophecies found in Revelation. Already, we have looked at the one God, the Father and Son, the Holy Spirit. We have looked at abiding in Jesus Christ and learning to hear the voice, being in the kingdom of God. We have looked at symbols and learning a way of interpreting the words of scripture. And I think that is where I want to start, because I feel impressed to re-emphasize Bible interpretation so that when we look at the rapture and the antichrist, we’re not just simply only applying these things outwardly, but we’re beginning to get a picture of ourselves.

You see, as you listen to these studies and as we dig deeper and deeper into the word of God, you’re going to discover God would have a people on this earth walking in the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. And the only way we are going to do that is to learn what it means to trust in Him so that He can make the changes in us – the things that need to be changed, rectified, wounds that need to be healed – the unsanctified things about us that need to be sanctified. We have to be able to see ourselves and we have to understand Him and, in His eyes, what is holy and unholy, what is right and just, and what is not right.

We’ve got to learn to think the way He thinks – that is why, in Isaiah 55, the scripture we read where the Lord says: “*My thoughts are not your thoughts, My ways are not your ways.*” If He does not think like us, His words are not like ours. Now, it was suggested to me that God would not write a book and put it in such a code, if you want to use the word *code*, that people could not readily understand it – and I would suggest to you, that’s true. I think the Lord has given us something that we can understand, but I also want to tell you that the deeper things He is going to have to give to you are spoken in a way you will not understand except He tell you.

Now I want to prove that to you from scripture first of all, again, before we get into the rapture and the antichrist, because the principle I'm going to lay out here applies to both of those doctrines. And if we can learn to see these things not simply as something outside of us, but see them as something taking place *within* also, we're going to be much further down the road – and the deep things of God will begin to unfold for you in a new and living way. I'm going to read from 1 Peter, chapter 1, something I've read in past studies, especially covering some of the things we looked at in "Men of Symbol," and I want to re-emphasize a couple of points for you:

*1 Peter 1:10-12*

*10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:*

*11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it [or Christ's spirit] testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.*

*12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost [Spirit] sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*

That is a lot of words to have to look at, but the point you've got to see, number one, it was *the spirit of Christ* speaking through the Old Testament prophets. As these men recorded what we today call the Old Testament scriptures – and though I believe this applies also to the new – this particular verse is talking about the Old Testament, the prophets of old. Christ was testifying through them, before the events happened, of His suffering and the glory that should follow. He also revealed to these Old Testament prophets that they were not ministering to themselves, or to people in their lifetime alone, but what they were saying would be applied and taught to people who would exist after Christ's incarnation and the sufferings, and so on.

Main, *main* point: The book is written for us, as Paul states in 1 Corinthians 10:11, *upon whom the end of the world is come*, but also, it was Christ speaking through the prophets. Now that is key, because if Christ spoke through these prophets – I want you to look with me at Mark chapter 4 and, in Mark 4, verse 34, there is an interesting scripture about the way Christ taught:

*Mark 4:34*

*34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.*

When Jesus Christ taught the multitudes, He spoke in *parables only*. When He wasn't speaking in a parable is when He was explaining to His disciples the meanings of what He had said to the multitudes. In His teaching, He only taught in parables. What's a "parable"? That word means *to lay down alongside of* – in other words, it is a story that teaches you another story. It helps you to see a concept that otherwise might be hard for you to understand. It just simply means to lay down alongside of; *to put beside something* – and here's the point: When Jesus Christ taught the multitudes, He spoke *only in parables*.

Who wrote the Old Testament? We just read the text – *the spirit of Christ* moved on those prophets of old. If Christ, when He was standing on this earth in His humanity, spoke only in parables, why would He have been any different in speaking through the Old Testament prophets? Why would there be any difference? Now, what I'm trying to tell you is this, a rule of thumb for your Bible interpretation: Yes, the Old Testament is true. Yes, the stories in the Old Testament are literally true, so that anybody can come along and pick up the book and read the story of

the flood, read the story of David and Goliath, read the stories the Lord has laid out for us. But it is just as true that, just as those stories teach a literal truth, every one of them has been laid down beside a *spiritual truth* – so that, by using that story as a parable or an allegory, we are able to look at another spiritual truth. Now I want to give you an example of how the apostle Paul did this. This was in our last study, *Men of Symbol*, but turn with me to Galatians, chapter 4 and, in this chapter, I want you to see how Paul explains the covenants:

*Galatians 4:21-24*

*21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye [you] not hear the law?*

*22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.*

*23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.*

*24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; ...*

Now stop – if you go back and read the story of Abraham, you’ll never find the word *parable* or *allegory* or *shadow*. The Lord never tells you that you could use that story allegorically – but here, through the apostle Paul, the Lord is telling us, *yes, you can do that*. I believe, through what the Lord has revealed to me, that Christ is the one who spoke through the prophets, and Christ taught only in parables. Why should I then not be able to go back and look at the Old Testament allegorically, and apply those truths spiritually? In other words, to take a literal story such as Abraham, Hagar, Sarah, their children – and see spiritual truth and concepts that, perhaps, are hard for me to see but, knowing the Lord has recorded these particular stories for me, so that I can see a higher truth.

