

Prophecy4

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[0 : 00] As best we can, and as briefly as we can, yet as comprehensively as we can, we are attempting to deal with what we are convinced is one of the greatest issues that divide Christendom, and that is a differing approach to the Word of God and ignoring of what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy about rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

And it is really significant when you consider that the Apostle Paul had a burden for this, and he is simply saying in that that things belong in certain places, and they need to be assigned at certain times and certain people.

And you know, I don't know that there's any more outstanding issue as regards this subject of right division.

If I might give an illustration, it would be an illustration of circumcision. Now, that might sound strange to you, but this was a really tremendous issue in that first century church.

And it had to do with Gentiles coming to faith in Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, and the attempts of those other believers, Jews who were also believers in Jesus as their Messiah, insisting that these Gentiles be circumcised.

[1 : 41] In effect, it was almost saying they have to kind of become Jews also. And the Apostle Paul went to the mat over that issue.

And he is making a very, very careful distinction between things that were and things that are. And the upshot of it is, as the Acts 15 decision comes down from the brethren there who held that council is that no, it is not required that these non-Jewish people, men, have to become circumcised in order to be in a right relationship with God.

Now, let me just inject something here, if I may. And I, yeah, I'm going to do it anyway. So, when Paul is insisting that to become rightly related with God, all you need to do is exercise faith in Jesus Christ.

We call this justification by faith and faith alone, which means you don't have to do anything because everything that needed to be done has been done, and Christ is the one who did it.

And what you are called upon to do is appropriate that truth as his substitute for your sin. And that's it. And the Jews, the ones that kept plaguing him, and by the way, these were the ones who also, that he was referring to, who preached Christ out of contention when he wrote to the Philippians with the wrong kind of motive, hoping to add additional hurt and pain to my situation, and Paul singles them out.

[3 : 22] These are the Judaizers. And the difficulty with this subject is, were these Judaizers, these Jews who insisted Gentiles also had to be circumcised, were these true believers?

Were these true believers, or were these just Jews who were paying lip service to the finished work of Christ, and they were really hanging on to the law of Moses? This is involving this transition time.

Now, here's a problem. I'm just going to inject something here, and I want you to think about this, because it's going to come up time and time again. If Gentiles don't need to be circumcised in order to be in right relationship with God, then, why do Jews?

Why do Jews? Why do Jews have to be circumcised in order to come into a right relationship with God? And the truth of the matter is, they don't. They don't.

And this is what precisely got Paul into so much trouble. And this is why the Jews accused Paul of teaching against the law of Moses.

[4 : 39] They were able to connect these dots, and they used their reasoning and thinking powers, and they said, well, wait a minute. If Gentiles don't have to be circumcised, it seems rather inconsistent to say that Jews do.

Well, it's true. That's true. They no longer had to. Why is it? Because Judaism had become defunct. Judaism is a religion without standing before God.

Now, I know no Jew is going to believe that, but it's true. And they lost that standing at Calvary when the veil in the temple was rent, and God is saying, I'm finished with this, and I'm going to begin something entirely different.

And that's the watershed issue of the New Testament, this transition that is taking place. I am convinced that this is, at least in part, what Paul was referring to when he was talking about right division.

You've got to place these issues and these subjects where they belong, and circumcision does not belong in the new covenant that Christ died to provide for.

[5 : 59] But do you know what he does provide? Colossians says that we're circumcised spiritually.

Well, now, how in the world do you do that? And not only that, but it seems applicable to women as well as to men.

And nonetheless, this is precisely what Paul is talking about. The circumcision is spiritual, and so is the baptism. It is spiritual.

And that's something else that needs to be divided from the old way, because what was it under the old way, under the old division? It was water. It was H₂O, and it was physical circumcision, and it was for the Jew only.

Nothing for the Gentile. And now it's a whole new ballgame. So we're moving from this position of Judaism through the transition that involves Jew and Gentile together in one body, and then as time goes on, what we are going to discover will happen is that more and more Gentiles are coming to faith, primarily through the efforts of the Apostle Paul, and fewer and fewer Jews are coming to faith.

