

The Set Times of God

(Day of Pentecost—Live)

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I want us to understand the historical significance of:

- why we're here
- what we're doing
- what God has planned

We've covered some of the historical things, but as we will see, prophecy is only history in advance, known only to God. As He gives us understanding:

- through His Spirit
- through His Word
- through His Holy Days

then we come to understand more and more about God's plan and what He's doing!

At the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai, the botanical and geographical setup of Sinai and the whole Middle East was entirely different back then than it is today. We cannot look at today's circumstances in the Sinai, North Africa, or the Holy Land and think that's how it was all the way back to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt, etc.

I was reading one of the Psalms and it said, 'the forests of Arabia.' I thought, 'Huh?' There's hardly a tree existing in Arabia today. It's all sand and oil; it's entirely different.

God gave the Ten Commandments, which was the first time that that many people were ever gathered together in one place to hear God speak. It was an awesome event, indeed, with:

- the thunder
- the lightning
- the wind
- the voice of God
- the sound of the trumpet

That was an historical event. What did God start out with? *The Ten Commandments!*

Now we come to another historical event that we covered partially yesterday—Day 49—in Acts 2. We'll continue our investigation of this as we go along. God uses His Holy Days:

- in a *prophetic sense* to tell us what's going to happen
- in an *historical sense* to tell us what He has done
- He uses them in the *present tense* so we know where we're going and what we are going to be doing

In Acts 2, with the sending of the Holy Spirit in power on the Day of Pentecost:

- it wasn't the day before
- it wasn't the day after
- it wasn't on one of the Holy Days during Unleavened Bread
- it wasn't on Passover
- it wasn't on Trumpets
- it wasn't on Atonement
- it wasn't on Tabernacles

It was on the Day of Pentecost! That was the *set determined time that God had set aside for Himself* to send the Holy Spirit to those who were converted and believed in Jesus Christ and to begin preaching the Gospel in a powerful way, in a way that was not done before, even during the ministry of Christ.

- Christ came to His own
- He called the disciples
- He gave all of the spiritual understanding of the laws and commandments of God

and how we need:

- to live our lives
- to love God
- to serve Him
- to love each other
- to know and understand what God is doing through the Sabbath and Holy Days

He specifically told the apostles that the 40 days—40 being the number of trial—was not a trial for Christ. He was already resurrected from the dead. *It was a trial for the apostles and disciples to see whether they really believed that Jesus, in fact, rose from the dead!* There were some who doubted. Since it never happened before, you can understand how some may doubt. If they were able to really see Him, and the way that He entered into the rooms is fantastic. He just showed up in the middle of the room: no door open, no window open. As a spirit being:

- He could walk through walls
- He could walk through brick

That's how He got out of the tomb. He just walked out through the rock!

Christ said, 'Don't go anywhere. I told you to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. You stay in Jerusalem until you are *endued with power from on high.*'

That happened on the Day of Pentecost. This was an historical event of great proportions because never before, in all the history of God's dealing with mankind down through time, did He give the Holy Spirit to that many people at the same time. Remember, 3,000 were baptized that day and received the Holy Spirit.

Another event that we covered on Day 49 took place, which was also a signal event to the apostles, in the plan of God, to the world and for the world that now, beginning with the apostles, God was going to preach the Gospel to the whole world. Like He told the apostles, 'You go into the whole world. Preach the Gospel. Make disciples, teach them what I taught you and I'm with you to the end of the age.' That's a continuous on-going command for us. Here's where it began; The Holy Spirit came.

Acts 2:1: "And when the Day of Pentecost, the fiftieth day, **was being fulfilled...**" All of the Holy Days are the *set times* of God, the *appointed time* of God.

Paul wrote that 'at the appointed time, Christ died for us.' What was that day? *Passover!* At the appointed time, Pentecost, the disciples were gathered. They didn't know what was going to happen. This was a complete surprise to them, except that Jesus told them, 'You're going to be endued with power from on high.' I wonder how many were thinking for those ten days what that means? *On Pentecost, they found out!* During the day, they were keeping it:

"...they were all with one accord in the same place" (v 1). That was called Solomon's Porch. It was a meeting room there, various meeting rooms, on the alcoves of the area of the temple.