Now, if you go on to read this in Galatians, Paul begins equating what each *woman* represents, and so on – and the sons, and how they’re the two covenants: one is *free*, one leads into *bondage*. He goes on to explain, and he’s pretty accurate – not pretty accurate, we know he’s accurate – but he’s pretty profound, and fine tuned in how he points out what equals what. So let me give you another example: When we read the story of David and Goliath, looking at the story of David and Goliath, I see David, who has already been anointed to be king, and I see the Philistine, Goliath, and how Goliath challenges all of the Israelites – and how David is the only one who can stand against the giant. David does this by trusting in God and, in order to do so, David goes to the river and collects *five smooth stones* from the *river* – he brings them up, and he faces Goliath without fear – and he takes a *rock*, and puts it in the *forehead* of that *giant*.

That is a true story – it *literally* is true – but what if we looked at that “allegorically”? What if we took the meaning of those symbols used in that story and applied it *inwardly*. For instance: What is a “river”? “Water” represents *thought* – a “river” is a *stream of thought*. A “stone” is a *concept*. “Five” is the number that represents *God’s grace*. “David” represents the Anointed One, *the Christ*. “Goliath,” the giant that defies all the armies of Israel, the giant all of us have to deal with, is *self*. Only David can take the grace of God, collect the five smooth stones from the river – that stream of thought – and put a rock in the forehead of the giant, slay him and cut off his head. You see, if I take that story spiritually, then I see how *Christ will help me defeat self*. In other words, that story becomes a reality for me right now – it isn’t just simply about “David.” It isn’t just simply about how he slew “Goliath,” but it is also about how Christ helps us conquer and defeat self; how only Christ can do that.

Now I’m telling you, every story in the Old Testament has a spiritual meaning – if we will seek the Lord to give us insight as to why He wanted that story recorded – because, honestly, when you look at Adam, say from Genesis to Malachi, you know good and well the stories of humanity ...there are

millions of stories, billions of stories of humanity. But, for some reason, the Lord selected *particular* ones. I personally think it's because they teach a *spiritual* truth. Let me show you something else: Turn with me in your Bibles to Hebrews, chapter 9 – and, in Hebrews chapter 9, let's start reading at verse 8:

*Hebrews 9:8-9*

*8 The Holy Ghost [Spirit] this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:*

*9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;*

This word “figure” is the very same word translated throughout the New Testament as *parable*. Here, the King James simply put *figure*, and Paul is using the word, telling you that the sanctuary itself was teaching a *parable*. If the sanctuary was teaching a parable, why not the entire law? In fact, in Romans 7:14 Paul writes, *we know that the law is spiritual*.

The Lord began to give me a rule of thumb for Bible interpretation. Again, I can look at it and see a literal truth, but I also can take this and see a spiritual truth – or something that will apply to me right now, this moment, and bring the reality of Jesus Christ to me right now. Now with that idea, I want to read 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 about the rapture – what I was told was the “rapture.” Now, as we go through this study, instead of using the word “rapture,” I want to use the word *resurrection*, because “resurrection” is something, is a word, I can see in the book – “rapture” is not. *Rapture*, that word is actually a Latin word. It's found nowhere in the Bible, and the expression of the rapture, as I was taught, is seen beginning in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4. Let's start reading at verse 13:

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

*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. [The King James has put “bring with him.” The word actually is lead away 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, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall [will] 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.*

Now, my point, applying the principle of a literal event, but also teaching a spiritual truth is this: When I look at the resurrection, and I see God's people taken into the heavens and meeting the Lord in the air, and forever being with the Lord in the air – I would like to say to you that if you are not experiencing the resurrection now, inwardly, *between your ears*, and meeting Him in the heavens (as there are three levels of understanding – the “heavens,” the “earth” and the “sea” – and the *heavens* represent God's, the way God understands a thing) – if you are not experiencing the resurrection and have not met the Lord in the heavens, to forever be with Him in the heavens ...that has got to happen first, or you will never literally see that fulfillment in your life. Just as the Lord is going to raise the dead and take them into heaven – meet them in the air and forever be with them – I believe that event happens because it is the *outward expression of an inward truth*. That is something that we have to experience right now. Let me show you something that points to that – look at Colossians, chapter 1.

In Colossians 1, let's read verses 12 and 13:

*Colossians 1:12-13*

*12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath [has] made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*

*13 Who hath [has - past tense] delivered us from the power [authority] of darkness, and hath [has] translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

You see, if you are abiding in Christ – if you have learned the teaching from your heart, to listen to Christ, allowing His mind to come down and fill you – you *have been* translated into the kingdom. You should be experiencing “resurrection power” in your life. It's totally different than simply reading the book and trying to do what you think it's telling you to do – it's *totally* different. Listening to Jesus Christ and living moment by moment in His mind puts you in the kingdom, and you have already been translated into the kingdom. The authority that Satan has in this world – you've been translated away and taken away from the authority of darkness already. So I'm here to tell you, especially for the last generation church, God has revealed this truth to you – and if you are not living in that, and choosing not to experience that and thinking it's untrue – then, for you, you'll never literally see the literal translation because you're refusing to experience the spiritual one.