[7 : 26] And by the time the first century closes out, and we start the second century, it's becoming rather dramatic that the number of Gentiles coming to Christ is dramatically increasing, and the number of Jews is declining.

And it is going to continue on that way to this very day. What is the percentage of non-Jews who believe in Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah, as their Savior, as opposed to the Jews?

And this is what Paul is talking about when he says, Israel has been set aside in their unbelief. They are under judicial blindness. Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in.

So this is the day of the Gentiles, and actually it began probably in 586 with Nebuchadnezzar, and the Jew has been in submission to somebody ever since.

So this is really important, dramatic stuff, and I cannot emphasize this study that we are undertaking, how critical it really is. And as I mentioned, what we are discussing right now is probably more than anything else responsible for the great division that exists in Christianity.

[8 : 48] And when I'm talking about Christianity, I'm using that term very loosely, and I'm including Roman Catholics as well as all Protestants. And we've got enormous division.

And you know something? So do the Jews. Even though they have a defunct religion, the way they practice it, they're all over the map. You've got Jews that are atheists, you've got Jews that are Hasidim, and the ultra-Orthodox, and you've got Jews that are Reformed, and you've got Jews that are Orthodox, they're all over the map, and to different degrees of seriousness, they practice their faith.

So what a mess. What a mess. And let me put this in because I want you to keep it in mind. It is an important segment that is often ignored. His infernal majesty, Satan himself, has got his fingerprints all over this stuff.

because he works on the basis of confusion. And this is very confusing to a lot of people.

Confusion, his goal is to divide and conquer. And he has succeeded admirably in dividing Christendom into so many ineffective segments that it is just...

[10 : 12] And this is part of his game plan. It's to thwart the plan and program of God any way he can. And we just don't want to be a part of it. So we're emphasizing what we are emphasizing with the hope that it will light your fire.

Boy, it certainly has done that for me. And as we move on through these things, and if you'll take that little sheet, just this little... And we've got extras of these, by the way, and I hope you will have these in abundance.

So I would suggest that you keep it handy in your Bible because we're looking at these great divisions. And when Paul said that the Word of God needs to be rightly divided, there are those who have divided it in different ways.

They've divided it between the Old Testament and the New, but that is not nearly adequate as we shall see. And there are those who divided it in accordance with the seven dispensations of Dr. C.I. Scofield.

And I remember how proud I was in the 1950s when I got my first Scofield Reference Bible. I felt like I had arrived. I kind of cut my teeth on the Scofield Reference Bible and I am forever indebted to it.

[11 : 25] I learned a great deal from it. If there was any criticism that I would have of it, it is the unfortunate idea that the Scofield Reference Bible and its breaking down the seven dispensations and you can clearly see the difference between them, all seven, because there is a change between them.

But it conveys the erroneous idea that a dispensation is a block of time from point A to point B. Well, no question about it.

all dispensations occur in time. Have to, you know. But it is so much easier to understand and grasp if you see these two great dispensations or administrations, prophecy and mystery.

And that's really much more accurate than saying Old Testament and New Testament. And I've talked about this a little bit before, but let me just run by it again.

You cannot divide the Old Testament from the New Testament and say, that's the dividing point, that's where the demarcation is, because it isn't.

[12 : 40] And the reason people think it is is because there's 400 years that separate them. Silence. So it's really kind of natural and you can understand people would say, well, we gear up here for a whole new thing and this is called the New Testament.

Well, actually, it is a continuation of the Old. It's a continuation of the book of Malachi because Malachi closes out his book announcing that there is going to be one who will come that will be the forerunner of the Messiah and then he will be followed by the Messiah.

And boy, when you open Matthew's gospel, bingo! There it is. The Messiah and the one who is announcing his coming. So it would be much more accurate if we divide these between prophecy and mystery.

And we've already looked at a couple of the aspects of prophecy. If you will remember, and I will not belabor these until we get to the new material, but if you've got questions, I want to entertain them.

Prophecy contains a kingdom, a political organization, and will not take time to look at Daniel 2.44 and Matthew 6.10 because we already have.

