

Epistle of First Peter III

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Let's continue in our study of the First Epistle of Peter, and there are just a couple of things I want to cover concerning *born again* that needs to be done to wrap up everything that we did last week concerning it.

First of all, Exo. 13:2 has to do with firstborn has to do with *birth by the mother!* Exodus 13:1: "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Sanctify all the firstborn to Me, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, of man and of beast. It is Mine'" (vs 1-2). Very important to understand, because the whole principle of firstborn follows along with that.

Now let's see another Scripture, Deuteronomy 21. This is something that we don't have to deal with. Poor Jacob did, he had two wives and two concubines and he lived a miserable life. There was a fight every night. Read that, that is definitely recorded there as a thing *not to do!* Not as a thing *to do!*

Can you imagine in this day and age trying to support all of that? Can you imagine trying to feed all the 12 sons of Israel and the four concubines and everything, going down to Lucky's and buying your weekly groceries; you'd have to drive a truck through just to load it up. The society was totally different then.

Deuteronomy 21:15: "If a man has two wives... [What does it say about *two masters?* What does it say when you're interests are divided? *Here's what happens*]: ...one beloved and another hated... [God has a little remedy here]: ...and they have borne him sons, *both* the beloved and the hated; and *if* the firstborn son was of her that was hated."

So, there's the firstborn of the *beloved*. There's the firstborn of the *hated*. Being born has to do with giving birth by the mother.

Verse 16: "Then it shall be in the day when he makes his sons to inherit what he has, he may not grant firstborn *status* to the son of the beloved in preference to the son of the hated one—*for he is truly* the firstborn." Being firstborn is counted from birth, *not begettal*.

Verse 17: "But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has. For he *is* the beginning of his strength, and the right of the firstborn is his."

Now let's look at another very interesting Scripture, 1-Chronicles 5, here's something very interesting that happened with the sons of Israel. Who was the firstborn of the sons of Jacob whose

name was changed to Israel? *Reuben!* We find an application of this right here:

1-Chronicles 5:1: "And the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel—**for he was the firstborn**; but since he defiled his father's bed, **his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph** the son of Israel... [Why? *Reuben was the firstborn of Leah; Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel!*] ...and the genealogy is **not to be reckoned according to the birthright**... [because each one has their own genealogy. But the birthright transferred to the sons of Joseph.

For those who don't believe in what people mock as *British Israelism* I defy you to read Gen. 49 and take all of those blessings that were given and apply them to the Jews—it won't work!

Then it says concerning Judah, v 2: "For Judah prevailed among his brothers, and from him *came* the chief ruler... [prophecy of the coming Christ and also a prophecy that the kingship or the rulership would be in Judah] ...but **the birthright was Joseph's.**" The birthright then is the inheritance of the physical land and the physical places as God has said, according to the promises given to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and down to Joseph; which then reside wholly in Ephraim and Manasseh. You can argue back and forth is England Ephraim or is America Ephraim. They're the sons of Joseph and you could make a case for either one. Rather than argue about it, just look at the sons of Joseph and see where the birthright has been.

Let's go to Matthew, the first chapter, and let's see what it says about Jesus Christ. Now we know where it says that God gave His *only begotten Son*—that is 'mono gennao.' God did not beget any more than just Jesus Christ in the flesh. When it's referring to God the Father, Jesus is not called *the firstborn* but the *first begotten*.

Matthew 1:25: "But he did not have sexual relations *with* her until *after* she had given birth to her son... [and this word here is 'prototokos' which means *firstborn*—a fact that a birth has occurred, a live birth.] ...the firstborn; and he called His name Jesus."

Here's a mistake that the Church made. The Church used to claim that—and some churches still do—that the Church is the mother; because the Church, collectively, is referred to as 'thea-ekklesia' in the female sense. But that doesn't make the Church the mother. Galatians 4:26: "But the Jerusalem above is free, which is *the* mother of us all." Now, when is the birth going to be? We saw last week: at the resurrection.

Let's go to Isaiah 66, and let's see just a couple of other things here concerning that resurrection and the prophecy of it. Now this can be applied to the New Testament Church at its very beginning. This can be applied also for those also who are in the Church of God, that later are kicked out by those who hate you. Remember what Jesus told the apostles: 'They've hated Me, they will hate you, also.'