I know there are people in my past, in our past, that were never given this truth – and the Lord is going to raise them. But never forget, this book was written for *those upon whom the end of the world is come*. It's written for us – He is revealing a higher truth – and this principle of interpretation is the way I'm going to be applying this all through the book of Revelation. When you begin to see these prophecies unfold in Revelation, never forget, it is something that takes place *inwardly*. He has got to help us understand who we are, who we are in Christ, who He is, and what His hope for us is.

Now with that, we're getting into some pretty deep things, and I don't want to take any more time speaking on these things, in this way – putting these things inward right now. I want to take a look at the “rapture” itself. It's important that we understand the timing of what He is talking about here because, when you understand the timing of it, again, you'll be able to apply this inwardly. And let me tell you, if things don't fit *inwardly*, then it isn't accurate the way you're applying it *outwardly* because, I'm telling you, the literal and the stories – the things the Lord has given us – lay down beside a higher concept. He's given you a higher truth, and *He* has got to be the One to interpret it for you – *no prophecy is of any private interpretation*. Why? Well, *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*. Therefore, if the Holy Spirit is what spoke through these men, the Holy Spirit is going to have to tell you why they wrote what they wrote, depending on how deep you want to go.

So, looking at the timing of the resurrection – *the timing of it* – I want to just read some scripture for you, and I want to go back to 1 Thessalonians. We read, a few moments ago, 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4 – and when Paul wrote this letter, he didn't put chapters in it. That was done after the fact, so Paul is still writing about this event when you come to what, in your King James Bible, says “chapter 5.” He's still talking about the same event – the resurrection. I want to read and, again, we're looking at *timing* – I pray to be able to come back to 1 Thessalonians 4 and pick out a few things in this to point out for you. Right now, the timing of the event – let's start in 1 Thessalonians 5:1:

*1 Thessalonians 5:1-4*

*1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye [you] have no need that I write unto you.*

*2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh [comes] as a thief in the night.*

*3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh [comes] upon them, as*

*travail upon a woman with child; and they shall [they'll] not escape.*

Now, there are three phrases in this I want you to key on. First of all, the “day of the Lord” – it comes as a *thief in the night*, and sudden destruction will come upon the wicked – and I want you to notice something. In verse 4, it states:

*4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.*

So here he’s talking about the resurrection as we read in 1 Thessalonians 4. The day of the Lord is coming as a thief in the night and, when it happens, sudden destruction on the wicked and – again in verse 4 – that that day isn’t going to overtake *you* as a thief ...you’re going to be aware of the timing of it. Now, let’s turn over to 2 Peter chapter 3, and I want to read verse 10 – starting at verse 10:

*2 Peter 3:10-14*

*10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; [Already he’s given us two of those phrases. Now what I want you to look at is the sudden destruction that Paul wrote of, the next one would be sudden destruction. Look at the way Peter writes this.] in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall [in it will] be burned up. [Read this carefully.]*

*11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [conduct] and godliness,*

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

*13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens [a new heaven] and a new earth, wherein dwelleth [in which dwells] righteousness.*

*[Now again, verse 14...]*

*14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye [you] look for such things, be diligent that ye [you] may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.*

This *sudden destruction* as he describes it and, again, the elements melt with fervent heat – the earth and the works in it are burned up; the heavens are dissolved ...and he says, *we are looking for these things*. He doesn’t simply say that we’re “looking to be resurrected.” What he does say is, we are looking for the destruction of the earth – the heavens and the earth – the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. *When they say peace and safety, sudden destruction comes upon all of them as travail upon a woman with child*. Peter keys on that destruction, that all things are destroyed – and we are to be looking for that to happen. Now take this to Revelation 16 and, for those of you who don’t readily know what Revelation 16 is about, it’s about the seven last plagues, or the *seven vials* – and I want to read with you, just simply glancing over these, and I hope you’ve got your Bible in front of you. In Revelation 16, verse 2, you have the first “plague” being poured out, and the part I want to point out to you is that there is *a grievous sore that falls upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and who worshiped his image*.

So here we have – as far as timing is concerned – these plagues don’t even begin to happen until at least the beast, and the image of it, is known. We know that, according to the eschatology of most denominational groups, we’re talking about the end of all things. If you’ll look at the second plague in verse 3, *the sea becomes as blood*. If you’ll look at verse 4, the third plague, *the rivers and the foundations of water become as blood*. Looking at the fourth plague, the fourth angel pours his vial out on the sun and *men are scorched with fire and blaspheme God*. The fifth plague – *the beast’s kingdom is full of darkness*.