Verse 2: "And suddenly *there* came from heaven... [not from any man, not from any machine, but *from God*] ...a sound like *the* rushing of a powerful wind, and filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit; and they began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them *the words* to proclaim" (vs 2-4). Here was a miracle.

In their own minds, they were probably speaking in Greek or Aramaic. The words coming out of their mouth were multiple languages that everyone could hear in *his own language*. They were preaching the great things of God. All of them were amazed!

Here they were at the temple of God. They knew that this was God place, where He said to come on the Holy Days. Did He not say, 'All your

males shall appear before Me three times in a year?' *Yes: Unleavened Bread, Feast of Weeks, Feast of Tabernacles!* They were there at the command of God. God began it there so that He would have His stamp of approval, indelibly known on it so that none of the scribes, Pharisees and the opponents of the apostles could say, 'Well, we don't know if this is from God or not!' Think what the problem would have been if it would have been done in Capernaum, in Galilee. It would have been rejected, out of hand.

God followed the authority that He established. He had them at the temple; He preached the Word of God. It lists all the nations. They were all amazed and wondering what this meant.

Verse 14: "Then Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke out to them: 'Men, Jews, and all those of you who inhabit Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words. For these are not drunken as you suppose, for it is *only the* third hour of the day'" (vs 14-15).

That's the same time that Jesus ascended on the Wave Sheaf Offering Day and that is the same time that they began the wave loaf offerings on the Feast of Pentecost, ***those leavened loaves!***

Let's take a little detour and let's answer about those two loaves; Matthew 13:33: "Another parable He spoke to them: 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to leaven... [this has to be *the good work of leaven*, not the leaven of sin] ...which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until all was leavened.'" We also find that if the lump be Holy, that is Christ, then the rest is also Holy.

- Why put the leaven in three measures of flour?
- Why let it be leavened?
- Why let it be likened to the Kingdom of God?

There has to be a 'good work' of leaven!

- What does leaven do when you put it in the dough? *It raises it! It changes it!*
- How would you like to eat flatbread all your life? no such a thing as leaven?

The *good work of leaven* is to make it into something else using the same ingredients. That is like unto *the work of the Holy Spirit*. Just like you put the leaven in, you can see what it does, but you can't see it working. That's the key. God gives the Holy Spirit. He does the converting within. People can see that you're changed, but they don't know how that happened, because it was from the Spirit of God.

Just like you make the dough to bake bread, when it's leavened and raised, ready for the oven,

you put it in the oven and you bake it. It is permanently set into that form, at least until you start eating it. This is a type of a complete change that is to take place with us. We'll see more about that a little later on.

So, the Holy Spirit comes. Not only was it given in power to the apostles, now it was offered to anyone who would repent. We'll read about that and then we will come back and we will connect the overlap between Pentecost and Trumpets, between Pentecost and the Day of the Lord. First of all, let's see the sermon that Peter preached.

Acts 2:22: "Men, Israelites..." *That means Peter knew there were those from the ten tribes of Israel there as well as the Jews!*

"...listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarean, a Man sent forth to you by God, as demonstrated by works of power and wonders and signs, which God performed by Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know" (v 22).

Remember, the whole ministry of Jesus Christ was an epic, historical time, too. Never had God come in the flesh—manifested in the flesh, born of the virgin Mary—to speak directly to His creation. That's why it's important. If someone says, 'Oh, I'll believe God if He comes down and speaks to me.' You just tell him, 'He already has, it's in the Bible. If you read the Bible, you will know what He would say to you if He would do it again, but once is enough for God.' Now He's committed to work in the power of the Holy Spirit with:

- Christ: Who is the Head of the Church
- God the Father: Who is the Sovereign Ruler of the universe
- has committed it to men to teach

That's what Peter's doing! As he told Cornelius later on, 'Now you know all this that Jesus did was not done in a corner.' It was well-known, talked about everywhere.

