

## Bible Study

### Numbers 15:37-39; Cain-Genesis 4; “I come as a thief in the night”

Fred R. Coulter—December 6, 2008

We are beginning to reach people more and more new people who have never been associated with any Churches of God before. Plus we are reaching people who have been associated with Worldwide Church of God who have pretty well given up on everything, yet, God's Spirit is still working with them and leading them. So, we have a good response from our website, and we are adding to mailing list because of advertisements.

(news items, etc. left out of transcript)

#### **Question #1—Numbers 15:37-38—about blue tassels—It's in God's Word and we're to live by every Word of God.**

Because I had said that we don't need tassels today and it's not a requirement for today, the question is basically true. But there is the *letter of the Law* and there is the *spirit of the Law* as revealed by Christ. Remember: ***no physical thing can accomplish a spiritual task!***

Let's also think about this in relationship to the time they were living in. They were in the wilderness, and they were going into the 'promised land.' They did not have Bibles or the Word of God like we do today.

Here was one of the things that God had them do, after there was found a man going out collecting wood on the Sabbath.

Numbers 15:32: “And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath Day. And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation. And they put him under guard because it had not been clearly said what should be done to him. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘The man shall surely be put to death....’” (vs 32-35).

Remember the Sabbath command that if you break the Sabbath ‘you shall surely die.’ Where were they? *They were in the camp of Israel!* God was leading them every day by the pillar of cloud in the daytime, and a pillar of fire at night. The tabernacle was right there and they were all together in this large group passing through the wilderness. ***When you do something right under the nose of God, there's going to be a greater penalty for it.***

What also did they have to remind them of the Sabbath? *The manna!* Six days the manna came

and on the sixth day twice as much. If they tried to keep it over for the first five days it would breed worms and stink. On the sixth day, they ate for the sixth day and prepared for the seventh day, and it didn't breed worms and stink.

So, they had this every week, and everyone knew because when God first gave the manna (Exo. 16) what happened? *He told them to not go out and look for manna on the Sabbath because it won't be there, you won't find any!* What happened? *Stubborn and stiff-necked Israelites, some of them went out looking for manna!*

What happened? *God corrected them and said, ‘How long refuse you to keep My commandments?’* So, their situation was entirely different in both instances, being in the wilderness and later settling in the ‘promised land.’

Somehow, I think because we have Bibles today, we kind of have in mind that they had the Word of God. *No they didn't!* Moses had the Word of God, just the Law. Aaron was the priest, the Levites were the assistants, the princes of the tribes of Israel were the ones who conveyed the messages and teachings down to the people who were scattered into their areas in which they lives; in both instances: when they were in the wilderness and then when they were in the ‘promised land.’ This is why the penalty was ‘put to death.’ There were many, many warnings.

“...All the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp.” (v 35). What does this also show? *That the enforcement that God gave to the people after a judgment was given!*

You can take this principle and look at the law of the land today, after a sentence is given how many times do they appeal it and get it overturned on a technicality?

Verse 36: “And all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died, even as the LORD commanded Moses.”

Now here come the verse in question; v 37: “And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel and command them that **they make fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribbon of blue**’” (vs 37-38)—which was probably the same color as

the blue that was with the priests garments.

Verse 39: “And it shall be to you for a fringe that you may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and **so that you do not seek after your own heart and your own eyes which you yourself wantonly go after**, that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be Holy to your God” (vs 39-40).

Now let’s understand something else: aside from Moses and Aaron and certain of the princes of Israel, they did not have the Spirit of God to lead them. They were totally carnal, so this is like putting up a stop sign along the road: stop at this point or watch where you’re going.

Verse 41: “I *am* the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. I *am* the LORD your God.”

These people did not have the Bible to read all the time. They did not have the Spirit of God; they were carnal. God expected them to obey in the letter of the Law, so this was a means to remind them. Now we will see what the Holy Spirit is to do with us and for us to help solve the problem of carnal-minded sin.

The one who went out to pick up the sticks, he knew that he shouldn’t do it, but he did not have the conscience—because he did not have the Spirit of God—to not go out and do it. He was also stiff-necked and stubborn anyway.

Hebrews 8:6: “But on the other hand, He has obtained a *supremely* more excellent ministry, as much greater as the superior covenant of which He is also Mediator, which was established upon superior promises. For if the first *covenant* had been faultless, *then* no provision for a second *covenant* would have been made” (vs 6-7).

There are prophecies of the covenant that would be for the New Testament Church, the covenant that would be made with Israel and Judah after they came out of their final captivity and returned to the land. Both of those are in the Old Testament.

Verse 8: “But since He found fault with them...” *The fault was that they did not have the Holy Spirit!*

“...‘Behold, *the* days are coming,’ says *the* Lord, ‘when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers *in the* day that I took hold of their hand to lead them out of *the* land of Egypt because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them,’ says *the* Lord. ‘For this *is* the covenant that I

will establish with the house of Israel after those days,’ says *the* Lord...” (vs 8-10).