Now, why am I reading these? Because I want you to grasp what happens after the sixth plague – because it's evident we're talking about the end of all things. In the sixth plague, it's poured out on the river Euphrates and it says, in verse 13, *three unclean spirits like frogs come out and they go out to deceive and they gather the people together for the great day of God*. Now, I want you to notice verse 15 – and I hope you're looking at your Bible:

*Revelation 16:15*

*15 Behold, I come as a thief. ....*

Stop. Even unto the point of the sixth plague, Christ has still not come as a thief. Paul states his picture of the resurrection, then he says of the time and the seasons: *Brethren you have no need that I write unto you for the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. When they say peace and safety, they'll receive sudden destruction*. Peter describes the destruction and again, the heavens are melting; the earth is on fire. Everything is being destroyed. He says, *we look for a new heaven and new earth*, and he says, *because we're looking for these things to take place, what manner of conduct should you have?* And here you're at the end of all things, and Christ has still not come as a thief. Does this begin to tell you something about the timing of this resurrection? Turn with me – let me just read a scripture – a statement from Christ Himself. In the gospel of John, chapter 6, I want to read verse 39:

*John 6:39*

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

Verse 44:

*John 6:44*

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

*John 11:24*

*24 Martha saith [said] unto him, I know that he [Lazarus] shall [will] rise again in the resurrection [when?] at the last day.*

Now, how much more clear can it be spoken to you? The resurrection is going to take place at the last day. How many resurrections do you think there are? I want to show you – since we're in the gospel of John – I want to show you John, chapter 5, starting at verse 28:

*John 5:28-29*

*28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which [in which] all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,*

*29 And shall [they'll] come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

He speaks of two resurrections – simply *two resurrections*: The *resurrection of the just* and the *resurrection of damnation*. Everyone in the grave is going to be raised, whether they are evil or

righteous – *everyone* is going to be raised. There are only two, and the resurrection of the righteous takes place on the last day.

Now, before I get into this further, there is another text I want you to see out of Revelation that really confirms this, and really sets it in concrete as far as the timing. But I want you to apply this inwardly because *your last day can be right now*, if you are abiding in Christ. If you have understood and made the decision, and the choice, to meet the Lord in the heavens – to understand the way He does – then you have reached the day where the heavens and earth are going to be destroyed in your understanding. The way you have perceived God’s understanding and the way you’ve taken your own interpretation of the book, He will burn it up – and you can meet the Lord right now in the air, and forever be with Him in that kingdom of His mind, receiving His understanding perfectly.

You see, when you do this – that *is* your last day. That is why, on the last day, the Lord performs the miracle, because it is *the outward expression of the inward truth*. For so many years, I spent my time trying to decipher the book myself, and listening to others give me their explanation of what God meant when He wrote this. You see, *that* is the heavens and the earth that needs to be destroyed. It is that understanding that needs to go, and don’t think – now listen – when He literally creates a new heaven and new earth; when He *literally* does this, in their minds they will have a new understanding of the heavens and the earth! Just as He produces it outwardly, it’s going to take place inwardly but, right now for you – being His child – He makes the offer now; just like one day every knee will bow and confess that Christ is Lord. You can do that right now. Literally it will happen – every knee will bow to Him – but you can bow right now, and come before Him right now, and be judged right now, and receive His thoughts right now, and be in His kingdom *right now*.

You know, I had it spoken to me one time, that when the Lord literally appears the second time, the world is going to say: *Here comes Jesus* – yet His remnant church, His last day church – their reaction will be: *Oh, I thought He was already here!* He is already here. He is the **I AM**, and He is present with you now – and let me tell you – if you receive His understanding by means of abiding in Him and letting Him teach you Himself, and letting Him give you the explanation of what He meant when He moved on these prophets to write what they wrote, you’ll discover your understanding, and what you think He meant, dissolving and burning up – and His spirit will so fill you with life, that you will be walking present tense. Remember, Jesus is the “**I AM**,” not *I WAS* or *I WILL BE WHEN YOU GET HERE* – He is the **I AM**. Right now, He’s with you – present tense – and He will destroy all of those ideas and concepts out of you, and give you pure truth.

Now let me show you, again concerning the timing of the resurrection – I want you to look at Revelation 20, and let’s read the first verse:

*Revelation 20:1-4*

*1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*

*2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and [he] bound him a thousand years,*

*3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. [Now look at the next verse very carefully.]*

*4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: ....*

*They and them* who? Now, I want to compare this to the way the Lord moved John to write Revelation

7 – and I want you to see something that happens here, because I want to apply the same principle of interpretation to Revelation 20. If you'll look at Revelation 7, I want to begin reading at verse 2:

*Revelation 7:2-3*

*2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: ...[How many angels to you see? One ...]*

*2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,  
3 Saying, [And he said] Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.*