[13 : 59] And then the kingdom is to be established on earth. I suspect that one of the greatest areas of misunderstanding is when you use the term kingdom of heaven.

People think in terms of somebody who died, went to heaven. That's the kingdom of heaven. No, it isn't. The kingdom of heaven, referred to so many times in the Bible, particularly in the gospels, is here on planet earth.

Well, then why is it called the kingdom of heaven if it's going to be on earth? It's called, it's called, let me put it this way. What it is, is it'd probably be more accurate to say it is heaven's kingdom.

It is the kingdom of heaven is the rule and the reign in heaven brought to earth so that that's what the prayer was about in Matthew 6, the prayer for thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And when God's kingdom comes from heaven to earth and is established here, then things will be as they ought to be. And I can easily understand because this was an area of confusion to me for a long time after I became a Christian.

[15 : 22] I just thought, when somebody dies, they go to the kingdom of heaven. Well, when they die, as a believer, they are absent from the body, present with the Lord. We go to heaven where God is, but that is not the kingdom of heaven come to earth that the Bible speaks about so often.

It is an earthly kingdom. It is to be established on the earth. And let us look at some of these references we made, beginning with the third one. Christ is to be the king. Jeremiah 23.

Let's go there, please. Jeremiah chapter 23. And verse 5.

Keep in mind, if you will, Jeremiah written approximately 500 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. And we read in verse 5, Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I shall raise up for David a righteous branch.

Let me ask you a question here. Where is David when Jeremiah is writing this? David's been dead for 400 years. He's talking about the house of David, a righteous branch.

[16 : 43] And this righteous branch is none other than Christ. He's spoken of as a branch because he is an offshoot. He's an offshoot from Jesse. He's an offshoot from David.

He's a descendant of. I shall raise up for David a righteous branch and he will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land.

You know, out of all of the kings that Judah had under the dynasty of David, only a few of them, maybe three at the most, were what could be called righteous kings that served the Lord.

Most all of them went after the heathen gods and deities, idolatry and everything. They were corrupt. And I'm talking about the good two tribes.

And in the northern ten tribes, every one of their kings was a loser. Every one of them was evil. They didn't have one single solitary king that was worth his salt that sat on the throne of Israel.

[17 : 57] And Judah only had a few, so there's a great contrast here that this one will do justice and righteousness in the land. In his days, Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell securely.

And this is his name by which he will be called, the Lord, our righteousness. That's Jehovah, Sidkenu, Sidkenu in the Hebrew.

And it means the righteous one. Therefore, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when they will no longer say, as the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Egypt from the land of Egypt. But as the Lord lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from the countries where I've driven them, and they will live on their own soil.

And this is what the Messiah is going to do. These are the days that are coming that he is talking about here. He will be the king. And while we're close by in the same neighborhood, come back, if you would, to Isaiah chapter 9, all of these are related.

They're just beautifully, beautifully connected. The whole theme of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is redemption, is buying back, is reestablishing, reconnecting.

[19 : 12] And the central nation of redemption is Israel. That's why they are so strategic. And by the way, that's why Israel has been so much a bullseye so far as Satan is concerned.

And do you realize, do you realize that the vast majority of anti-Semitism that exists in the world today, if you examine it, it is nothing but irrational.

I mean, it's completely irrational. There is no logical basis for the anti-Semitism that exists. Well, where does it come from?

This is part and parcel of the adversary. He affects the way people think and he affects their conclusion and he conditions and he sets up situations and people walk into it and they don't have a clue.

If you told people, if you told anyone, if you told any of the dignitaries in the United Nations or in the Capitol that Satan is behind a lot of the stuff, why? They would laugh you to scorn. They would think you were some kind of superstitious idiot.

[20 : 23] They wouldn't give any credence to that at all. And they have no idea that their own minds are blinded by this. So, he is very much involved. And here in Isaiah chapter 9, very familiar passage, I'm sure many of you probably recall it.

And again, whereas Jeremiah prophesied 500 years before the birth of Christ, Isaiah prophesied 700 years before the birth of Christ.

And this is what he said in chapter 9 and verse 6. For a child will be born to us. A son will be given to us.