Verse 23: "Him, having been delivered up **by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God...** [you can tie in all the prophesies relating to His ministry, death and crucifixion] ...you have seized by lawless hands *and* have crucified and killed. *But* God has raised Him up, having loosed the throes of death, because it was not possible *for* Him to be held by it; for David speaks concerning Him, 'I foresaw the Lord before Me continually; for He is at My right hand, so that I may not be moved. Therefore, My heart rejoiced and My tongue was glad; moreover, My flesh also shall rest in hope; for You will not leave My soul in *the* grave, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You did make Me to know *the* ways of life; You will fill

Me with joy with Your countenance'" (vs 23-28). He was quoting from Psa. 16. Peter clarifies it:

Verse 29: "Men *and* brethren, let *me* speak to you freely concerning the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day."

Here's a good verse to remember for anyone debating about souls going to heaven. 'Do you think that David was a righteous man and deserved to go to heaven?' *Yes!* Turn to Acts 2. He's dead and buried and this is about 1,000 years after he died and the tomb was still there. No, he didn't go to heaven. This Scripture was a prophecy of Jesus.

When you read the Psalms, you read a verse or two that pertains directly to David. You read some other verses that directly pertain to the prophecy of Christ. Then you will read some verses that pertain to the present time, current with David. Then you'll read in other verses that are prophecies clear on down into the future.

The Bible, inspired by the mind of God through the power of the Holy Spirit, is Authored by the Eternal God. Therefore, ***there is no end to learning; there is no end to understanding the Bible!*** As a matter of fact, even in our lifetimes, as much as we can learn and understand, what's that compared to God? What's that compared to what God's going to do with us and for us at the resurrection? *Training ground, that's what it is!*

- learning
- growing
- teaching
- letting the Holy Spirit work in you

Peter clarifies, v 30: "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn to him in an oath *that* from *the* fruit of his loins, as concerning *the* flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit upon his throne."

Even that prophecy is yet to be completely fulfilled. Think of that! He's not sitting in David's throne right now. He is in heaven as the Head of the Church sitting at the right hand of God.

Verse 31: "He foresaw *this and* spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in *the* grave, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus has God raised up, whereof ***we all are witnesses.*** Therefore, having been exalted by the right hand of God, and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this that you are now seeing and hearing.... [directly from God] ...For David has not ascended into the heavens..." (vs 31-34). *There's the*

other verse to connect to the first one, that David's tomb was still there!

“...but he himself said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand until I have made Your enemies a footstool for Your feet”’” (vs 34-35). *Again, another prophecy that is being fulfilled that hasn't been completed!*

When will that prophecy be completed? *After the Millennial reign, after the Great White Throne Judgment and after the incorrigible wicked are burned up in the Lake of Fire! **God has called us to enter into what He is doing, to give us understanding of His plan and how He uses His Holy Days.***

Verse 36: “Therefore, let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance... [this is the message that was preached on Pentecost] ...that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, **both Lord and Christ.**”

This was a tremendously effective sermon. I imagine that God's Spirit was working with all of those that were listening to it and as many as would respond and repent, God and the apostles dealt with.

Verse 37: “Now, after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart...” *I imagine there were some Peter was speaking to who were there saying, ‘Crucify Him! Crucify Him!’ some 50 days before!*

“...and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’” (v 37).

- seeing as how we have done this
- seeing how our hands have had part of this
- seeing how we agreed with His execution and crucifixion

“...What shall we do?” You talk about grace and forgiveness. That's why the Church is not a political party. There's no grace and forgiveness in political parties.

Verse 38: “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized...’” That's a whole story, too; the meaning of baptism. You enter into a personal special covenant with God the Father and Jesus Christ. That's what baptism is all about. Just as Christ pledged His life and His death so that you may have eternal life through His resurrection, ***you are also in baptism pledging your death to receive eternal life, through Christ.*** That's why baptism is full emersion in water. Repent means to:

- stop
- turn from your ways
- quit sinning
- confess your sins to God

- be sorrowful that you have committed them
- realize what it's done to your life
- realize what it cost God in the person of Christ to bring this to you

And then “...**be baptized** each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those who are afar off, as many as *the* Lord our God may call” (vs 38-39). Isn't that something?