Isaiah 66:5: "Hear the Word of the LORD, you who tremble at His Word, 'Your brethren who hated you, who cast you out for My name's sake...'" You go back and look what happened to those Christians who were Jews; who were kicked out of the synagogue; out of their homes.

I've joked with Carl Franklin a couple of times about what would have Paul's life been, if the Jews back then had all the things they had today for spying. They had helicopters to go track him down and all that sort of thing, Paul would have been long gone and dead—and he was hated. Remember when he just tried to speak to the people at the temple. As soon as he mentioned the word *Gentiles* there was riot and he had to be saved and taken to prison to rescue his life. It applies there and to all that fit into that category, obviously.

"...said, "Let the LORD be glorified." But He will appear to your joy and they will be ashamed.' A sound of noise from the city, a sound from the temple, the sound of the LORD repaying His enemies" (vs 5-6). You can put in there: 1-Cor. 15 where then he is going to reign until 'His enemies be made His footstool.' Many different things. Go ahead and do a little word study on 'enemies.'

- Remember those who didn't accept Jesus?
- Remember those who cast out the servants that were sent?
- What was it said?
- *Bring those My enemies and slay them here before My eyes.*

So God is going to take care of them in the long run.

Verse 7—here's a prophecy of the resurrection of all the Church: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.... [This is directly referring to Jesus, but (as we will see) it flows right into the resurrection of the Church—being born at once.] ...Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day?... [and in the Septuagint this the same as giving birth.] ...Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day?... [the answer is: *Yes!* So the resurrection's going to occur in one day] ...or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (vs 7-8). Are we not the children of God? *Yes!*

Verse 9: "'Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?' saith the LORD. 'Shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb?' says your God. 'Rejoice you with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all you that mourn for her'" (vs 9-10). So there's a prophecy of Jerusalem above as the 'mother of us all.' Now, obviously, that is in symbolism.

Now let's go to Hebrews, the first chapter, because this becomes very important for us to understand. This becomes important because this is the place where the word 'gennao' for *begotten* is used; and also 'prototokos' for *firstborn*—showing that they are two different things. But when it is 'prototokos' referring to Christ as the *firstborn* that is after the fact of the resurrection, because why? *He was firstborn in the flesh when Mary gave birth*—correct? And God begat no others but Jesus. Who is the firstborn from among the dead? *Jesus!*—'prototokos'; we saw that last time (Col. 1).

Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by His Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who, being the brightness of His glory and the exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins..." (vs 1-3). That's interesting— isn't it? 'by Himself'—in other words, *alone*. That had to be done. That's why on the cross Jesus said, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?' Because He had to have that time absolutely alone.

"...sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'?.... (vs 3-5). That is from the root verb 'gennao'—which means *to engender*. And in the Greek you have the 'gen'—which still carries over to the English. 'Gen' is *ga*, which you have 'gennao' and all of the forms of the verb 'gennao'

"...And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'? And again, when He brought the..." (vs 51-6)—*KJV: first begotten*; but that is not a proper translation, because the word here is not 'proto-gennao'; this is 'prototokos'—the *firstborn*. So when he's 'prototokos' He's resurrected from the dead.

Colossians 1—let's look at that again so we can see how the word 'prototokos' is used. We saw where it was 'prototokos' when He was born, the firstborn of the virgin Mary. He was born of the dead so then, even though the Bible doesn't say so, Jesus was 'born again.' To a Protestant, when they hear that they go absolutely bananas, because to

them that means *answering the call of the preacher and running down and accepting the Lord Jesus, then you're born again*. But because they don't understand it, they don't understand that in order for Him to have been resurrected and be the firstborn—'prototokos'—from among the dead, He had to be born again. If He was the firstborn when He was delivered of by His mother Mary, and He's the firstborn among the dead, then being born again has exactly what we talked about last time: 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.'

Colossians 1:18: "And He is the Head of the body, the Church; Who is *the* beginning, **the firstborn from among the dead**... [there it is right there, 'the firstborn from the dead.' The word 'prototokos' is also used in v 15: the first born of 'every creature.' That does not mean creature in the sense of everything that God has created. That means the first born of every creature who is *raised from the dead*, which is referring to Christ.] ...so...[it pleased the Father] ...that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence."

Let's put a couple of more Scriptures here so we can finish that. Romans 8 will fit in with the series we're doing with 1-Peter. This is a true statement when you're going through the difficulties. It doesn't feel like it, but it's still true.

