

Kingdom / Miracles in Revelation and Acts

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[0 : 00] I don't know of a better place to begin than at the ending. So if you will open your Bibles to Revelation chapter 20, we will use that for the starting point this morning.

We will not spend a lot of time here, but I do want you to understand that this is where everything is going. And when we get there, maybe a lot sooner than what we know.

So we're going to begin reading in Revelation chapter 20. And it has to do with the binding of Satan. Revelation 20 and beginning with verse 1.

John says, I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

I want to stop right there and simply indicate something that is really important. And that is this. Is this thousand years, a thousand years, is it 365 and one-fourth days times 1,000, or is it a vague, indeterminate, round number figure that is given for a purpose that yet remains unknown?

[1 : 32] My contention is, the Bible speaks very plainly and very clearly because it is intent, its intent is to be understood.

You cannot intelligently respond to something you do not understand. So understanding is key. And the best way for us to gain understanding is for words to mean what they say. This does not mean that everything in the Bible is to be taken literally.

That's crazy. There's a lot of figurative language in the Bible that is not intended to be taken literally, such as, the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth.

That's poetic language. It doesn't mean God has eyes that pop out of their sockets and roll around all over the earth looking at things. It is simply a poetic way of saying something that is different from the literal.

[2 : 40] And what it literally means is, when it says, the eyes of the Lord run to and fro, it simply means God sees everything. And everything is aware and open to Him.

That's what it means. But poetic language is used for expression and for emphasis. And we use it all the time. I've told you a thousand times.

Well, not really. But you get the point when I say, I told you a thousand times. Who's counting? But we use that to exaggerate to make a point. Is that what's happening here?

Is this thousand years just an exaggeration? Or is it a literal thousand years? What's writing on the difference? Everything. Everything.

Let's read it. He laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And threw him into the abyss.

[3 : 42] And shut it and sealed it over him, that he should not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were completed.

After these things, he must be released for a short time. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them.

And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead, this is the 666, and upon their hand, and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

The implication is that it is the same thousand years that was mentioned earlier. Let's read on. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years, which we may assume is the same thousand years, were completed.

This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part. In the first resurrection, over these, the second death has no power.

[5 : 08] But they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. You almost get the impression that something is being emphasized here.

And what it is, is the thousand years. Verse 7, And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war.

The number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came upon the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are also. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Well, we've got a repetition of these thousand years which by the way is synonymous with the term millennium and millennial.

[6 : 20] The word millennial in the English literally means a thousand. And in this case it is talking about a thousand years. This is the time that is referred to as the kingdom of heaven come to earth.

It is a complex subject but it is so because there have been so many faulty assumptions made regarding it and we want to do our best to try to clarify it.

And let me be the first to admit up front I am as capable of making faulty assumptions and getting it wrong as anybody else. I don't have any special powers.

I don't claim any special unction or insight or ability to interpret or understand. My dictum is we must allow the scriptures to be its own interpreter because when we force our interpretations upon it it's almost always wrong.

So the Bible is its own best interpreter and what I want you to keep in mind is we are trying to connect dots. This millennial ring when Satan is out of the picture out of commission is going to be a time when Jesus Christ himself will have returned and will be ruling and reigning in Jerusalem the twelve apostles that served Jesus during his earthly ministry are going to be resurrected and served with him and they will be judging the twelve tribes of Israel this is after the wrap up this is after the second coming because at the second coming that's when this kingdom is going to be established.

[8 : 04] It is the kingdom of heaven come to earth. The big problem is we do not see this as earthly because the word heaven is used and we think of people when you die a saint is absent from the body and present with the Lord and he goes to heaven.

So when we talk about the kingdom of heaven many people think that we're talking about the place where God dwells. That's heaven but it is the rule and reign of heaven come to earth.

You're familiar with what's called the Lord's Prayer. It is a prayer that concludes thy kingdom come. That's a prayer for the coming of the kingdom. What's the big deal about the kingdom?