James 1:17: “Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning.” *He's got His plan and He's going to do it:*

- that's why God has to be perfect
- that's why God cannot sin
- that's why God cannot lie

There is no way that the universe can be held together unless someone:

- has the power
- has the character
- has the ability to do so
- has a purpose that is unchanging and unswerving

This is the character that God wants to put in us through His Spirit!

Verse 18: “**According to His own will...**” Think about why you're here. You're here according to the will of God. Yes, we had to set the time and place, but it's fulfilling the will of God. You were baptized and received the Holy Spirit according to His own will, His own desire. He loves you and He wants you to be part of His Family. That's why!

“...He begat us by *the* Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all His created beings” (v 18).

We are the firstfruits unto God, and the firstfruit harvest is pictured by Pentecost. The completed product was brought to the priest in the form of those loaves. We will see what our completed product will be like and the meaning for us in the first resurrection.

We're going to see some very important things and even an indication of the timing of when we'll be resurrected.

1-Corinthians 15:20: “But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the Firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep.”

We also know He's called 'the Firstborn from the dead.' So, Firstfruits and Firstborn are interchangeable in those particular senses there.

Verse 21: "For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order..." (vs 21-23). *God has:*

- **a set time** for the resurrection of the saints
- **a set time** for the resurrection that we know as the second resurrection
- **a set time** for the things that He does

"...Christ *the* Firstfruit; then, those who are Christ's at His coming" (v 23). *We will see that Pentecost and the coming of Christ are tied together! We will see how that is and what happens.*

Rev. 6—again, just as God intervened in powerful ways to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, with all the plagues, signs and wonders that He did, so also, when God begins to intervene in the world's affairs, ***it is Christ Who is going to do it!*** There are going to be awesome events that will take place. You might say, if we are looking at the tipping point in the history of the world that is when ***Christ begins to personally reveal Himself!*** We find that in Rev. 6 with the opening of the sixth seal.

This is quite dramatic; this is quite powerful, because in the beginning Rev. 6, we see all of the elements of the end-time coming together and falling in sequence by the first five seals: the great spiritual delusion that is coming and the beginning of the Tribulation. When the Tribulation begins, there's going to be no doubt when it's beginning. Then immediately the things that follow: famine, starvation and death and martyrdom.

Then Christ intervenes. He does something to get the attention of the entire world. It's not going to be a secret rapture where only those 'in the know' will hear the word. It's going to be that the whole world is going to be notified that ***here comes Christ!***

Revelation 6:12: "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."

We will see that happen several times because of the events taking place after this.

Verse 13: "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..." (vs 13-14).

I can't imagine what that's going to be like. I can't imagine what is going to happen when all of

a sudden the sky around the whole world changes. It's like taking away a cover on a window and you see for the first time things you've never seen before. The world is going to know this. The earth is going to feel it and fulfill the prophecies that God said that:

- He's going to shake the heavens and roll back the sky like a scroll
- He's going to shake the earth

You're going to see earthquakes and thing that take place

- He's going to 'shake the sea'

This is a signal event that God is intervening to do His will on the earth, personally. No longer will it be a time when men will say, 'Where is God?' When that happens:

"...and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the powerful men, and every bondman, and every free *man* hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, 'Fall on us, and hide us from *the* face of Him Who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, **because the great day of His wrath has come, and who has the power to stand?**'" (vs 14-17).

Let's also understand something else. Though they have martyred everyone that they think are Christians—remember when the Tribulation starts, Satan is cast down—some of those in the Church go to a place of safety, but the rest Satan goes after in war. Then it's completed with the fifth seal, they're all martyred. Then God intervenes and does this. Also, what is happening in Jerusalem?

We have to kind of look as this as a movie with many different scenes and many different things taking place. What's happening in Jerusalem? ***The beast and the false prophet are there, and the two witnesses are there in a daily confrontation!*** They witness for 1260 days. They know what's going to happen. They've been told; they know it's Christ.