Romans 8:28: "And we know... [We're going to see that's the whole thing concerning *hope*. This is what you've got to know]: ...**that all things work together for good** to those that love God... [Even the unpleasant work together for good in the long-run. In the short-run, maybe not. But in the long-run.] ...to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. Because those whom he did foreknow, He also predestinated... [That's God's plan, predestinated you]: ...*to be* conformed to the image of His own Son, that he might be *the* firstborn among many brethren" (vs 28-29).

You put all the Scriptures together and it's very clear that you are not born again until the resurrection. And here this word for *firstborn* is 'prototokos'—referring to Jesus. Doesn't it say back there in 1 Cor. 15, we covered last time? Jesus, the *firstfruits*, Jesus, the *firstborn* from among the dead. So, I will say as I did last week, if there's a Protestant who thinks that he is *born again*, come and produce yourself in a spiritual body and show us so that we may believe. If not, it's false doctrine, it just ain't so!

One other thing in prophecy, let's go to Hebrews, the twelfth chapter, and see what we are called—we're also *firstborn*. Christ, the *firstfruits*. He was first of the first.

(go to the next track)

Remember what it says 'Blessed and Holy is he that has part in the **first** resurrection' (Rev. 20).

Hebrews 12:22: "But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem... [Which is *the* 'mother of us all.'] ...and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering; and to *the* church of *the* firstborn, registered in *the* book of life in heaven... [They are not *in* heaven, but their names are **written in** heaven—right? *Yes, indeed!*] ...and to God, *the* Judge of all; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected; and to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that of* Abel" (vs 22-24). That ties right back in with what we covered in 1-Peter, the first chapter.

Now you understand a little more clearly why that it had to be translated, even in the *King James*, in 1-Peter 1:3: "...He has begotten us again." It could not be translated: *borned us again*—because the Father begets. There are several things that we need to do here, several things we need to cover. Now, just to show you how all of this ties in together—and I am amazed in just going through and seeing how tremendously that this has been written as far as the original. Not what I've written; I just translated it in a way that I hope is a little easier to read. But what is in these verses, all jammed-packed together in preaching the Gospel—in just those verses—it is amazing! Let's look at some of the words that are here, some of the key words:

- 1-Peter 1:2: "...**predetermined** knowledge of God the Father..." Now we find that throughout the writings of the Apostle Paul, as well.
- Then "...by **sanctification**..."
- "...unto the **obedience**..."—*the obedience*.

We need to understand that because Protestants think they can do anything they want to. They say it is once done, completed in Christ Jesus, and that once you've accepted Him; once you've been born again in your mind, you cannot sin after that and you are bound to be in the Kingdom of God, period—and there's nothing you can do to do it—it's a finished, complete work in Christ. Now yet, because 'we are His workmanship.' God is working in us now to complete it, so there has to be the obedience.

- "...**sprinkling of the blood** of Jesus Christ..."
- "...**grace**..."
- v 3: "...**hope**..."

- v 4: “...**inheritance**...”—very important. Where is it? *In heaven*—we don’t have it now.
- v 5: “...**faith**...”—and I circled *hope* and then *faith* and came down to another verse—so we have **hope and faith and love** or **faith hope and love**.

—*faith hope and love* or *hope, faith and love* or *love, hope and faith*—however you want to list it—‘the greatest of these is **love**.’

1-Corinthians 13:13: “And now, these three remain... [or that is: ‘now remains living’ or ‘is abiding’] ...**faith, hope and love**... [if you have a King James it says ‘charity’, but the Greek there is ‘agape’ which means *love*.] ...but the greatest of these *is love*.” Now we find exactly the same thing in the Epistle of Peter: **Faith, hope, grace, love!**

Let’s come back here to 1-Peter 1:5—next key word, right after faith:

- “...**salvation**...”
- v 6: “...**trials**”—because 1-Peter says a lot about that.
- v 7—the phrase here: “...**proving of your faith**...”
- v 8: “**Whom, not having seen are loving**...”

So there is ‘**faith, hope and love**.’ We’ll tie in *love* a little bit later on. We’re to have love unfaded.

- v 8: “...**believing**...”
- v 9: “...**faith**...”
- v 10: “...**salvation**...” and “...**grace**...”

Now, we could probably go through the whole book of 1-Peter and pick out these key words all of the way through, so I’ll leave that up to you to do. But I just wanted to do this so that we can see and know that the Gospel is the same—the Gospel that Paul preached, the Gospel that Peter preached, the Gospel that James preached, the Gospel that John preached, the Gospel that all the apostles preached *is the same*.