It has two fulfillments beginning with the Church the Holy Spirit came (Acts 2), *which was to the Jews and the Israelites*. This applies in that particular sense, though you can go back to Jer. 31 and see that it is going to apply again when they come out of their final captivity.

“...‘I will give My laws into their minds, and I will inscribe them upon their hearts...’” (v 10). *Now it’s going to be internal, not external!* The blue ribbon tassels and borders are external.

“...and I will be their God, and they will be My people” (v 10).

- What is the reminder to keep the commandments of God?
- What would be wrong in doing it?
- Do you need it?

If you have the Holy Spirit of God and being led by the Spirit of God, and you have conscious toward breaking the commandments of God *because of the Spirit of God in you, that is a superior replacement to the tassels on the borders of the garment*.

Verse 11: “And they will no longer teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord’...” This blends into all of those who are in the Church and have the Holy Spirit of God, and are taught of God. With Christ in them, you know God because you keep His commandments.

That will also apply when the Israelites come out of their final captivity and God establishes a covenant with Judah and Israel again.

“...because all will know Me, from *the* least to *the* greatest of them; for I will be merciful toward their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their lawlessness I will not remember ever again” (vs 11-12).

- this is why we have daily repentance
- this is why we have being led by the Spirit of God
- this is why we have conscience when we sin

Verse 13: “In speaking of a new *covenant*, He has made the first *covenant* obsolete.... [the one we are talking about in Num. 15] ...Now that which has become old and obsolete *is* about to disappear.”

Now we will see where He mentions it again, but now it has to include all of the Gentiles, as well.

Hebrews 10:15: “And the Holy Spirit...”  
Now the whole equation has changed. *We are to keep the commandments of God in the spirit* and not just in the letter.

Take for example what Jesus taught concerning adultery in the Sermon on the Mount: *If a man looks upon a woman to lust after her in his heart, he has already committed adultery with her!* Now the commandments are much more binding. But also you have the Holy Spirit to convict you so that you can change and repent if that starts to well up your heart and mind, be it man or woman.

“...also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, “This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,” says *the* Lord, “I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.”” (vs 15-17). *Notice that He did not say this just to Israel alone, but this now includes the Gentiles!*

Verse 19: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way... [keeping the laws and commandments in the spirit] ...which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God... [that now includes Jews and Gentiles and Israelites] ...let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water... [through baptism] ...Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful” (vs 19-23). *So, the whole thing is completely different!*

Let’s see what else that God is going to add to us, these are the spiritual things of Christ being formed in us and developing the mind of Christ. Let’s see that these are far above and beyond just the *letter of the law* or *the spirit of the Law*, in keeping the commandments of God!

Now we don’t need blue tassels to remind us of anything. ***We need the Holy Spirit and our daily contact and relationship with God!***

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is **love...**”

- love toward God
- love toward neighbor
- love toward brethren
- love toward our enemies

Someone always asks: How do you pray for your enemies? *You pray that they would be converted or stay far away from you!* If they rebel

against God then they’re in God’s hands for His judgment against them, whether it is unto punishment or unto to death. So, you don’t hold hatred toward them, because all that does is put a blockage between you and God.

Remember what Jesus said when He was hanging on the cross and they were casting lots over His garments and jeering Him and saying to Him, ‘If You’re from God then come down off the cross and we’ll believe you.’ *Father, forgive them for they know not what they do!* That’s why we’re not to harbor hate for them. Let God take the vengeance, He’ll do it in due time and catch them in their own traps. He’ll confound them in their own schemes.

“...**the fruit of the Spirit is love...**” and that’s why with *The Faithful Version Bible*, we start out with the commandments of God, the love of God and so forth, to lead people step-by-step right in the beginning to understand about the Word of God and the foundation for it.

“...**joy...**” (v 22). You can have joy; you can have joy through peace, because though the most trying and difficult times, which we are going to face down the road.

Verse 23: “Meekness, **self-control...**—long suffering, because we’re going to have trials living in this world. We live in the world but we are not of the world. That’s why Jesus said, ‘In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good courage, I have overcome the world.’

“...**against such things there is no law.** But those who *are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit” (vs 23-25)—*within us!*

This is why we don’t need to follow that carnal ritual commandment of having the blue border on the hem of our garments. ***We are to have the laws of God written in our heart and in our mind!***

2-Peter is the subject of more than one sermon, so I’ll let you study it. I’ll just read through it show what God is doing for us. If someone wants to wear blue ribbon on their garments, should they be condemned? *No!* But the question is: Do you really need it spiritually? *We’ll leave it at that!*

2-Peter 1:3: “According as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness...”—which then is the inner part of our mind with God’s Spirit.

Another thing that’s true, too. We have the Bible, the whole Word of God! We’re so used to having it that somehow we don’t understand that

people did not have the Bible down through most of history. We have it now.

In relationship to that, Jesus said, *‘To whom much is given, much is expected.’* If we have the whole Bible, God expects much from us.

That doesn’t mean that we say that we’re better than other people. *No way whatsoever!* If we cannot produce the character that we need to and maintain a close personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ with all the Word of God...