And who do you think the us is? It's Israel. Who is Isaiah anyway? He is a Jewish prophet, one of the most renowned. And when he's talking about us, he's talking about Israel as a nation.

A child will be born to us, a son will be given to us. And the child refers to his humanity. As a child, he is born.

[21 : 32] And the son refers to his deity. Because as a son, he isn't born. As a son, he is given. Wow. God so loved that he gave.

And the government will rest on his shoulders. The government of what? The government of the whole globe, the whole planet, is going to be ruled over, reigned over, by this son who is given.

And when he comes back, he will simply claim what he paid for when he was here the first time. Son will be given. And the government will rest on his shoulders.

That's another way of saying he alone is going to bear the full authority and responsibility. When we talk about something being on someone's shoulders, we mean they are the ones responsible for it.

It's their bailiwick. And that's what's going to be. And the text goes on to say, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

[22 : 56] There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness.

Yeah, we've got a lot of that in our world today, don't we? Yeah. I tell you, the corruption out there is so rampant you cannot believe it.

And I am persuaded, I don't want to go too far afield here, but I am persuaded that the vast majority of the depressed nations throughout the world that we refer to as third world nations, there are some exceptions, but the vast majority of them have potential and natural resources to not be a third world nation, but to be greatly improved.

But there gets to be a pocket of influential people in charge who are corrupt to the gill and they sap the poor of their money and of their energy and their opportunity and everything else.

And it's corruption that keeps so many of these nations down and out. And we've poured millions and millions, probably billions of dollars into several nations all over the world trying to help them out.

[24 : 17] And a lot of times it's like pouring money down a rat hole because it never gets to the place that we intended. It is gobbled up by those who are entrenched in power and they have millions of dollars that they salt away in Swiss bank accounts and all of this kind of stuff.

And this goes on all over the world. But it's not going to happen when this time comes. It will be upheld with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore.

How's that all going to come about? Well, it will be the zeal or the effort of the Lord of hosts that will accomplish this. Any question or comment before we move on? Joe?

Mark, I have it. Mark, I have the Chiron. Will you please take this over there? Okay. Okay. You should have Handel's Messiah playing in the background.

Yeah. Right over here. Thank you. Two things.

[25 : 24] One, that word forevermore is a nice word because that means it's going to go beyond the thousand years and into eternity. Yeah. And it won't stop at that thousand years.

And then the second point is you mentioned the devil a little bit ago. He is trying to interrupt. That's why anti-Semitism goes on. If he can interrupt that line there somewhere online, then God's plan cannot come to fruition.

Absolutely. God's plan cannot come to fruition. Absolutely. And then he can win maybe because he kind of knows what his end is and he wants to stop that. He does not want that to happen obviously. Absolutely.

And Satan has got an ego that you cannot imagine and he still thinks that he can somehow pull this thing off. But Revelation talks about this when he's cast out and his demons cast out with him.

He comes down to the earth and it says that he has great fury and great indignation because he knows he has but a short time and he's going to make the most of it.

[26 : 30] All right. Thank you for that. And let us if we may look at item number four, this kingdom prophesied since before the world began and come back to what is commonly called the New Testament in Luke chapter one.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Interestingly enough, this is in connection with Zechariah's prophecy and I'm not going to begin well, we could begin with verse 67.

It's really close there. This is when Zechariah offers his beautiful prophetic utterance at the birth of his son.

Remember, this guy couldn't speak. He was a mute for nine months and the first word that he said when they were talking about naming his son and everybody was quibbling and talking about what this boy's name was going to be and it was at his circumcision, eight days old, and it was when they also gave the child the official name.

And they're arguing and debating what his name is going to be called and all of a sudden, John's tongue is loosed for the first time in nine months and John says, John, his name is John.

[28 : 03] And I'm sure everybody looked and he talked, he said, well, John, you're talking and you say his name's John. Well, now, that's strange because we don't know anybody in your ancestry that's named John.

and that was a little peculiar to them because very often when a child is named, they name a great grandfather, a great great grandfather, someone like that to name them after.