Why would they fight? *For the same reason that Pharaoh would not repent and change, because of their sins and their hard-heartedness!* They are going to view what is going to take place in the return of Christ, as the invasion of aliens from outer space, because they don't know us and the won't know even that we exist until we're resurrected, which will take place a little later here in the flow of things. Of course, God the Father and Jesus Christ are aliens to them. So, they're going to get their wish. 'I wonder if there are people out there?' ***Yes! God and the resurrected saints!***

When that happens, God rolls back the heavens and shows Christ. Let's see how it's going to appear on earth.

Matthew 24:21: "For then shall there be great tribulation... [that starts with the second seal] ...And if those days were not limited..." (vs 21-22) ...*God set a specific time in many prophecies that it's going to be three and a half years—'limited'!*

"...there would no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be limited. Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here *is* the Christ,' or, '*He is there,*' do not believe *it*. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect" (vs 22-24). *Let's see if they can outdo 'rolling back the heavens.'* Won't be able to do that one!

Verse 25: "Behold, I have foretold *it* to you. Therefore, if they say to you, '*Come and see!* He is in the wilderness'; do not go forth. '*Come and see!* *He is* in the secret chambers'; do not believe *it*" (vs 25-26).

Here's how it's going to appear when the heavens roll back and we will see that that happens *just before the next to the last Pentecost* as we come down toward the end.

Verse 27: "For as the light of day... [*King James* says 'lightening,' but lightening never does this]: ...which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west..."

Lightening never does that. It goes up and down, north and south, east and west and they also now know that when there are great electrical storms on the earth, they've caught it on satellite, when there's lightening going down to the earth from the clouds, going up into the heavens, hundreds of thousands of feet, there are great electrical storms going up. This is going to be a tremendous thing!

I don't know how many of us are going to live to see it. I've often thought I'll live to see the return of Christ and I've preached that we'll live to see the return of Christ! I'm not so sure. We do whatever God wants us to with all of our might until whatever time God determines. That's just the way that it is.

So, the heavens roll back and all of a sudden what do they see? *A new sun out there in the universe!* That is absolutely astounding! We're talking about not little religious things. We're talking great, fantastic things that God is going to do.

"...so also shall the coming of the Son of man be" (v 27).

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."

It starts out as if it's a new sun coming down the toward the earth, *toward the earth, toward the earth!* Why does God do this? *Because He's giving people time to repent!* We'll see that in Rev. 7.

Verse 29: "But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man..." (vs 29-30). *That's what we're viewing back in Rev. 6!*

Because God is interested in mercy and God is dealing with Israel, God is dealing with other people, we have Rev. 7.

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After that happens, he shows Himself, displays the sign of the Son of man in heaven, which is like a sun. Then He does something spectacular. All of that calms down.

Revelation 7:1: "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that the wind might not blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree."

A great calm unlike anything that has ever happened before on the whole earth! I imagine that men are going to be wondering what this is? God is going to do something.

Verse 2: "Then I saw another angel ascending from *the* rising of *the* sun, having *the* seal of *the* living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to damage the earth and the sea, saying, 'Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.' And I heard the number of those who were sealed: one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of *the* children of Israel" (vs 2-4).

This tells us who the 144,000 in Rev. 7 are. It can't be any of us, because when we receive the Holy Spirit we are sealed. We don't need to be sealed again. These are people who are not converted and they are from the twelve tribes of Israel.

Verse 5: "From *the* tribe of Judah..." God said He would save the 'tents of Judah first.' There it is right there! **God's Word is true!** The way you understand it is:

1. *believe* that the Word of God is true
2. properly put it together
3. things that you don't understand, put it in the back of your mind and come back at it later

Then it lists all the twelve tribes of Israel!

We find it in the prophecy of Hosea 5:14-15 and Hos. 6, the first few verses. Israel repents and says, 'I'm going back to God' and it says, '**after two days of affliction, we will be raised up in the third day.**'

A day in prophecy is a year. Out of three and one half years, when you take away two, how many are left? *A year and a half!* At the beginning of the third year, or some time close to the beginning of the third year, God raises up Israel and spares them from the rest of the Tribulation beginning with the 144,000 (Rev. 7). What about if there are other people who would repent? *Yes!*

Verse 9: "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one was able to number, out of every nation and tribe and people and language... [then it shows what's going to happen to them]: ...was standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and *holding* palms in their hands."