Down through the centuries, very few people had all the Word of God. As a matter of fact, a lot of the Waldensians only had the Gospel of John. Yet, out of that they understood about the Sabbath and Holy Days, love of God and everything like that.

Here we’ve got the whole Bible and we have a Laodicean attitude! Think about in the end-time God is making sure that there are so many Bibles out there in so many languages that no one is going to have an excuse when it comes time and they say, Lord, why didn’t You tell me?’ God will say, ‘Did you have a Bible in your house?’ *Yes, indeed!* ‘Did you ever read it?’ *No!* ‘I’ve done My part; I sent it to you.’ Even though one of your relatives may have given it to you, your part was to read it, believe it and live by it.

“...given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness... [to develop the character of God; commandment-keeping is only the beginning] ...through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises...” (vs 3-4). *You might want to focus in on that!*

- What is it that you want in life?
- Do you want eternal life?
- Do you want to be a son/daughter of God?
- Do you want to be in the first resurrection?
- Isn’t that the most important thing in life?
- *Yes, indeed!*

“...that through these you may become partakers of the Divine nature... [ultimately the full Divine nature at the resurrection] ...having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust. And for this very reason also, having applied all diligence besides... [it shows how we are to respond to God]: ...add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge” (vs 4-5).

This shows the steps of growing in grace and knowledge, developing the character of God, and continually being at it throughout our whole lives.

Verse 6: “And to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness... [this also shows a lifetime of doing it] ...and to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love of *God*” (vs 6-7).

These are connected together, not in a linear sense, but in a circular sense, because one leads to the other, which leads to the other, and you come right back to the beginning again and you grow in:

- grace and knowledge
- depth of understanding
- the love of God
- willingness to serve God

All of these things are there. This is what’s so important living in the days that we are living in.

I remember years ago thinking it was great that we were living in the end-time. But we never understood what it was going to be like or how long it was going to be, or the difficulties that would ensue with it.

These things are given here so that when difficult times come we can have the strength and character of God, and not say that God never told us, or that you didn’t expect this. We’re all going to be confronted with those things.

Verse 8: “For *if* these things exist and abound in you, they *will* cause *you to be* neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Then Peter gives a warning, because he knows human nature. This warning is more powerful than blue ribbons.

Verse 9: “But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure; because ***if you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time.*** For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ” (vs 9-11). *That’s why we do not need tassels today!*

## Question #2—Genesis 4—Cain

Remember that the book of Jude says, ‘Woe to those who have gone *in the way of Cain!*’ and walked after the error of Baalim. So, the New Testament equates of what Cain did as *the way of Cain* still part of the attitude of people today.

We read Gen. 4 and it doesn’t tell us very much, so how are we to decipher what actually went on and what would be the mindset with this. Let’s

read it and see what it says, and you do the other study to find the Scriptures that relate to this to give us a more full picture.

Genesis 4:1: “Then Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, ‘I have gotten a man from the LORD’”—*which she thought was fulfilling the prophecy given that there would be a Savior come!*

Verse 2: “And she bore again, his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.” *Nothing wrong with either one!* You can be a keeper of sheep, cattle, or you can be a tiller of the ground, a vineyard owner, orchard owner, and so forth.

Verse 3: “It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground. And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering.” What is a firstling? Where do we find those commands? *Exodus and Leviticus!* They’re the firstborn.

This is a part of the tithing system, all the firstborn. Then you have to have the rest of it. You can’t have part of it because when people say, ‘Oh, the Law wasn’t in effect until God gave it to Moses at Mt. Sinai.’ *Paul said that if that’s the case then there couldn’t be any sin, because where there is no Law there is no sin!* What do we find here in Gen. 4? *Sin! Sin is defined by ‘transgression of the Law!’*

This is how we bring the Scriptures together. If you want to expand this a little more, note Gen. 26:5, that the blessing went to Isaac because Abraham obeyed the voice of God, kept His commandments, charges, statutes and judgments. It doesn’t tell us what they are at that point, but can they be any different than what God gave to Israel, since God is ‘the same yesterday, today and forever’? Would He give one set of laws here, one set of laws to Abraham and another set of laws to Israel? And then give us another set of laws.

He gave us the same laws, but with a spiritual application. It’s the same laws because God is eternal and His laws are eternal. It talks about His righteousness has been from the beginning. Psa. 119 says ‘Your Word is true from the beginning. All Your commandments are righteousness forever.’

That’s how we bring to bear into Scriptures like this, to fill in the rest of the story. Let’s look at what happened here.

Verse 3: “It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground.” Why didn’t God accept Cain’s offering? *Because that becomes part of the way of Cain!*

Verse 5: “But He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering. And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell. And the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well... [do right] ...shall you not be accepted? But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door....’” (vs 5-7).

So, Cain did something that wasn’t right and brought an offering that God did not command, and he brought it in a way that God never commanded to bring. We read in *Josephus* where you can get a little more understanding of what the Jews had at this particular time, and Josephus said that Cain ended up ‘forcing the ground,’ which means he probably did not keep the land sabbath every seven years. Though he could go right to the altar at the east end of the Garden of Eden and bring an offering to God.