Why does everybody want the kingdom to come? The prayer says thy kingdom come so that thy will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

That's what this thousand years is all about. And while we're thinking about the thousand years I want you to come to Acts chapter 3 book of Acts chapter 3 and be reminded that this is shortly after Pentecost and that tremendous experience that happened on the day of Pentecost with the confounding of the languages released so that everybody heard in their own language and the following day well it may not have been the following day but it was shortly thereafter Peter who interpreted what was going on there with the speaking in tongues and all of the rest of it is going to go with his fellow apostle John back to the temple they are celebrating the feast of Pentecost that went on several days the temple was the meeting place and everybody gathered there by the thousands and when they get there there is a man who is positioned there in his regular place begging the man has been lame from his mother's womb he was born that way never stood on two feet in his entire life and he has a choice spot there in the temple where he sat every day and held out his little plate for people to drop alms in it and they would out of sympathy and pity they would drop coins in there and that was the way he made his living and when Peter and John came there they saw the man sitting there and he looked up at them as if to receive something from them and he's saying alms alms alms for the needy and Peter looks at him and says silver and gold have I none but such as I have give I unto thee in the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk and Peter reached down and grabbed that man by the hand and yanked on him and he came up and stood aright and he is amazed he has never stood on two feet or walked a day in his life and he has strength immediately in his legs this is a continuation of the miracles that Jesus was performing in the gospels only now

[11 : 28] Jesus is gone he has returned back to heaven in Acts chapter 1 and this is the disciples the apostles carrying on Jesus ministry of healing after he ascended back to heaven remember fellows back in back in Matthew chapter 10 when Jesus called the twelve apostles we are told that he gave them authority he gave them authority to preach the kingdom of heaven and to heal just like he was doing and these twelve men went out in six teams of two each and continued the ministry of healing all throughout the land and you read the gospels it is the principal thing that so characterized the earthly ministry of Jesus everywhere he went everywhere he went he fixed everything that was broken including people's eyes and ears and dead bodies that he brought back to life these miracles constituted our

Lord's calling card they authenticated who he was it was impossible to overlook the miracles that he did in fact one of the Pharisees came to him by night Nicodemus and said we know that you are a man come from God for no one can do these miracles that you are doing unless God is with him you must understand the miracles that Jesus was performing were nothing more than instances of righting wrongs that had occurred from the time of the fall in Genesis 3 in Genesis 3 when the fall of humanity took place and everyone born of them is born under that curse of the fall we are born with fallen bodies it doesn't make any difference how good the doctors are or how good the surgeons are every one of us as an individual still has a death rate of one per person why is that that's because the earth is under a curse and we are under a curse and death is a part of it when Jesus came and to perform these miracles he made the statement if I by the finger of God cast out demons and do these miracles then that is evidence that the kingdom of heaven has come upon you fellows I cannot tell you how enormously significant that is because as you read here in Acts 3 let's look at this passage in verse 17 verse 18 let's for time's sake the things which God has announced everybody's asking what's going on with this guy they know this man this crowd they know this guy he's a permanent fixture he's there all the time they recognize him and when he is standing there jumping up and down and hugging the guy because he's able to walk a big crowd is drawn and Peter is going to take advantage of the crowd and he says in his message the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ his Messiah should suffer he has fulfilled in other words what Peter is saying is you know it is recorded in the scriptures and by the way the scriptures that Peter is speaking of the only scriptures that existed at the time this occurred that was the Old Testament and Peter is saying you all know how the Bible talks about the Lord's anointed suffering and Isaiah 53 is a perfect picture of that and what Jesus is what what Peter is saying is that's happened his Messiah he did that the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ should suffer he has thus fulfilled when did Jesus do that he did that about 50 days prior to the time that Peter is speaking here less than two months before Jesus was on that cross and he suffered in accordance with Isaiah 53 he has thus fulfilled repent therefore and the therefore is always in light of what he said before as a result of what

God did through Christ in his suffering here's what you are supposed to do by way of response repent change your mind that's what the word means by the way let me inject something here repentance does not mean what shall I say it does not mean penance this is the Roman Catholic idea of doing penance where you pay some kind of a penalty for your sins you are assigned if one of our Roman Catholic friends goes to a priest to confess his sins and the priest says alright for penance you must say fifty our fathers what does that mean that means that your penalty for the sin that you've committed is that you have to recite the Lord's prayer fifty times our father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name fifty times and if you need a string of beads to keep track of how many you said then that's okay but that's penance whereby you make some kind of penalty or payment for your sins that is not repent repent literally means change your mind and it is the word in the