This is a prophecy of what is going to happen to them. Why? *Because the resurrection does not take place until 'the last trumpet' sounds!* Here we haven't even started the first trumpet, yet. That begins in Rev. 8.

In Rev. 8 we have an overlap between the Feast of Trumpets and Pentecost. Rev. 8 and 9 we'll cover when we get to the Feast of Trumpets. These are also great and awesome events that are going to take place on the earth. But here we have something new taking place in warfare, at least in our time:

In Rev. 6 it's men against men. In Rev. 7, the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude are sealed and then the drama picks up again. The trumpet plagues begin. Now we have the angels of God bringing the plagues of God against men: angels, demons and men fighting in great armies (Rev. 8; 9). We'll cover all of that when we get to the Feast of Trumpets.

We will see the trumpet sound for the resurrection. Then we will look at a little more of the resurrection and see how that has to be on Pentecost, *because we are the firstfruits of God!*

Here we find the two witnesses giving their witness; Revelation 11:3: "And I will give *power* to My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in

sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and *the* two lampstands that stand before the God of the earth" (vs 3-4).

We find that prophesied of in Zech. 3 and 4. If anyone in the Church says, 'I'm one of the two witnesses and my wife is the second one,' ***don't believe it!*** First of all, tell the to send you a photo and if their dressed up in clothes, you know they're not the ones. Besides, it doesn't say husband and wife. *No! They're clothes in sackcloth!* The next question to ask is, 'Where are you living?' If they're not in Jerusalem, they can't be the two witnesses. So much for the vanity of men and women!

God is going to select them. They're going to come—the high priest and the governor of Judea. That's who they are going to be. In Jerusalem! Understand this: ***No Jew would ever listen to a Christian***—period; though they might be nice to them for the sake of money and advantage. When there are two that they consider Jews—

1. probably the high priest of the house of Aaron
2. the governor of Judea, who is of the line and tribe of David

and they're in Jerusalem—they will pay attention to them. That's why the first 12,000 of the 144,000 are Jews who repent. Notice what's going to happen here.

Verse 5: "And if anyone attempts to harm them, fire will go out of their mouths and devour their enemies..."

How are you going to stop that? If they attempt to harm them, they're incinerated. This is going to be a painful thing for people to put up with. I always think of the media. Just imagine the media and then imagine those who try and attack them.

"...For if anyone attempts to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have authority... [notice the power and authority that they have] ...to shut heaven so that no rain may fall in *the* days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, **as often as they will**" (vs 5-6).

Unlimited power from God. It's going to frustrate *the beast* and the *false prophet*. They'll probably have daily confrontations

Verse 7: "And when they have completed their testimony, the beast who ascends out of the abyss will make war against them, and will overcome them, and will kill them. And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, **which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also**

our Lord was crucified” (vs 7-8)—*that’s Jerusalem!* God always traps the enemy into thinking he’s going to succeed.

Finally, the two witnesses are killed. They say, ‘Hooray! This is great!’ So, they have a worldwide party, it says in the next verses, and they give gifts to one another. The same trap that God set for Pharaoh and his horsemen and chariots as they went into the Red Sea. ‘Oh, we’ll go in. Look, it’s all dry.’ *Not so!* They’re going to think, ‘We’ve got this won!’ For three and one half days, they’re going to be jubilant. It also says that the whole earth is going to see them.

Verse 9: “Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, and will make merry, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth.’ Then after the three and a half days, *the* spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them” (vs 9-11).

What looks like total defeat turns around to be a victory because of God. Always remember that in your life, too. When:

- you have a time that looks like you’re totally defeated
- you have a time that it looks like you can never overcome
- you have a time that you don’t know:
 - ✓ what’s happening
 - ✓ what’s going on
 - ✓ how it’s going to work out

put your trust in God because it’s not over ‘till it’s over!

God raised the witnesses up. Then He did something else which fulfills the prophecy that Jesus said, ‘The last shall be first and the first shall be last.’