Let’s come back here to v 4 “Into an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us.” The whole purpose, brethren, of the Epistle of 1-Peter is to get your mind on Christ, get your mind on serving God, and keep it there. It’s not going to corrupt, it’s not going to be defiled by anybody, and it’s not going to fade away and *it’s reserved in heaven for us*.

Let’s see how the Apostle Paul preached exactly the same thing. What did Jesus say, the very last thing in the book of Revelation: He said, ‘Behold, I come quickly and My reward is **with Me**, when I come.’

2-Corinthians 5:1: “For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with *human*

hands, eternal in the heavens.... [it’s not here yet] ...For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; if indeed *that* being clothed, we may not be found naked” (vs 1-3). There are many parables you can have in there.

- What is the parable of the wedding feast? *Have on the appropriate garments!*
- What does it say there? ‘*Walk in the white raiment of the saints, lest you be found naked!*’
- What does it say there concerning the Laodiceans? ‘*You’re wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked!*’

Verse 4: “For we who are in *this* tabernacle truly do groan, being burdened... [the older we get, the more we understand that, how limited we are] ... not that we wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon so **that the mortal flesh may be swallowed up by life**... [there it is, when you are resurrected, you receive eternal life and inheritance] ...Now, He Who is working out this very thing for us *is* God, Who has also given us the earnest of the Spirit” (vs 4-5). There it is again.

When you get into a lot of these strange-sounding doctrines it is because people have a certain knowledge to a certain point and have not really studied the subject through. And that’s why many of these doctrines come up the way that they do. Now I’ve been saying I need to bring a sermon on sacred names. People try and go God one further, because you are complete in Christ.

1-Peter 1:4: “...it’s reserved in heaven for us.” Christ is going to bring it **with Him**. Now what can fade? What can become defiled? What can corrupt? *Well, anything that’s physical is corruptible!* So are our own bodies. That’s why Paul said ‘this corruption must put on incorruption.’ That’s why we need to keep looking toward and for the first resurrection. And how many times does it come along? Look at the example that we saw in our lifetime of what happened when a church leader got overwhelmed with riches and money and set his heart just on that?

Let’s look at a couple of Scriptures to go along with that. Let’s go to Matthew, the sixth chapter. And this is true, and you can take this anyway you want to apply it, because it applies in many, many different ways. I’ve seen this used by churches to say, ‘Now brethren, you send in every penny you can.’ I’ve seen this used by people to not even send in even a single penny. So people can apply it anyway they want to! But the fact remains is this, what Jesus said:

Matthew 6:19: “Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust spoil, and where thieves break through and steal...”

I was shocked! I was amazed! I saw on a news report—I forget when it was—but did you know that there were **3-million** burglaries in family residences in the United States last year? [1991] Isn't that amazing? What always happens when you get everything all stored up. How many stories have their been of rich people that have lost everything? Well, even when they had it they still had nothing. Look at the other end of the scale. You know, people are so weird today; it's amazing! There are those you can sell. There is a business now where you can sell 'hoboing.' Just like signing up to go work out with your favorite baseball team in spring training. You pay \$3500 to go down there and do that. You can sign up, for \$1500, and go hoboing—and you go out and catch a freight train. And they were amazed at all the work they had to go through to do it. So you've got the extremes of the rich and poor that are saving up for themselves treasure on the earth, in whatever way it may be.

But Jesus said, v 20: "But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust spoils, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (vs 20-21). So, whatever your treasure is, if your treasure's not in God, that's where your heart will be. It's just a living principle, just an absolute living principle.

Luke 12 is compared then to what God is giving us: an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, reserved in heaven for us. I always got a kick out of these first two verses here—Luke 12:13: "Then one from the multitude said to Him, 'Master, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me'.... [What did Jesus answer?] ...But He said to him, 'Man, who has appointed Me a judge or a divider over you?'" (vs 13-14).