“...But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door....” (v 7)—the entrance to the Garden of Eden where God left, and He met them at the East Gate, which also has ramifications tying in with the temple and the temple layout.

“...Its desire *is* for you... [in other words, sin with lust wants to overtake you] ...**but you must rule over it!**” (v 7)—showing that you have the choice and you don’t have to sin! He didn’t have to sin, because God was right there. Cain knew what he should do.

What can we deduce out of this, because we have to do some deductive thinking based upon the rest of the Bible. How many times does God say, ‘Obey My voice’?

Genesis 3:17: “And to Adam He said, ‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it!”—the ground *is* cursed for your sake. In sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life.’”

What happened? *He did not obey the voice of God! He obey the voice of his wife and that was sin!*

(go to the next track)

Let’s analyze this a little bit more. When you read and study the Bible, you’ve got to have a general knowledge of the Bible so you can begin to analyze what it is saying.

Genesis 4:7: “...but you must rule over it!”—that is sin that “...lies at the door....” In other words, he could have controlled what he had done by obeying the voice of God. If this had been the firstfruits, then that would be a different offering.

Tithing of the fruit of the ground—whatever it is—is not an offering. that’s separate. But can

people not sin by choosing not to sin even without the Spirit of God? *Yes!*

What we’re going to read about here is *murder*. The vast majority of all mankind are not murderers, because they choose not to be, whether they know the Word of God or not. Perhaps a lower percentage of them are not thieves, because they know that stealing is wrong. Perhaps 50% of the population knows that adultery is wrong. A higher percentage years ago.

Now let’s see what happens when you turn your back on God, you don’t follow His advice and you get in a bad attitude and you look upon the one whom God is blessing and you think that you have done what you want to do, and God should accept it.

*That’s what Cain did!* Obviously, he didn’t follow God’s instructions, otherwise it would have not been sin. *Sin the transgression of the Law!* So, this is how you have analyze these parts of the Bible.

Verse 8: “And Cain talked with his brother Abel. And it came to pass that when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him”—which also tells us that one sin leads to more sins.

Jealousy, bitterness and anger leads to hateful behavior, and when hateful behavior is carried out to the end without any control leads to murder! You can take that same thing and apply it to any modern-day case of murder or whatever it may be. That’s not talking about manslaughter, this is direct hateful pre-meditated murder!

Verse 9: “And the LORD said unto Cain, ‘Where *is* your brother Abel?’ And he said, ‘I do not know. *Am I my brother’s keeper?*’” *The first lesson: yes, you are your brother’s keeper!*

Verse 10: “And He said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries to Me from the ground.’”

Today, with modern technology, we know that that is true. They can find out what’s in your genes by just taking a swab from your saliva, ***because every part of your body has intrinsically, indelibly built into it who and what you are,*** which is separate from any other human being!

Can blood cry out to God? *Yes!* An atheist would read that and say, ‘What do you mean *the voice of blood crying out to God?*’ ***It’s God’s view of things, not an atheist’s view of things!***

Verse 11: “And now you *are* cursed from the earth, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you, and you shall be a wanderer and a fugitive upon the

earth” (vs 11-12).

How many times have you heard me say to watch the specials National Geographic and History Channel, and take the Ten Commandments and evaluate the behavior of the people whom you see, and the societies that they live in, and the science of societies that they have created, and you will see the blessings or the cursings that come upon them according to how they keep the commandments of God or don’t keep the commandments of God.

Can we conclude from this—if we look at the societies, which basically are those societies that are the most depraved, living in the worst places in the world; many of them are generally living where they are naked—that they live in a place in which they have to grub for every little thing that they get to eat, whether out of the ground or animals? Who are wanderers and fugitives on the earth? In other words, they are nomadic and go from place to place.

- Are these people descendants of Cain? *We don’t know!* We can’t say with any dogmatism that they may be.
- Are they disregarding the laws and commandments of God in the same way that Cain did? *Yes!*

***Therefore, they have received the curse of Cain,*** because Jude talks about the *way of Cain* alive and active in his day.

This is how you can take certain sections of Scripture and read it, and in order to understand all the rest of the Bible. Bring all the other factors together, then it will give you a little more understanding of what’s gone on in place like this.

**Question #3—How can Jesus return as a thief in the night and every eye will see Him? Do not those two Scriptures contradict each other?**

Central to that question is:

- When Jesus returns—from the first indication that He’s coming—how far away is He from the earth?
- How long does it take Him to get to the clouds?
- How does that square with the Scripture that in that day He shall put His feet on the Mount of Olives?

1-Thess. is a very interesting section of New Testament Scripture, because it seems, when you first read it, to be almost a contradiction. Let’s first read concerning the resurrection:

- What happens to the dead?

- When will they be raised?

1-Thessalonians 4:13: “But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep... [died] ...that you be not grieved, even as others, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, **those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him**” (vs 13-14).