But this is completely different. He says, his name is John. And his father, Zacharias, in verse 67, was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied saying, blessed be the Lord God of Israel for he has visited us.

And who's us? That's Israel. Visited us and accomplished redemption for his people. Under the subject of prophecy, there's only one group that can be classified as his people.

And that's the Jew. Like it or not, that's the Jew. that's under prophecy. Under mystery, guess who his people are?

[29 : 21] Jew and Gentile. Both are his people. But that was not so under the Old Testament. Remember what Paul wrote to the Ephesians?

At that time, you were, you Gentiles were without God, without hope, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope in the world. That was their status before.

He has accomplished redemption for his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for it. Does anybody remember the significance that is given for the word horn, what that means?

Anybody? Strength. Strength, yeah. He's not talking about something that you toot. He's not talking about tooting a horn. He's talking about, actually, he's talking about an animal horn because this goes all the way back, this goes all the way back to Genesis 1.1 that says, in the beginning, Elohim, translated G-O-D.

In the Hebrew, it's Elohim. Elohim. And the first two letters of that word, E-L, and the H-I-M, is the Hebrew plural.

[30 : 49] In English plural, we add an S. In Hebrew plural, they add an I-M. And Elohim, which is one, pluralized becomes Elohim.

And Genesis 1.1 says, in the beginning, Elohim. That is the plural term for gods. But you will not see it translated G-O-D-S.

I guess the translators just couldn't bring themselves to do that. But that's what it is in the Hebrew. And it is nothing more than an indication of the three persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, all of whom were active in the creation.

But that first two letters, E-L, has that connotation of strength, power, majesty, might, energy, and it is associated of all things with an animal horn.

Well, what's the connection with an animal horn? Well, you will find just about any animal that has horns, that is a position of their strength.

[32 : 04] You ever see a couple of bucks fighting over a doe? They clash horns and they fight with their horns and sheep butt heads with those horns and the dull sheep, how they ram each other.

What a headache. And this is in their horn. and when you see a cowboy grab a steer by its horns, there's not much he's going to do with that steer.

That steer can do about whatever he wants, but he can take and throw him. And there's power, raw energy. And the writers, the Hebrews, were trying to come up with a word, with something that would illustrate the raw energy and power of God.

In the beginning, God created. Who could do something like that? What kind of power would that take? And the most powerful thing they could come up with was animal power, brute power, brute force.

So they called it El. And all through the Bible, almost every name that you see that begins with E-L in Hebrew has the word God in it.

[33 : 26] It's from Elohim. Even the word Elizabeth, the female name, Elizabeth. There are so many examples.

Elisha and Elijah. Actually, the J-A-H on the end of Elijah comes from the Hebrew Yahweh.

And Elijah literally means, the E-L means God, and the J-A-H refers to Jehovah and Elijah's name. The name Elijah means God is Jehovah.

And that's all wrapped up in that one name. And as you go through your Bible, you'll find so many names, and so many of them end in E-L. Daniel, Michael, you can go through the list of names and you'll find dozens of them that end in E-L or that begin in E-L.

And each time you see that E-L, in the Hebrew, that's the word for God. And each time you see an A-H ending, that's the word for Jehovah, Yahweh.

[34 : 38] And you find it in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. The E-L ending is referring to God, so it's a beautiful thing.

Well, I don't want to stop there. Okay, let's move on. You know what? Nothing excites me more than just plain old truth, however, that's amazing, just amazing.

Okay, where are we? We're done. Acts 168 visited us, accomplished redemption for his people, has raised up a horn. There's that power, strength, a horn of salvation for us in the house of David, his servant.

And he's talking about David's dynasty, because when David came to the throne, after Saul was disposed of, David came to the throne, he established, or God established in David, the Davidic dynasty.

And all of the kings that come after David, every one of them, without exception, would be a blood descendant of David, the king.

[35 : 53] And the last one, at the end of the line, is David's greater son, born a thousand years after David, and his name is Jesus.

He's the end of the line. He's the last one to sit on the throne, and he will occupy that throne. The house of David, his servant, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, from of old, salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us, that's a lot of people that hate them, isn't it?

to show mercy toward our fathers, and look at this, look, and to remember his holy covenant.