[17 : 56] Greek metanoia we're familiar with the word meta it means through if you have if you have if you have a malignancy some of you can identify with that the question is has it metastasized metastasized if it has metastasized that means it has spread to other parts of your body if it is malignant and it metastasizes that means you're in more trouble if it is a benign then they can remove the whole thing that's meta means through and it comes from the word nous and it means through the mind it is a thinking process what is it that they're to repent of they are to repent of their estimation and evaluation of

Jesus Christ who he was what he did why it mattered that's what you need to change your mind about what was their answer before what was their position before crucify him crucify time we will not have this man to reign over us and they were dead wrong and Peter is saying you need to reverse yourself about that because he not only died for your sins God raised him from the dead you need to change your mind and fellas changing of the mind always comes as a result of information why should you change your mind because the facts require it don't be stupid get with the program the evidence is there you weigh and evaluate the evidence you reach a conclusion and on the basis of that you make a decision that's what coming to Christ is all about it is all about assessing the situation assessing yourself

I am a sinner I am undone I cannot save myself Jesus Christ died to be my savior to give me what I could not earn on my own and that is eternal life it is the gift of God I need to receive it and receive Christ as my savior that's repentance and it's always on the basis of listen every time a preacher preaches all he's doing is giving out information it is information that is designed to make a difference because people hear the information they evaluate it they assess it they ask themselves is this true or is it not if you conclude that it is not true you have a responsibility to dismiss it it's pure bunkum it's religious hogwash dismiss it it's not worth anything if it is true then you have to ask yourself so what what do

I do what's my position am I supposed to have a response to this what is the purpose of life anyway why is anybody here what is this all about where am I going how can I tell what difference does it make these are questions that everybody needs to ask themselves and places like a funeral is where more people probably think of these things than any you know why because they are forced to deal with their own mortality there is that body lying in a casket one of these days that's going to be me what about it and we are forced to face our mortality that's what this thing called preaching the gospel is all about and fellows this is why it's called good news the gospel Jesus

Christ has provided the remedy for our eternal life and let's read on here in Acts chapter 3 repent and return in your original position with God so that your sins may be wiped away in order that times of refreshing what's that the times of refreshing is everything getting remade everything that is broken in this world which is everything is going to be fixed it's going to be refreshed read on the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send Jesus the Christ appointed for you what he's only been he's been gone less than two months Acts chapter one is when he left he's only been gone two months from the time

[23 : 12] Peter is saying this and he will send Jesus the Christ appointed for you whom heaven must receive that is where he is now until the period of restoration of all things that period of restoration is identical with the times of refreshing in the previous verse it's just another way of saying the same thing restoration when something is restored if you've worked on an old automobile restoring it and the idea was to get that old jalopy with all of its dents and dings and everything else that's wrong with it to restore it and get it in the kind of shape and condition it was when it rolled off the showroom floor that's restoration fellas if you haven't already discovered it we live in a broken tarnished ruined world everything about us is out of kilter everything is wrong you wonder what's wrong with the world everything is wrong with the world it's under a divine curse because of our parents original sin and they passed it on to their children and eventually it got to us and when it got to us if we had kids we passed it on to them because that's the way human nature is but

Jesus Christ paid the penalty so that that can all be reversed it has not yet happened but let me tell you this the second coming of Jesus Christ is as certain to occur as was his first coming in history both are prophesied matter of fact the second coming of Christ is found in the scriptures far more than the first coming and when he comes the second time he is coming to collect on what he paid for the first time the text says the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from ancient times now I've given you a sheet this morning and I want you to look at it if you would please it is taken from a volume by

Dr. Dwight Pentecost on things to come and it has to do with the conditions existing within the millennium the millennium is the thousand years spoken of in Revelation chapter 20 this is the same thing and we read that much scripture is devoted to stating the untold blessing and glory poured out upon the earth through the beneficence of the Lord Jesus Christ in the kingdom the kingdom is the millennium and fellas you can't have a kingdom if you don't have a king they go together and and the kingdom is that over which the king rules and reigns the time is coming when