How is He going to bring them *with Him* if they're dead and buried on the earth? *This is going to tell you how it's going to happen!*

- If Jesus is going to be coming from the third heaven—and I think we would all agree that's where the Throne of God is—how far way is the third heaven? *We don't know!*
- Even if we knew, we couldn't see it because it's composed of spirit!
- How is it that the dead in Christ are buried in the ground and Christ returns coming from the third heaven and He brings them with Him? *Some people think that they're in heaven!*
- If they're in heaven, why do you need a resurrection?

If you've ever read the Catholic explanation of this, you have to have a completely distorted and twisted mind to understand it. *It's insane!*

Verse 15: “For this we say to you by *the Word of the Lord*... [by His authority] ...that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep, because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God*; and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (vs 15-16).

- Where are they going?
- How will they get there?

Verse 17: “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the clouds for the meeting with the Lord in the air*; and so shall we always be with *the Lord*.” *The meeting in the air!*

- What is that all about?
- Where is that going to take place?

For those who believe in a resurrection on the Feast of Trumpets instead of the Day of Pentecost, which some still believe in that:

- How are you going to accomplish this all in one day?
- Everything that needs to be done?

Verse 18: “Therefore, encourage one another with these words.”

Now we'll see that there's almost a contradiction; 1-Thessalonians 5:1: “Now then, concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, there is no need that I write to you; for you yourselves understand perfectly that the Day of *the Lord* will come exactly as a thief *comes by night*” (vs 1-2).

How can Christ come as thief by night when He's coming “...with *a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God*...” *That doesn't seem to be too sneaky to me, so is this a contradiction?*

Verse 3: “For when they say, ‘Peace and security,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail *comes* upon a woman who is with child; and they shall by no means escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness that the day of *the Lord* should overtake you as a thief” (vs 3-4).

Is the day of the resurrection the Day of the Lord? *No! **The Day of the Lord***: in looking at different Scriptures you will see *it can mean*:

- the day that Jesus puts His feet on the earth
- the day when He is revealed
- the last three and a half years, beginning with the whole Tribulation

So, you have interpret the Day of the Lord in the context that it is given! Obviously, there is no contradiction here when we put the rest of the Scriptures together.

- 2-Peter 3:20—the Day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night
- Rev. 3:3—if they didn't repent and complete the works that they should have—to the Church of Sardis—that Christ would come upon them as a thief

- Everywhere it says that Christ comes upon you, does that mean at the time of the resurrection? *No!*
- Can God come upon you in judgment at any time in your lifetime before His second return to judge you or punish you? *Yes!*

What you have to do is understand the context of things and how they occur.

Revelation 1:7: “Behold, He is coming with the clouds...” Isn't that what Jesus said to the high priest when the priest said, ‘Tell us, are You the Christ?’ Jesus said, ‘You have said it, and you will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven.’ They said that He blasphemed!

Verse 7: “Behold, He is coming with the clouds...”—and no one is going to know it, because

it's going to be a secret rapture, and only those who hear it, if you belong to certain evangelical churches will be raptured away! **NO! There is no rapture!** {Note sermon series: *The Rapture Hoax*}

“...and every eye shall see Him, and those who pierced Him...” (v 7). How can that happened? *They have long died, the soldier that ran the spear in Jesus' side and the soldiers that nailed His feet. They're long dead!* How are they going to see Him? *You can understand this in two ways:*

- our sins crucified Christ, which mean that you also had part in piercing Him
- when you understand about the second resurrection, guess who is going to be resurrected and see Jesus directly but the ones who did it

Don't you think there's going to be mass repentance when that happens? *Yes!* The Jews that rejected Jesus and the priests, Pharisees, scribes and all of those who were taunting Him, as well as the soldiers who were there. Even the Centurion, when he saw all of these things going on, said, ‘Surely this is the Son of God!’

When they're resurrected in the second resurrection, and they're going to be able to see Christ and all the saints...

“...and **all**...” (v 7). When you come to the book of Revelation, the word *all, the whole earth, the world, all people, nations, tribes, languages and so forth*, what we're talking about is that the Bible has its fullest meaning in the end-time, because we have the whole Bible.

As we get closer to the end, which may be further away than we have figures, we understand more of these things as we go along, *IF* we are led by the Spirit of God and we rightly divide the Word of God. You have to have those two things because ***all ideas are not good ideas. Some ideas are really good ideas, but other ideas are very bad ideas and should be discarded!***

Likewise, in trying to interpret the Scriptures in these things, not everything that people think of is ‘new understanding.’ You'd better ***prove*** some of the new understanding first and make sure that it's right, because it may not be a good idea.

“...and **all** the tribes of the earth **shall wait because of Him**. Even so, Amen” (v 7).

As a matter of fact, when you read the rest of the book of Revelation, you see that the world is going to fight Christ.

Mark 13:23—talking about the events at the end-time: “But you, watch out *for them!*.... [false

Christs] ...Behold, I have foretold all *these* things to you. Now, in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give its light; and the stars of heaven shall fall... [we will see when this takes place] ...and the powers that *are* in heaven shall be shaken; and **then they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds** with great power and glory. And then He shall send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, *and from the extremity of earth to the extremity of heaven*” (vs 23-27). *So, there will be bodies out in heaven, too.*

There are already astronauts already lost out there, some blown up in space. There was a astronaut out there trying to do some repair and forgot to tether the toolkit and now we've got a toolkit orbiting the earth as well as everything else.