- Who were the two witnesses? *The last two martyrs!*
- Who are the first two raised? *The two witnesses!*

Just before the resurrection occurs the witnesses are raised from the dead! I don’t know all the things that are going to take place in their bodies being transformed from flesh to spirit, or exactly at what time that will take place, but nevertheless, there they go.

Verse 13: “And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and

seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake. And the rest were filled with fear, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming immediately” (vs 13-14). ***Right after the witnesses are raised, the seventh trumpet sounds, which is the last trump!***

Verse 15: “Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become *the* kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.’ And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshiped God” (vs 15-16).

Let’s also understand something, here, too. In the concept of the third heaven of God, we somehow have it in mind that it’s way, way, **way** out there, but from these prophecies, it appears to be whole lot closer to the earth than we’ve ever imagined. Let’s think of it as being a whole lot closer to the earth than we have thought. The Apostle John saw this.

Verse 17: “Saying, ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; for You have taken *to Yourself* Your great power, and have reigned.... [beginning of the reign of the Kingdom of God] ...For the nations were angry... [they don’t want to repent] ...and Your wrath has come, and the time for the dead to be judged... [the resurrection] ...and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to *all* those who fear Your name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth’” (vs 17-18). That is a description of the resurrection.

Now let’s look at a few more Scriptures and then we’ll complete this part of the picture of Pentecost. Let’s see where Paul writes of the first resurrection.

1-Thessalonians 4:14: “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.” *In order for God to bring us with Him, we’ve got to get ‘from here to there’!*

Verse 15: “For this we say to you by *the* Word of *the* Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep.... [the resurrection is going to take place, we’ll see exactly when] ...Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command...” (vs 15-16).

We saw where He comes down close to the earth, into the clouds. He doesn’t yet come down literally on the earth but into the clouds.

“...with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first**” (v 16).

Let’s think about this for a minute. The world has seen all of these things that have been transpiring up to this point of the seventh trumpet and the resurrection.

- Will they see all the saints being resurrected out of the graves?
- Will they see the angels carrying them up to meet Christ in the air?
- Why not?

What a witness to the world to tell them, ‘Hey guys, the jig is up! It’s over! Christ and the saints are going to reign.’

Verse 17: “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds...”

- Where is Christ coming? *From the light of day down to a place in the clouds!*
- How high do clouds go? *Anywhere from 500 ft. to 50,000 ft.!*

You take your pick as to where we’re going to meet Him.

“...for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord” (v 17).

What’s going to happen when you’re resurrected? ***The angels are going to carry you up to meet Christ!*** That’s what it says in Matt. 24. He’s going to send His angels out and He will gather His elect from the four winds of heaven.

Remember this: As you look at the earth from the beginning of sunset to sunset going clear around the earth to the next sunset is 24 hours. From sunrise until the next sunrise is also 24 hours.

- Is it going to be that God is going to raise the people—beginning from where, I don’t know where it will begin—to meet Christ in the air?
- Will it be a witness for the full 24 hours of the daylight portion of the Day of Pentecost?

As daylight comes to them:

- the graves open
- the saints are resurrected
- the angels take them

‘Look at that! The invaders from outer space are body snatching! The movies were right!’

Let’s see what else is going to happen. We know in 1-Cor. 15 it says ‘flesh and blood cannot

inherit the Kingdom of God.’ Let’s look at another view of the harvest:

Revelation 14:14: “And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and *one* like *the* Son of man sitting on the cloud, having a golden crown on His head; and in His hand *was* a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him Who was sitting on the cloud, ‘Thrust in your sickle and reap, because the time has come for You to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe’” (vs 14-15).

There is ***a set time*** for the resurrection. The harvest of the firstfruits and the celebration of that as pictured by Pentecost, ***is the time!*** We are resurrected and we are changed:

- from flesh to spirit
- from mortal to immortal
- from dust to spirit

That’s what happens with the harvest!

Verse 16: “And He Who was sitting on the cloud thrust forth His sickle upon the earth, and the earth was reaped.”