Jesus Christ is going to return as the rightful owner of planet earth which he purchased in his own death burial and resurrection and he is going to refurbish everything remember when I said quote I think it was from Luke 12 where Jesus said if I cast out demons by the spirit then the kingdom of heaven has come upon you all of the miracles that Christ performed were indications of that he brought kingdom conditions with him fellas that's the whole point of the miracles here what Jesus was doing was giving that generation to whom he was ministering reasons to believe that he was their Messiah and they crucified their Messiah now the question is what happens regarding those who were guilty of that remember when Jesus was on the cross well you don't remember but you remember reading it when Jesus was on the cross he uttered seven different sayings and one of them was father forgive them for they know not what they do

I am persuaded that that prayer was answered and that the father forgave them and this is exactly why that kingdom offer opportunity that was given to Israel is still good it isn't good now but it was good then and here's the question this is the thing that separates Christendom more than anything else and I hope you pick up on this this kingdom business these thousand years when all of these conditions are fulfilled peace a joy b holiness c d glory comfort justice full knowledge instruction removal of the curse sickness removed healing of the deformed l protection m freedom from oppression no immaturity reproduction labor economic prosperity increase of light unified language unified worship manifest presence of

[29 : 08] God the fullness of the spirit the perpetuity of the millennial state all of these things are ingredients of the kingdom and I ask you the question are these things describing the world we're living in now not even close not even close what what is this what is this this is ideal this is utopia this is this is paradise this is things like they should be because when Jesus Christ returns that's what he's going to accomplish he's going to make things like they should be he gave samplings of that when he raised the dead gave sight to the blind caused the lame to walk what was the point of all of that did Jesus just feel sorry for people well true he had compassion for people but he wanted to demonstrate who he was and

Israel misinterpreted the whole thing why why the message was repent what is that that's change your mind that involves moral decisions moral decisions their only interest in a messiah think about this you were a Jew living in Israel in the year 2000 and Jesus is on the scene and he is purported to be the messiah the messiah is going to have all kinds of power unlimited power and wisdom what do we want him to do get those guys out of here who romans romans soldiers thousands of them everywhere running the show persecuting the Jews making all kinds of demands crucifying people collecting taxes sending the money off to

Rome these people are a bunch of infidels they bring their idols in here they have no appreciation for the one true God I tell you what when the messiah comes he's going to drive the romans into the sea and when jesus came preaching peace love healing man where's the power oh yeah well he does a miracle but where's the military power where's driving these romans out what's going on here fellas this is why they rejected him the old testament speaks of two comings of jesus the first coming is as a lamb a sacrificial lamb wounded for our transgressions bruised for our iniquities hey what kind of military conqueror is that how weak how meek how lowly a lamb yeah as a lamb as a sacrifice he was purchasing something you know what he was purchasing you he was paying for you he was doing for you what you couldn't do for yourself he was doing something that would enable you to come into a right relationship with your creator that's what he was doing and on the road to Emmaus when he was walking there in Luke 24 with those two disciples that didn't even know that

Jesus was resurrected they thought he was still dead this is this is three days after four days after the crucifixion and jesus confronts these two disciples on the road to Emmaus and they don't know it's him he's in a glorified body he obviously looks somewhat different and he's walking along beside them and he comes up to the side to these guys and he says you fellows really look down sad downtrodden and sad what's what's wrong and they said you must be a stranger around here don't you know what's happened in the last few days and he said what are you talking about they said well we're talking about Jesus of Nazareth a man approved of God with many miracles and signs and we trusted that it was he who would deliver Israel but they crucified him and he's dead and it's been three days since those happened and jesus said oh foolish ones and slow of heart slow of mind to understand all that the prophets had written what was their problem the prophets wrote about two comings of the messiah one as a meek and lowly lamb who would die and the other is as

a reigning king and conqueror both of those are depicted in the bible but the one they focused on was just the ruling reigning king they completely ignored the suffering lamb and Jesus said ought not should not the messiah to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory do you know what the Jews opinion was their idea was forget the suffering we don't want anything to do with that just get to the glory and what Jesus is saying there's no crown without the cross the cross precedes the crown the cross is what gives him the right to wear the crown don't you get it and as they were making their way to Emmaus Jesus opened the scriptures to them he didn't even have a bible with him he didn't need one he opened the scriptures he explained the scriptures and when he left them they looked and they told people about it and they said did not our hearts burn within us when he opened unto us the scriptures it all made sense fellas that's all we're trying to do here is connect some dots allow you to make connections as to how things are were why they fit and the way they fit and when you do when you get it if you get it if you get it it will get you and you will never be the same that's what this kingdom thing is all about that's what this is all about these are the conditions and the references that are given in the bible indicate where these statements are found in the scriptures and you can look them up because there are plenty of them here and all of these are ideal conditions this