Everyone wants to know, ‘Lord when will this happen?’ *You can spend thousands and thousands of dollars and have your ashes spread out in the universe*, because Japan and the United States and other countries are offering ashes taken into the heavens to be scattered via rockets, the shuttle or whatever the Japanese and Chinese will have.

Verse 28: “But learn the parable of the fig tree...” Is it young? Old? Has it born fruit before? Is it healthy? Diseased?

“...When its branches become tender... [Is spring early? Late? Has there been enough water?] ...and it puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near” (v 28).

What if you had an early spring, or a late spring. What is you had a cold spring? How long is that? ***All these variable factors are there!***

Verse 29: “In the same way also, when you see these things coming to pass, know that it is near, *even at the doors.*” ***When you see all the these things (Matt. 24)!*** Not part of them, some of them, not almost all of them, but ***all!***

Verse 30: “Truly I say to you, this generation shall in no way pass away until all these things have taken place.”

How long is a generation? *Most people figure that it's 40 years!* But if you add up the chronology there, which I did. I took those three sets of 14 generations and one of them was 29 years, one was almost 60 years and the other one was 40+ years. So, how long is a generation? *We don't know!*

“...this generation...” The end-time generation, the very last generation. A lot of people have said that *we're the end-time generation*. It's been ever since Christ came.



- they thought it was in 70<sub>AD</sub>; didn't happen
- they thought would be in 95<sub>AD</sub>; didn't happen!
- they thought it was in 1000<sub>AD</sub> when all the plagues, earthquakes, etc. were taking place and a quarter of the population died; didn't happen

*in our time:*

- 1844, William Miller and the whole group got out there and stood on rocks and stumps of trees waiting of for the Lord

He didn't appear, so they said He was coming the next year. They went out there again and stood there and it didn't happen. So, they had a split in the Church and that's when the Seventh Day Adventist Church was invented out of the Church of God Seventh Day.

- 1918 with the Jehovah Witnesses, that Christ is here in a secret building in New York City

Jesus said *not to believe* it when they say He's in a secret chamber. He's not coming from anywhere on earth, He's coming from heaven!

Notice how sure these words are, v 31: “The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away. But concerning that day and the hour, **no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only**” (vs 31-32).

Which day was that? *We'll see in a minute.* Not the return of Christ, but *the beginning* of the return of Christ is determined by an event which the Father only knows.

Verse 33: “Take heed, be watching and praying. For you do not know when the time is coming.” *” Yet, everyone purports to know!*”

Someone sent me a paper, The Trilogy, the three things that are going to happen, which shows when the 1335 days begins. It was nothing but confused nonsense!

Verse 34: “*It is like a man journeying to a far country, leaving his house and giving authority to his servants, and to each one his work, and commanding the doorkeeper to watch.*” Who are the doorkeepers? *All of those who are preaching the Gospel!*

Verse 35: “Be watching, therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming... [He's coming as a thief, yet, every eye will see Him] ...at evening, or at midnight, or at *the cock's crowing, or in the morning...* [the only thing missing is *noon*].”

When you look upon the earth, what do you have? *24 time zones!* In the day that it occurs, part of the earth is going to be in the evening, part at midnight or sometime between evening and midnight. Part of it in the early morning, part in morning and part in the daytime.

Since the whole world is going to see it, that means that all the world, day and night, whatever time it is, will be able to see it. I thought this was a very interesting verse when you really think about it.

Here is a key event that starts the Great Tribulation. This is the one that we need to look to as the signal event when it's going to happen, which begins the three and a half year Day of the Lord and is not the literal day when He puts His feet on the Mt. of Olives.

Matthew 24:14: “And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come.”

That cannot mean in successive time coming down through the history since Christ first spoke these words. This has to be at the end-time. It would be meaningless if it happened in all of these generations, which it did in varying degrees, but you come to the end-time and it's really not as to the full amount that it should be, and then someone will say, ‘Lord, I never heard.’ So, this has to be for the end-time! This will have to be done two ways. First, however:

- How much time do we have left between now and the time the Tribulation begins?
- The actual Tribulation?
- How many false alarms did we have along the way that didn't happen?
- Why? *Because we wanted to hurry up and bring the Day of Lord so we could get into the Kingdom of God while we were still young and not have to suffer getting old!*

With all the economic events that are taking place, and it's affecting the whole world, these are worldwide events. There is nothing on the scene that shows that the events that are going to trigger it are anywhere near being ready to be fulfilled, which means that there is going to be more time that we have figured.

However, with the G-20 nations coming together for the financial things, they are developing what must happen first before there is a world-government, which is a unified monetary system for the whole world. Then they can develop the governmental entities after that has taken place. This is speculation, we don't know that for sure, but I think we can pretty well count on it as we see things

coming down.