Where are they going to go? *Here we are with the ‘body snatching’ angels taking all the saints!* Those who are alive, they’re changed. I wonder if we’re going to have any conversations with the angels on the way up? ‘Who are you? What’s your name? What? I’ve known you for a long time.’ *You saw all my bad deeds?* ‘Yes, but God’s forgiven those.’ *Thank you.* We can have a little practically here. We’re we going to go? ***We’re going to meet Him in the clouds. Christ is coming from the heavens to the clouds!***

Revelation 15:1: “Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up. And I saw a sea of glass...” (vs 1-2). The throne of God is on a ‘sea of glass’ (Rev. 4).

I don’t know if the rest of the world is going to see that or not, but let’s read about it and we’ll think a little bit more about it.

“...mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast... [*who is Satan the devil; that goes all the way back to Abel*] ...and over his image... [*all idolatry down through time*] ...and over his mark... [*which is coming*] ...and over the number of his name, standing on the Sea of Glass...”

There we are! How many are going to be there? It’s going to be a fantastic thing. We don’t know, but I want to be there to find out who all is

going to be there. That's going to be something. We start out singing and rejoicing.

Verse 3: "And they were singing the song of Moses, *the* servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, 'Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints."

Why are we going to meet on the Sea of Glass? *We've got to find out, first of all, who we are, because we're going to get a new name!* All of us have to receive a new name. Isn't that something? ***We all have to meet Christ. We all have to be presented to the Father!*** 'Behold, I and all the children that You have given Me' (Heb. 2). Jesus said, 'All yours are Mine, and all Mine are Yours.' Then we're going to have to get our rewards because it says that we're going to have to hear, '***Well done good and faithful servant!***'

Remember this, just in case you think, 'I don't know how much I deserve.' Jesus said that no grater prophet has arisen than John the Baptist and he didn't do one miracle. Yet, the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he.' It's going to be so fantastic and thrilling that it's going to be something.

Next we have to find out what we are going to do. We've got to get some assignments. Even coming here to this meeting, you needed to know where, when, and are we going to eat?

The same way on the Sea of Glass! We're not going to give up eating just because we're spirit beings. Just sit here and breathe spirit. Inhale a breath and say, 'Oh, that was so good!' It isn't going to be that way.

There has to be the marriage of the Lamb/Christ. Then there has to be the wedding supper. Is that not true? *Yes!* Then we have to witness the 'seven last plagues' being poured out. That obviously takes place after the resurrection. When we start talking about Trumpets, that's where we're going to pick it up.

Then you're all going to do what you really have wanted to do. When you look and see all this confusion on the earth and you see all the political nonsense—the Greek word is 'skubalon,' which means *dung*—that has been going on:

- politically
- religiously
- education wise
- in families
- in countries
- in everything

You want to do something. Jesus said, '***If My Kingdom were of this world then would My servants fight.***' The Kingdom is of this world and now we're going to fight!

Jesus says, 'I've assigned each one of you white horses. Now the angels are going to show you how to do it. When the word comes, we're going to descend off the Sea of Glass after the seven last plagues and take over the world. You get on your horse and we're going to say, 'Let's go!'

What's that going to be like coming down off the Sea of Glass, down to the earth? Here's the beast and all the armies down there with all of their guns, shooting and firing away. God sends a plague on them that dissolves the flesh right off their bones. There isn't any way you can fight against that. Then God is going to have all the flesh-eating birds of the whole world gather around and fly in huge circles to come down and eat all the flesh to clean up the earth.

I'm a little ahead of myself, but that's okay. The first order of business: kill *the beast* and *the false prophet* in the Lake of Fire. Next order of business is to get rid of Satan and the demons and put them in the abyss.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 2:1-4, 14-15
- 2) Matthew 13:33
- 3) Acts 2:22-39
- 4) James 1:17-18
- 5) 1-Corinthians 15:20-23
- 6) Revelation 6:12-17
- 7) Matthew 24:21-27, 30, 29-30
- 8) Revelation 7:1-5, 9
- 9) Revelation 11:3-11, 13-18
- 10) 1-Thessalonians 4:14-17
- 11) Revelation 14:14-16
- 12) Revelation 15:1-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Psalm 16
- Hosea 5:14-15; 6
- Revelation 8; 9
- Zechariah 3; 4
- Revelation 4
- Hebrews 2

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