this is Eden this is the best possible this is paradise this is utopia and this is not what we have now but you need to know this you need to know this some of you already do maybe everybody I don't know the majority opinion in Christendom and when I say the majority opinion in Christendom I'm talking about Roman Catholicism and Protestantism combined the majority position is this is already happening this kingdom this thousand years is already going on when did it start when did it start when did these thousand years start well they started on the day of Pentecost they started when the Holy Spirit came that's when the thousand years now wait a minute when you do the math wasn't that two thousand years ago instead of one well yes but it's just talking in general terms in general numbers the thousand years is not a literal thousand years it's just a figure that is determined that is meant to be a long period of time baloney a thousand years is a thousand years the bible says what it means and it doesn't stutter and when it says it six or seven times you almost get the impression that that's what it means the bible is a book that is designed and intended to be understood it is never intended to confuse you or confound you it's intended to be grasped understood so you can have an intelligent response to it because if you don't understand it all you can do is scratch your head and say well I don't know what I'm supposed to do about this and there isn't any way you can know but the bible speaks quite plain the book fellas the book was intended to be understood not intended to be a riddle or a mystery or you just say I have no idea what that means and neither does anybody else that's nonsense we give

[39 : 28] God more credit than that God has spoken and he has not stuttered so what we are saying is where we are right now is not the millennium the wolf and the lamb are not lying down together and someone said well they had a display in Russia where they had a lion and a lamb in the same cage and they were proving the glorious utopian possibilities of communism if only people get the message and understand it correctly you can have the lion and the lamb together in the same cage how do you do that now well every now and then you just put in another lamb that's all because that's the way it works because nature is red in tooth and claw you know that's about as ridiculous as what communism is and by the way do you know the first instance of communism that is on record is right here in the book of Acts where everyone had their assets and they sold them and they brought the money and they laid it at the apostles feet and that they distributed to everyone as people had need what was that all about why did they do that and why don't we do that today why don't we why don't you all just bring the titles to your car and to your house indeed to your house bring them to my church and give them to me and I will liquidate and turn them all into cash and then I will distribute the money according to need you want to be biblical don't you why don't we do that that's what they did in Acts chapter 3 and 4 and 5 and they had great rejoicing why don't we do that why were they doing that these people were not just overcome with euphoria they were operating under kingdom conditions what am I talking about remember when Jesus was confronted by the rich young ruler and said what do I have to do what do I have to do to be right with God and Jesus said well you sell all of your possessions and give it to the poor and come and follow me and you'll have treasure in the kingdom of heaven now he didn't say heaven he said you'll have treasure in the kingdom of heaven and the young man went away because he had many possessions and Peter and John are standing there and they're listening to all of this they're listening to what

Jesus said and this is in Matthew 19 and they turned to Jesus and said we did that we did that Peter James and John and Thomas and all of us left the business we left our boats we left the fishing we left our families and we're following you and frankly we're wondering what's the payoff for this what are we going to realize and Jesus said you who have followed me in listen in the regeneration when the son of man comes into his kingdom you also will sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel what did he really mean that when he comes in his kingdom fellas as you move into the book of

Acts it is a continuation of what's taking place in the gospels with the miracles that's why these people were doing that they were doing what Jesus told the rich young ruler to do they were getting with the kingdom program then in healing the miracles continued because that was still the kingdom program and it had not stopped why had it stopped most believe that it stopped with the crucifixion when Israel said no then the kingdom was taken off the table and the torch was passed and it was given to the church and the church of Jesus Christ has replaced the nation of Israel as God's chosen people that is the majority view today held by Roman Catholicism and most Protestants so there is no future at all for