That's the Mosaic covenant. That's the covenant of law that God made with his people. The oath, and this even predates it, Moses, the oath which he swore to Abraham, our father.

And you've got to remember, Abraham predates Moses by hundreds of years. To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

[37 : 16] And you, child, who's he talking about? He's talking about his newborn son. He's talking about John, John the Baptist. You, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High.

And you will go on before the Lord to prepare his ways to give his people, the Jew, the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins because of the tender mercy of our God with which the sunrise from on high shall visit us to shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death to guide our feet into the way of peace.

And the child continued to grow and become strong in spirit, lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel. Wow, this is just marvelous, marvelous stuff.

Acts chapter three will be the last one we'll take time to look at. Acts chapter three, I'll tell you, these people, they knew their Bible, of course the only Bible they had to know was the Old Testament, and they became very familiar with it, much of it was committed to memory, and in Acts chapter three, this is Peter's second sermon, this is in connection with the man healed outside the gate, beautiful, the silver and gold have we none, such as we have in the name of Jesus, get up and walk, and so on.

And if you will look at chapter three and verse 19, let's begin reading there, he's talking to the Jew, to his Jewish audience, repent therefore. Well, let's start with verse 18, the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ should suffer, he has thus fulfilled.

[39 : 11] You know what that's saying? That's saying this, God promised and he delivered, God delivered, he promised and he fulfilled, and he fulfilled in the person of Jesus dying for our sins.

So what are you going to do about that? Verse 19, Israel, the ball's in your court, what are you going to do? Repent therefore, this is why you should change your mind. Change your mind about what?

Change your mind and admit that you were all wrong about Jesus of Nazareth, that he really was the Messiah. You know what you need to do?

You need to reverse yourself because the evidence demands it. You need to acknowledge that you were wrong.

You do a 180, you completely reverse yourself. You repent therefore and return that your sins may be wiped away in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send Jesus the Christ appointed for you whom heaven must receive.

[40 : 31] Well, they already had. Heaven had already received him 10 days earlier in the ascension or maybe a little longer than that, maybe 12, 13 days, however much time lapsed between Genesis, I mean between Acts 2 and the day of Pentecost and this incident here might have been just a couple of days, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things.

That's the renewing of the earth, that's the refurbishing of the planet, that is the bringing in the kingdom of heaven to earth, about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from ancient time.

Moses said, the Lord shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren. To him you shall give heed in everything he says to you. And of course, that is referring to Christ.

He is that prophet that should come. And it shall be that that very soul that does not heed that prophet, and this prophet is prophesied in Deuteronomy, the latter chapters, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.

Likewise, all the prophets who have spoken from Samuel to his successors onward, also announced these days. It is to you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your father saying to Abraham, and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

[41 : 58] For you first, God raised up his servant. And he's talking about Israel. Israel for you, the nation. God raised up his servant and sent him to bless you.

by turning every one of you from your wicked ways. So how about, are you ready to turn, to repent? Are you ready to turn? And Israel is on the edge, a critical edge, right on the precipice.

Are they going to go with a positive response to what Peter said? dead? Well, look at the next chapter. As they were speaking, the people, the priest, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees came upon them.

And this is when the persecution began. This is Jew persecuting Jew. There are no Gentiles involved in this.

Rome has nothing to do with this whatever. This is a strictly Jewish thing. It is Jew against Jew. And this kind of persecution is going to go on, and you know who the leader of it's going to be, don't you?

[43 : 12] His name is Saul, Saul of Tarsus. And God is going to take the number one man in the persecution scheme and gloriously save him and turn him around, and it's going to be something.

Well, we've gotten through the first few here, anyway. We'll look at item number five. But this is all prophecy. This is all predictable stuff.

And to one degree or another it has come to pass, and that which hasn't, will at the second coming. Any comments or questions? We're just about out of time. David? Wait a minute. Hang on.

Yeah, okay. Sorry. Get our mic guy over here. Over here. I can yell loudly. Okay. Thank you.