Here you have “one messenger,” *singular*, referring to himself in the plural – now think it through. That must mean this messenger, even though in God's eyes it is a single messenger, yet the literal of it is that it's a *multitude*. You could say it's the body of Christ. You could say, in God's eyes, He looks at the body as His messenger but, when we go deliver the message, we say, “we” – we are sealing the servants of God. *We* are ascending from the east – one messenger in the plural. Well, let's take that to Revelation 20, and notice in Revelation 20, you have this angel – let's look at verse 1:

*Revelation 20:1-4*

*1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit [abyss] and a great chain in his hand.*

*2 [He binds the adversary in verse 2.] And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*

*3 [In verse 3, he tells the adversary you'll deceive the nations no more.] And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*

*4 [And in verse 4 ...] And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, ....*

“They” -- referring to the messenger who, in one hand, had the key of the abyss and, in the other hand, a chain – and with this key and chain He is able to bind the adversary and say: *You're going to deceive the nations no more at all*. And then he says: *I saw thrones and they sat upon them*. Look closely at verse 4:

*Revelation 20:4*

*4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

In this verse, you are seeing two groups of people: People who gave their lives because they would not worship the beast, and people who never saw literal death. Look at it again:

*Revelation 20:4*

*4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them ....*

Who? The ones in the first three verses – who had the chain and the key of the abyss, and bound the

adversary and said: *You're not going to deceive the nations anymore.* Do you know what those nations are? Can you take that and apply it to a spiritual concept? Remember the sower of the seed? He sows seed into the earth. The "seed," Jesus says, is *words*. Therefore, the "words" are planted into *the earth of your mind* and God promises to give you the Promised Land. That "land" is what's *between your ears* - and He tells them: *I'm going to bring you into the Promised Land; I'm going to bring you into this land I promised your fathers, and there will be seven nations stronger and mightier than you.* Those nations represent the sin problems – your bent to sin – in your life. "Seven" is a spiritually perfect number, and here you have a messenger – God's messenger with a chain, with the key of the abyss – and he makes the statement: *You will deceive the nations no more at all – I have an understanding.* And he binds the adversary, and he says: *And then I saw thrones and they were sitting on them. Judgment was given unto them and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded.*

You have two groups: You have the people who literally die, giving their lives, and the people who don't literally see death. Are there people that will not literally see death? Of course there are – I want you to see these two groups of people. First of all, 1 Corinthians, chapter 15 – start reading at verse 51:

*1 Corinthians 15:51-52*

*51 Behold, I shew [show] 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.*

Now, I've got to point out a couple of things. Number one: Here is one of the resurrections. Who is being resurrected first? The righteous, before the wicked are resurrected. The righteous are being resurrected, and what is it that happens in the twinkling of an eye? I was always told that, in the twinkling of an eye – poof, I'm gone – I blast out of here and, in the twinkling of an eye, I'm in heaven. Well that isn't what he said at all – look again:

*1 Corinthians 15:52*

*52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: ....*

What? Look at the verse above it: *We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trump.* What changes? My outward body is going to change in the twinkling of an eye. Notice what he says – the trumpet is going to sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we're going to be changed. Now what I want to do is compare this to what we've already read in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4; you'll see the two groups of people, those who are asleep or those who have *died*, and those who don't. Again:

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-17*

*13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye [you] sorrow not, even as others which have no [those people who don't have any] hope.  
14 For if we [you] believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep [are sleeping] in Jesus will God bring with him [lead away with Christ].  
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 them which [precede or go before the ones who] are asleep.  
16 For the Lord himself shall [The Lord is going to] descend from heaven with a shout, with [it's going to be] the voice of the archangel [that raises the dead], and with [and the] the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall [are going to] rise first [As compared to whom? When he says rise, what do you see? Rise as take off into heaven? No – it means rise out of their graves.]:  
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.*

Now, notice that the dead in Christ rise out of the grave, and then we are caught up together with Him. In other words, everyone goes up at the same time. That is what he means when he says *we shall not precede those that are asleep*. So here are your two groups of people: those who are alive at the coming of the Lord, and those who are dead – rising together to meet the Lord in the air. Those who are alive change in the twinkling of an eye, and are made ready to go meet the Lord in the air. Now, notice in Revelation 20 – and I want to look at verse 5:

*Revelation 20:5*

*5 But the rest of the dead [or the wicked] lived not again until the thousand years were finished. [Then he says] This is the first resurrection.*

Now, what does he mean? Well, you can't just simply read verse 5 without looking at 4 with it. In verse 4, he says:

*Revelation 20:4*

*4 And I saw thrones [them, the people who are alive at the coming of the Lord – the people who had bound the adversary.] ...*

You see, those people who are alive when the Lord comes back – those people serving Him – have reached the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. They have bound the adversary and said: *You'll deceive the nations no more*. They have reached a completed perfection – *and I saw them, but then I saw those who were beheaded, those who literally gave their lives*. Now again, I want you to look at verse 4 with me:

*Revelation 20:4*

*4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, ...*

You see, he sees them and they are alive – they have been resurrected. That's why, when you come to verse 5, he says:

*5 But the rest of the dead lived not again [didn't live] until the [after this] thousand years were finished. [Then he says] This is the first resurrection.*

What is? What he just described in verse 4 – and, actually, verse 5 could be put in parenthesis, or at least the part: *the rest of the dead live not until a thousand years were complete*. Then he says:

*Revelation 20:5-6*

*5.... This is the first resurrection.*

*6 Blessed and holy is he that hath [has] part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power [has no authority], but they shall [they'll] be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

So you see this thousand year period and, before it, begins the resurrection of the righteous – and after it is over, the resurrection of the wicked. That is why Satan is loosed out of his prison – because the wicked are raised – and he deceives the nations again. It is the wicked that this happens to, that face the second death. The righteous are raised before that thousand year period – there are only two

resurrections, and the righteous are raised at the last day. Those who are alive have reached an understanding of God, walking in the measure of the fullness of Christ, as Paul states in Ephesians (Ephesians 4:13). You see, one of the greatest signs of the end of all things is what's happening *in the church*. It isn't just simply what's taking place around you, but what you can see happening in the church, because God's people, by abiding in the mind of Christ and allowing Him to live in their hearts in a moment-by-moment relationship, allows the Lord to cut the work short in righteousness – and He will make a short work of it because now you're finally *listening*. Now you're finally speaking only as He leads you to speak. Now you're finally acting only as He leads you to act, and He gives you His understanding – which begins to straighten out the crooked places – and He begins to make you and form you in His image.

Now, speaking of timing, there is still another scripture. This begins to bring in the antichrist, and this also is so clear about the timing of the Lord and what comes before what – but if you'll look at 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2:1:

*2 Thessalonians 2:1*

*1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,*

That has to be the resurrection, when He gathers together us, and all things into Christ. There is a verse I want you to compare with this, about our gathering together, and it's found in Ephesians, chapter 1, verse 10:

*Ephesians 1:10*

*10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times [or the dispensing out of all time, or the last day] .....*

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times [time], he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven [in the heavens], and which are on [the] earth; even in him:

So here you see the resurrection taking place, and in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2:

*2 Thessalonians 2:1-3*

*1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, [According to Ephesians 1, it's when all of time has been dispensed out. That's why I know we're talking about the resurrection, the gathering together of us.]*

*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 [that they shall not come], except there come a falling away first, and that [the] man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*

So here we see, we're not going to have a resurrection or, as I was taught – the *rapture* – until the man of sin is already revealed, and there's a falling away. This word in the Greek, "falling away," is *apostasy*. "Apostasy" means to *quit believing what you once believed*. There's going to come a great apostasy – the man of sin is going to be revealed – and the Lord is going to come and stop it and, at the last day, is the resurrection. That means that this antichrist he is speaking of – we're going to see – we're going to know who that is. Now, I can't help but think as I read 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, the Lord moved upon Paul to write about a specific individual; a *specific person* – because, as you read this in 2 Thessalonians

2, it's evident in Paul's mind that he saw someone fulfilling this. Let's read what he says – verse 4:

*2 Thessalonians 2:4*

*4 Who opposeth [opposes] and exalteth [exalts] himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth [sits] in the temple of God, shewing [showing] himself that he is God.*

Now, before I go on and read this – and I feel like we do need to continue reading this – but when you see this individual playing that part of exalting himself above God, sitting in the temple claiming to be God, I want to put that inwardly. And I want to ask you to turn to 1 John, chapter 2. This is a scripture that we read in looking at the Godhead:

*1 John 2:22*

*22 Who is a liar but he that denieth [denies] that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth [denies] the Father and the Son.*

I pointed out to you that it is possible to believe in the Father and Son, and yet deny that they are Father and Son – and that way is the trinity. But I want you to look also at 1 John, chapter 4 and I want to start reading at verse 1:

*1 John 4:1-3*

*1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

*2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth [confesses] that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:*

*3 And every spirit that confesseth [confesses] not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye [you] have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

So, look at this verse carefully: Every spirit that confesses not Jesus Christ did come? No. Is going to come? No – *is come in the flesh*. What does that mean? The Holy Spirit, or the mind of Christ, is come – *in whose flesh?* In our flesh! He is abiding in His church, and anyone who doesn't confess that is *antichrist*. What does “anti” mean? *Instead of*. It's just a Greek preposition – it means *instead of*. If Christ is come in the flesh, that means you're listening, you're abiding – you have been translated into the kingdom, and He is living in you. He is speaking through you. He is giving His testimony through His church, and anyone who denies Jesus Christ *is* come in the flesh, is another spirit – it is anti-christ; it is “instead of” Christ. You see, there actually are people who deny the Holy Spirit is Christ – that Jesus Christ *is* come. They deny the Holy Spirit is Christ, but they also deny the abiding truth. I've had people challenge me and say: *Well, how do you know who's voice you're listening to?* That we're to live only according to the Bible, and the Bible alone, nothing else – that we're to read this book and interpret it ourselves. I would suggest to you – read the gospel of John, chapter 10: *My sheep hear my voice and they know me and they follow me*, He says.