Israel they muffed it and God has written them off permanently but he hasn't he hasn't at all Israel has been set aside as a nation read Romans 9 10 and 11 Israel has been set aside in their unbelief until Jesus returns and when he does they will believe then meanwhile what is taking place is an entirely different thing we have not replaced Israel they remain God's chosen people the gifts and calling of God are without repentance and God is not changing his mind they remain Abraham Isaac and Jacob and the descendants of his and they have a special place in the heart and mind of God and that will be fulfilled so all of these things are coming together and the miracles that are continuing in the book of Acts they were simply getting into and getting with that kingdom program and by the way one of the aspects of it is when Jesus

Christ is ruling and reigning in Jerusalem we are told that he will reign he will rule with a rod of iron you know what that means that means no nonsense that means righteousness is going to prevail and evil will be dealt with Samaritan now jump fast forward if you will to Acts chapter 5 and we've got Ananias and Sapphira remember this these people were getting with the program they sold their land but they got let me give you a figure the Bible doesn't talk about it let me give you a figure they sold the land for ten thousand dollars so they bring money they bring eight thousand dollars to the cause and they put it in the coffer and they give eight thousand and Peter says is this what you sold the land for and they said yeah yeah sold and and he said you have not lied unto men but you've lied unto God how'd Peter know that this is part of the supernatural that was taking place that was in the gospels that is transferred and continued in the book of Acts and he said listen while you had the land wasn't it yours yep when you sold it weren't you entitled to all of the money yep well why has Satan filled your heart to give part of it and hold back part you could have kept the whole thing if you wanted to but you lied you didn't have to give anything but you lied and you gave the impression that you brought the whole price of the land in and you donated it you gave a false impression you lied

[47 : 20] Ananias dropped dead in words to that effect and that's what he did what hey that that sounds to me like ruling with a rod of iron and his wife came in and didn't know what had happened and he gave her an opportunity to tell the truth and you know what she did she told the same lie as her husband and she paid the same penalty and the text says and great fear came upon everyone why what's going on here hey this is a no nonsense thing now this is going to continue as long as that kingdom opportunity is on the table I cannot tell you because I don't know exactly when it was withdrawn I have my suspicion and I could be wrong about this but I think it was in connection with the stoning of Stephen and the stoning of Stephen is very very important because of who did it in the first place it was a trumped up job they framed him they framed Stephen by going out and finding a couple ne'er-do-wells the kind of people who will do anything for a buck and got them to testify against Stephen that they had heard

Stephen blaspheme God what's the penalty for that death so they hold this kangaroo court it's in Acts chapter 7 Acts chapter 7 and 8 and in this kangaroo court they hold a trial and it's the Sanhedrin the council these are the 70 most revered respected individuals in Judaism and they are holding this religious council and the high priest is the chair of it and they have Stephen before them and they call him on the carpet and they accuse him of blaspheming God he is as innocent as the day is long and he is not guilty at all but they find him guilty because these false witnesses testified

against him in the mouth of two or three witnesses the thing shall be established and they found two or three who were willing to lie for the money that they were paid and you've heard the verdict you've heard the claims you've heard the charges what's the penalty death and they stoned him and they stoned him to death and the ones who physically committed the act of stoning him raining these stones stones and boulders of every size down on the body of Stephen there on the ground in this stoning pit from which one could not escape and his body was literally crushed before he died he looked up to heaven and the text says

Stephen saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God and Stephen cried out Lord lay not this sin to their charge sounds very much like Lord forgive them for they know not what they do and the stones crushed the life out of the body of Stephen and there was a bystander there who was an instigator in the whole thing and he went around to the men and said let me hold your robes because they had these long heavy down to the floor length robes heavy take your robe off so you've got just the undergarment because you need the flexibility for throwing those stones that you won't have with this bulky robe and he collected their robes and held them and his name was Saul of Tarsus and you read in chapter 9 about the huge turnaround of Saul of Tarsus and I'm not finished but I quit because I can't compete with the food so thank you so much for your great service this morning and guys we'll continue this I hope you will keep this sheet maybe keep it in your Bible we'll be looking at it again later and there are more things that we've got to share along this line that I think you will really appreciate thank you all for your kindness and by the way I didn't allow any time for Q&A; this morning so next time next time we meet maybe we'll start with Q&A; if you've got any questions at all feel free to bring them up and we'll do our best to deal with it thank you thanks