Okay. Thank you. Back up at the beginning of chapter three there, where, yeah, Acts three, where you were. I've lost my place.

[44 : 18] Somehow I went backwards. Let me hit it from memory. It said verses one through three right there at the beginning. It mentioned John.

Is that John the Baptist? You're in chapter three? Yeah. And verse one? No. This Peter and John, this John here, is the brother of James.

This is one of the sons of Zebedee. The John that is mentioned here will be the John who writes the gospel of John and also the Revelation and first, second, third John.

This John and his brother Zebedee were in the fishing business. Their father's name was Zebedee and these boys helped their dad in the fishing business and when Jesus came along said, you follow me and I'll make you fishers of men and they came on board.

So there's a lot of different Johns and there's more than two actually. I think there's six or seven different Johns. Yes. John the Baptist is probably dead at this time. Yeah, John the Baptist. That's why I was wondering.

[45 : 21] Yeah, John the Baptist is entirely different. By this time, John the Baptist is dead. He has been beheaded by Herod. See, that was early on.

That was way before the time we're talking about here in Acts. Yes, Joe? Joe? You spoke earlier about the time of the Gentiles come in.

You used that phrase. And it's mentioned in Luke that, I can't tell you the exact scripture, you probably know where it's at, in Luke that the time the Gentiles comes in, that's talking about iniquity. When the iniquity is filled, fulfilled, then Christ is going to open the blindness of the Israelites.

They're going to come back and be in charge. It's probably the tribulation time period. Okay, but then also in Romans, Paul mentions the fullness of time of the Gentiles.

He mentions it there too. And now here's my question for you. Most Christians refer, think of that as when the last Christian is brought into the body of Christ, into the body of Christ, that that's what it means in Romans.

[46 : 28] But couldn't it also mean the same thing in that Luke refers to it as when finally God is fed up with all the sin and iniquity in this world right now and boy, he's going to come down in Judges rather than meaning it's the last Christian that's into the body of Christ.

See, the fullness because that word fullness, if you remember, is also used in Genesis referring to the Amorites before Joss 200 years because supposedly God was giving them time.

They haven't sinned enough. They haven't gotten bad enough to come down on them. So that fullness is used there too. So if we use consistency with that word fullness, then in Romans, I think Paul is referring to the time when God just gets fed up with all your iniquity and all your sin.

Yeah, well, the point is well made. And what is going to happen precisely, this world is going to morally, spiritually deteriorate.

do you do you have a hint that it might be in process now? And it is going to continue on this downward slide apace.

[47 : 43] And the thing that will really speed it up is when you're gone. when the righteous element is removed, the body of Christ is removed, the greatest single stone of stumbling to Satan will be removed.

And he's going to have a way of access the likes of which he has never had before. Christians all over this globe serve as maybe not very well, maybe not as much as we would like, but we serve to some degree at least as a moral, spiritual retardant to the evil that could be out there if there were no restraining influences at all.

And it is people like us whom they would call judgmental, goody goodies. When we're gone, Satan's going to go, now we can get down to business.

And that's exactly what's going to happen. And the well, the tribulation period isn't called the time of tribulation for nothing.

It's going to be sinners upon sinners. It's going to be a blood letting the likes of which we cannot even imagine. It is evil. It is evil pulling out all the stops and having its way without those bothersome Christians around to point fingers or say you shouldn't do this or this is wrong or whatever.

[49 : 32] You're going to be gone. and we will no longer be the problem to them. And some feel that this is exactly who is involved and who is referred to in Paul's letter to the Thessalonians when he talks about when that which lets or that restrains is taken out of the way and that could very well be the restraining influence of Christians and the moral barriers are just going to fall flat and it's going to be Katie bar the door and that's the way it's going to play.

And of course Satan will have his heyday then. I think we're already over on our time. Is that clock right? I'm sorry we've gone over. But I tell you thank you for being here and we will continue this and keep these little things.

I don't know of anything you can get that is as simple and as brief and as definitive as this. And for people who say well I don't know you don't need to make any difference after all we just take the whole Bible.

Well it needs to be divided and this explains why. Thank you all for being here this morning.