What is the fundamental question that we have to ask before the end-time takes place? We will read here that triggers the end-time event and the Tribulation. Where is the King of the North? *and* Where is the King of the South? You cannot have the end-times take place until there is the King of the North and the King of the South. It's not going to some obscure little thing that's going to happen in a corner. It's going to a big time something that's going to take place. Europe is in disarray. The areas of the Arab countries—which will be part of the King of the South—are in disarray.

(economic news left out of transcript)

With the things that are transpiring in the world, the Gospel is going to be preached and there will be more time to do it. One of the things that Mark says, it's going to be *published* in the whole world. The Gospel is contained in the Word of God, and now there is almost a madness in producing Bibles in the world that it is the most printed book of any books in the whole world ever. The United Bible Society is printing 800,000 Bibles a year in Eastern China, contracted for the next ten years. That adds up to 8-billion Bibles.

Verse 14: “And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations... [everyone on earth] ...and **then** shall the end come.... [**When?**] ...Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy place.’ (The one who reads, let him understand.)....” (vs 14-15).

That last statement was inserted by John, Philip and Andrew when they canonized the New Testament, because they knew that Jerusalem had been destroyed and there was no Holy place and no abomination of desolation that stood in the Holy place before it was destroyed. They didn't understand it so they put this parenthetical statement in there: “...the one who reads, let him understand,” which then is for our day.

That's why there will be a temple built in Jerusalem. Not where the Mosque of Omar is, that's a whole other subject.

Verse 21—this is the verse that connects it: “For **then** shall there be great tribulation...” That's when the Great Tribulation starts. The Great Tribulation cannot start until the abomination of desolation stands in the Holy place.

A lot of people say, ‘Couldn't they have a tent and offer some offerings?’ *No! It's a temple!* Rev. 11 doesn't say *tabernacle*, it says temple and the temple grounds. It will be built, and if you don't

believe, go on line and look up [templeinstitute.org](http://templeinstitute.org) You will see how far along they are in their plan for doing it.

“...such as has not been from *the* beginning of *the* world until this time, nor ever shall be *again*. And if those days were not limited, there would no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be **limited**” (vs 21-22). That's the correct translation. To say, ‘cut short’ people say that it's not going to last as long as it was prophesied, it's going to be cut short. Well then, why prophesy how long it's going to be.

Verse 23: “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here *is* the Christ,’ or, ‘*He is* there,’ do not believe *it*”—**because He's not coming from the earth!** He's coming from the third heaven.

Verse 24: “For there shall arise false Christs...” Lord Matria, haven't we heard that his presence is here for 30 years? Where are you hiding, Lord Matria?

“...and false prophets...” (v 24). Just read *The Journal* if you don't think that there are those among the Church of God.

“...and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have foretold *it* to you. Therefore, if they say to you, ‘*Come and see!* He is in the wilderness’... [I guess that's where Lord Matria is] ...do not go forth. ‘*Come and see!* *He is* in the secret chambers’; do not believe *it*” (vs 24-26).

Here's how Christ is coming! How can this be a thief in the night; v 27: “For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be.” *That's not really very sneaky!*

Verse 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 upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” *So much for a secret rapture!*

Verse 31—this happens before He puts His feet on the earth: “And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to *the* other.” *Then Jesus gives various warnings and so forth.*

I did sermon on which day was unknown to Jesus; we're going to read here, because it's keyed on to an event. Everyone agrees that there are three and a half years to the Tribulation period. You could also say that there are three and a half years of peach and security before hand. The last three and a half

years triggers the Tribulation when *the abomination of desolation* stands in the Holy place and that is defined by 1-Thess. 2.

Rev. 6—we’re not going to go through everything here except to say of the seals.

*The first seal* is the white horse, which is the false religion that is coming. I think that this is the world-religion that they are now developing. That’s the war against terrorism is all about, to try and somehow put a noose around the Muslims to drag them into the 21<sup>st</sup> century of being civilized human beings. There have been very few instances of civilized human beings down through history. Nevertheless, that’s what they’re trying to do.

*The second seal* is when the Great Tribulation begins. *The abomination of desolation* takes place then the Tribulation begins.

Revelation 6:3: “And when He opened **the second seal**... [the beginning of the 3-1/2 years right here] ...I heard the second living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ And another horse went out *that was red*; and *power* was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth, and *to cause* them to kill one another; and *a great sword* was given to him” (vs 3-4)—*the Great Tribulation!*

Verse 5: “And when He opened **the third seal**...” These follow very quickly. Whenever you have war, you’re going to have shortages.

“...I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold, *there was* a black horse; and the one sitting on it had a balance in his hand. And I heard a voice in *the midst* of the four living creatures say, ‘A measure of wheat for a silver coin, and three measures of barley for a silver coin: and *see that* you do not damage the oil and the wine.’” (vs 5-6). Why? *Because the orchards and the vineyards are going to be destroyed!* ‘So, we’ve got to ration this and be very, very careful.’