In John, chapter 5, remember where he says: *Search the scriptures, for in them you **think** you have life and they're telling you about me, and you're not coming to me that you might have life*. If you're not listening to the Holy Spirit and recognizing that there is a higher revelation of God than what is written in this book, it's called the Holy Spirit – and, in fact, you're never to going to understand this book if the Holy Spirit isn't telling you – if you are simply reading this book and following your intellect, and what *you think* the book means, then you are another spirit other than Christ. It is *antichrist*. If you

can't confess Jesus Christ *is* come in the flesh, you are antichrist. If you are denying the Father and the Son, you are antichrist. That is why that trinity doctrine just stands out to me, because it denies the Father and the Son, and it denies who the Holy Spirit is. It makes the Holy Spirit another god. Key on the word *another*. Not that the Holy Spirit isn't divine, He is but, in our study on the Holy Spirit, I think we covered that thoroughly. It's obvious that it's Christ, and it is the mind of Christ in you – and if you deny Jesus Christ is come, you see there are two things in there. Jesus is the Holy Spirit and He is come – I'm abiding; He is in me. I'm living in Him, and He is living in me. If you're in that place then you are in the temple of God, and that temple of God is between your ears – *you are the temple*. The Holy Spirit abides in you. If you're denying those truths, then you are sitting in the temple of God, exalting yourself above all that is God, because you're taking your understanding over and above what God is giving His church. That's heavy!

Yes, I believe that we can look at history and see an individual exemplifying what antichrist is. Believe it or not, there actually is someone who sits in God's church and proclaims himself to be God. But I don't want to point the finger at this moment and say: *Look at him, he's antichrist*. If we are still standing back, holding on to that trinity doctrine, and claiming that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are co-eternal – a unity of three co-eternal persons, that God is one – well He's three, well, it's a mystery ... If that's where you are, you're no different. You're sitting in God's temple too, exalting yourself above God; and you're taking your understanding over and above what He is revealing to His people. There's no way you're ever going to be that angel with the key to the abyss and the chain in your hand to bind the adversary – you cannot do it, if you're a Trinitarian. It is impossible. We're going to be getting into things, in the future, in these prophecies that will reveal to us the meaning of those words and help us understand the love of God – and a Trinitarian will never understand what is being spoken. It will not make sense and, I'm telling you right now, if that's the camp you're in, you're no different than this fellow, the antichrist, that I believe Paul was talking about.

Let's go back to 2 Thessalonians and continue reading this. 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, starting at verse 5:

*2 Thessalonians 2:5*

*5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?*

*6 And now ye [you] know what withholdeth [is withholding or restraining] that he might be revealed in his time.*

*7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already [is already at] work: only he who now letteth will let [only he who now restrains will], until he be [he is] taken out of the way.*

*8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall [will] consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

Now what does he mean there? I was always told: *Well, that's a rapture verse* – that the one restraining him is the church and, when the church is taken out of the way, or the Holy Spirit in the church, when the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way, then the antichrist will be revealed. I don't know how many times I've been told that and, let me suggest to you, that if you go back reading prophecy, reading Daniel, and you look at the four kingdoms – the "lion," the "bear," the "leopard," the non-descript "beast"; Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome – and you look at those things, and then you see the little horn come up, where the antichrist appears ... I would have to ask you: What was holding him back? What held back any of those beasts? The one *before it* held back the one after it, until it no longer had the power – and then it was conquered.

Now understand what I'm saying: The only thing that was restraining this picture of the inward

antichrist – and that is what I’ve tried to explain; that’s what I think John was explaining in the book of 1 John – that *inward application* of antichrist. But there is someone who exemplified the person who does that. There is actually a person on this planet today who claims to be God on this earth; who claims Christ to the church; who claims to have the power to call Jesus Christ out of heaven and put Him in a cookie, and put that cookie in your mouth to give you Christ. It’s called “transubstantiation”; it is the ultimate in literal understanding of the Bible and, for me, it’s the ultimate in hypocrisy. That person is the pope – he claims to be God on this earth. “Vicarius Felii Dei” – the name on his hat when he’s coronated; the substitute, *the vicar of the Son of God* – he is God to the church. He is – one of his titles is “Lord God the Pope.” I’m simply telling you – and by the way, the Catholic church says their main doctrine, the one they base everything on is – you guessed it – *the trinity*. They base everything on the trinity ...It starts right there.

The following statements are taken from a book entitled *Dignity and Duties of the Priest*. Reading from page 26:

“With regard to the power of priests over the real body of Jesus Christ, it is of faith that when they pronounce the words of consecration, the incarnate Word has obliged Himself to obey and to come into their hands under the sacramental species (or the wafer). God Himself descends on the altar, that He comes wherever they call Him and as often as they call Him, and places Himself in their hands, even though they should be His enemies. And after having come, He remains entirely at their disposal. They move Him as they please, from one place to another. They may, if they wish, shut Him up in the tabernacle, or expose Him on the altar, or carry Him outside the church. They may, if they choose, eat His flesh and give Him for the food of others.”