Verse 7: “And when He opened **the fourth seal**, I heard *the* voice of the fourth living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold, *there was* a pale horse; and the name of the one sitting on it *was* Death, and the grave followed him; and authority was given to them over *one-fourth* of the earth...” (vs 7-8). *Exactly how that is divided out we don’t precisely know!*

“...to kill with *the sword* and with famine and with death, and by the beasts of the earth” (v 8). *Now we’re coming to the time when the thief is going to make himself known!*

Verse 9: “And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had

been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held... [this is the martyrdom of the saints] ...and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, Holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ And white robes were given to each of them; and they were told that they should rest a short time, yet, until *it* be fulfilled *that* both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been” (vs 9-11).

This is when the saints are going to be blamed for everything on the earth. Just imagine all the false religion, all the hatred, all the atheists and everything. They’re going to ferret out every Christian. They will be martyred. The only ones who will not be martyred will be the few in a place of safety. If there weren’t the few in the place of safety, then the Church would die out, because physically there would be no human beings on earth who compose the Church and have the Spirit of God.

After that is accomplished, “...until *it* be fulfilled *that* both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been” (v 11). *This is the last martyrdom!*

Here is the day that cannot be defined by a Holy Day or a day of the week, or year. It is defined by **the fifth seal**. When they have finished the martyrdom of the saints, this is the darkness hour on the earth. This is when it comes upon them!

You could also have it when the Tribulation starts, because there are going to be a lot of people not prepared for that. But that not this day when they begin to see Christ. It is going to be a startling event as we know.

Verse 12: “And when He opened **the sixth seal**, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as *the hair of sackcloth*, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its untimely figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then *the* heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place” (vs 12-14). *This is a tremendous event!*

Regardless where you are on the earth—remember that there are 24 time zones. The whole world is going to see this whether it’s day or night. The earth is still spinning on its axis and still in it’s orbit. Every eye is going to see it!

Jesus comes when they don’t expect it. The earth is not looking for it. Those who are the true Christians who have already been martyred, with the exception of a few in a place of safety. That’s why it happens at this point. Go back and listen to virtually

any sermon on Pentecost and the events leading up to it and after it, so you can get kind of timeframe when this happens.

I'll just briefly review it here: Apparently, and some people like to say *apparently*, but since we don't know exactly when the day is, how else can I explain it. Apparently, according to Hosea 5:21-6:3, it's going to be two years into the Tribulation, which means there are 18 months left in which the other events will take place. Those other events are, beginning with the 144,000 (Rev. 7), the seven trumpet plagues.

When the heavens open up and the sign of the Son of man appears as another sun in the heavens, how does Christ get from there down close enough to the earth that He's in the clouds. And then for the resurrection to take place—which we have shown has got to be on Pentecost, so that's not the day it's talking about—and then come down to the time of the seven last plagues and all the saints come back with Christ to the earth.

There is a period of time of almost 18 months! The last four of which all the resurrected saints are on the Sea of Glass, which has to be located somewhere above Jerusalem. Why? *Because when we come back to the earth with Christ, we're going to step on the Mt. of Olives! Where is that? East of Jerusalem! Where is the Valley of Jehospat, the Valley of Slaughter? It's just north of Jerusalem!*

So, the Sea of Glass has got to be there for those who are resurrected. The world is going to see this; this is not going to be done in a corner. This is going to be the greatest and most mammoth event to take place in the history of the world up to that time.

The way it comes as a thief in the night can be two ways:

1. you are not spiritually prepared and it takes you by surprise
2. It comes on the world as a thief in the night, because when they finally have martyred all the ones they can find who are Christians, they are going to be convinced that *now* we can make the world right

Then the ripping open of the heavens and Christ reveals Himself and every eye is going to see Him. It's not going to be an instant return to the earth. It just cannot be an instant return when you apply all these other events that transpire after Rev. 6:12-17.

What you do when you come upon Scriptures that seem to conflict with one another, you have to bring to bear all the Scriptures and put it together with what you know the best you can.

This gives us something to look at, especially in this age we can understand it better than any time in the past. So, if you want a further explanation on this see the book: *God's Plan for Mankind Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days*—with CDs—and we have events leading up to Pentecost and events after Pentecost coming down to Trumpets, and so forth.

I hope this answers the question: **How will every eye see Christ, yet He comes as a thief in the night?**

Scriptural References:

**Q #1:**

- 1) Numbers 15:32-41
- 2) Hebrews 8:6-13
- 3) Hebrews 10:15-17, 19-23
- 4) Galatians 5:22-25
- 5) 2 Peter 1:3-11

**Q #2:**

- 1) Genesis 4:1-4, 3, 5-7
- 2) Genesis 3:17
- 3) Genesis 4:7-12

**Q #3:**

- 1) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4
- 3) Revelation 1:7
- 4) Mark 13:23-35
- 5) Matthew 24:14-15, 21-27, 30-31
- 6) Revelation 6:3-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

**Q #1:**

- Exodus 16
- Acts 2
- Jeremiah 31

**Q #2:**

- Genesis 26:5
- Psalm 119

**Q #3:**

- 2 Peter 3:20
- Revelation 3:3; 11
- 2 Thessalonians 2
- Hosea 5:21 thru 6:3
- Revelation 7; 6:12-17

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *The Rapture Hoax*
- Book: *God's Plan for Mankind Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days*—with CDs—by Fred R. Coulter