Page 27:

“The angels abide by the order of God, but the priests take Him in their hands, distribute Him to the faithful and partake of Him as food for themselves.”

Page 32:

“Mary conceived Jesus Christ only once, but by consecrating the Eucharist the priest, as it were, conceives Him as often as he wishes, so that if the person of the redeemer had not as yet been in the world, the priest by pronouncing the words of consecration would produce this great person of a man God. Hence, priests are called the parents of Jesus Christ. Thus the priest may in a certain manner be called the creator of his creator, since by saying the words of consecration, he creates as it were, Jesus in the sacrament, by giving him a sacramental existence and produces Him as a victim to be offered to the eternal Father. Oh venerable sanctity of the hands. Oh happy function of the priest. He that created, gave me the power to create Him, and He that created me without me, is Himself created by me.”

Reading from page 27:

“And God Himself is obliged to abide by the judgment of His priest, and either not to pardon or to pardon according as they refuse or give absolution, provided the penitent is capable of it. The sentence of the priest precedes and God subscribes to it.”

Reading from page 31:

“When Saint Michael comes to a dying Christian who invokes His aide, the holy archangel can chase away the devils but he cannot free His client from their chains till a priest comes to absolve him. If I saw an angel and a priest, I would bend my knee first to the priest and then to the angel.”

Page 34:

“Priests are called vicars of Jesus Christ because they hold His place on earth. When he ascended into heaven, Jesus Christ left His priests after Him to hold on earth His place of mediator between God and men, particularly on the altar. Let the priest approach the altar as another Christ. The priest holds the place of the Savior Himself. To pardon a single sin requires all the omnipotence of God.”

Page 36:

“Indeed, it is not so much to say that in view of the sublimity of their offices, the priests are so many gods.”

Page 33:

“The power of the priest is the power of the divine person, for the transubstantiation of the bread requires as much power as the creation of the world.”

So there is a fellow who, I believe, is fulfilling the outward. But there are millions who are simply looking at the outward and saying: *It has to be him, therefore it can't be me*; and yet inwardly, they too are exalting themselves above all that is called God, because they are taking their own interpretation of the book, and claiming it to be so when the Lord is saying: *Hey, you need to die to self. Let me give you the meanings. Let me tell you what I meant when I wrote that through Peter, through Paul, through Matthew, through Isaiah, Jeremiah.* You see, there is an abomination that leaves you desolate and maybe, in future studies, we can get into that but, right now, to put it in a nutshell, it's *when you refuse to hear God* – and He says: *OK, I've had enough.* You'll no longer hear the voice – that abomination is allowing your self to be put in God's place, and shutting out His speaking to you through your conscience, to the point where your conscience is seared, and your land will then become desolate.

I would like to pray that you consider these things. I pray that these things be a blessing to you. We're going to continue into the Revelation, and we're going to be looking at *the seals*. I believe that's the next study, and we'll be looking at the trumpets, the vials – and as the Lord impresses me – I continually update these studies. So if you're taking the Revelation studies, I would ask you to, ever so often, come back and see if there are any updates. And I also pray for your input. I know the Lord does not just simply give everything to one person, and I'm open. I pray for your input and to help me understand deeper things too. I pray that the Lord is glorified. There are many texts dealing with this antichrist that perhaps, in further studies, we'll get into and cover, such as Daniel 9. There are things in there that need to be seen and need to be unraveled because, to be perfectly honest with you, this rapture doctrine was invented by the Catholic church in the first place. If you'll just do some digging, and look at history and check this out - because the Protestants, those who protested Catholicism, read the scriptures and said: *This is the papacy* - and the papacy had to answer the charges. He held a counsel, and his theologians invented “the rapture” – I believe it was a Jesuit priest named Ribera – and he had to come up with the rapture because, in his words: *If the rapture happens before the antichrist is revealed, then the pope can't be him.* That teaching has been brought into the protestant realm through

a series of events and, today, there are so many people proclaiming that – and it's simply Catholicism. It was given to protect the pope's status with the church, because they could not answer – he was, in their literal understanding, fulfilling these verses. So I'm just simply telling you, the papacy might be an outward expression of it, but what about us? Is there any way we are on that throne disregarding our Savior, our Heavenly Father, and accepting self over Him?

Again, it isn't until you're *the third ruler of the kingdom* – just as Daniel, read the story of Daniel – another allegory. Yes, it's literal – but the night Babylon fell, Daniel was made the third ruler of the kingdom, a picture of *us*. *Dani'el* – God is my judge; the third ruler -- the Father, the Son and me. When you're the third ruler of the kingdom, God can rule. Babylon will fall, and the confusion will dissipate – and you let God give you His understanding of truth; and may He be glorified.