How many family arguments have been as to who gets what. That's the whole problem with the world today— isn't it? And one of the biggest sources is, which one of the sons of Abraham gets the treasure? Those from Isaac? *or* Those from Ishmael? Look at all the problems it has. Then He gave this parable:

Verse 15: "And He said to them, 'Watch out, and keep yourselves from covetousness, for no one's life is in the abundance of the things that he possesses.' Then He spoke a parable to them, saying, 'The ground of a certain rich man brought forth abundantly. And he was reasoning within himself, saying, "What shall I do, for I have nowhere to lay up my fruit?" And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my granaries and build greater *ones*, and there will I lay up all my produce and my good things.... [That is he's going to store them in there.] ...Then I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your rest, eat,

drink, *and* be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool, this night your soul shall be required of you; and to whom will you leave what you have prepared for yourself?' So *shall it be* to the one who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (vs 15-21). And there's nothing that you can compare what God has given to us as an inheritance and the promises to whatever is on the earth. There is absolutely nothing! So that's why Peter is writing this.

Now, let's go back to 1-Peter 1:5: "Who are being safeguarded by the power of God through the power of God through faith, for salvation..." That's the whole operation of what God is going to do. You can think of the Scriptures there, what did Jesus say? 'All that the Father has given Me, none shall be lost. None is able to take them out of the Father's hand.'

"...*that is* ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you yourselves are greatly rejoicing; *but* if it is necessary, at the present time you have been in distress..." (vs 5-6). The *King James* translates that: 'you are in heaviness.' Distressed or depressed or heaviness. That's the way some of these problems come upon you.

"...for a little while by various trials." (v 6). As I've said before, none of the trials that we go through are the trials that we think that we're going to go through. That's why we have to be ready at all times.

Here's why, v 7: "In order that the proving of your faith... [God is going to test our faith. It's interesting that it is the 'proving.' It's an ongoing thing.] ...which is much more precious than gold..." We'd all love to have gold. I've given sermons on gold and attitudes of gold and all that sort of thing. And people are fascinated with gold. They traveled the earth, go here and there, and try and get as much as they can, and so forth.

"...that **is perishing** even though it [your faith] is being tested by fire... [What is the old expression on some of that? 'Boy, I sure got burned! Oh, let me see your flesh where its burnt. No, it's just the trial you're going through. The heat of the trial feels like fire.] ...may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (vs 5-7).

That's the whole goal. That's the whole purpose in it. And that's where we need to constantly be looking to and aiming for. And I know and you know that sometimes during the week when you're down there in the trenches, it's kind of hard to keep your mind on that. But that's why we've got Sabbath. That's why we get together every week, so that we can keep our minds on it. And there is a blessing, there is the blessing that Jesus said. Jesus, when He was praying for the 12 apostles, He said:

‘And Father, I pray not for these also, but also for those who shall believe on Me through their words.’ Now they saw Christ. They handled Christ. They heard Christ. They saw Him resurrected. They saw Him as a spirit being. They saw Him ascend into the heavens. Not us. We haven’t.

Verse 8: “Whom, not having seen, you love... [present tense: *you are loving*.] ...on Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you are believing... [present tense: *loving* and *believing*] ...*and* are rejoicing with unspeakable joy, and are praising *Him*.” That doesn’t mean we all get up and shout, yell and scream and dance, because it says it’s ‘unspeakable joy.’ This kind of joy is when you are praying to God and you realize the absolute inadequacy of your self as a human being; the utter folly of your own heart and mind when compared to God; and the joy that you have in your mind, spiritually speaking, when you understand what God is offering and giving to live forever. You don’t have this every day. There are times when the inspiration in praying really hits you, and that is what it’s talking about: the joy that is *unspeakable*, and you have been *praising* Him.

Verse 9: “*And are* receiving the fulfillment **of your faith**... [You take all of these things together, tie all of these verses together, you are receiving the fulfillment of your faith] ...—*even the* salvation of your souls.” Now, how important is this salvation? Brethren,

- it’s the whole reason *why we’re here*
- it’s the whole reason *why the Bible was written*
- it’s the whole reason *for the plan of God*

Verse 10: “Concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace *that would come to you* have diligently searched out and intently inquired, searching into what *way* and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ *which was* in them was indicating, *and* testifying beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and those glories that would follow” (vs 9-10). The famous account there is of Daniel.

Let’s go back to Daniel, the twelfth chapter. You think of Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Hosea and Amos and Joel and Obadiah and Habakkuk and Zechariah and Micah and all of the prophets, and all of the unnamed prophets that we don’t have writings of, like Nathaniel and Gad the seer, and so forth. But here Daniel is the famous one, where it talks about this because Daniel wanted to know. Here’s one of the greatest prophets of God. What did God say? Though Daniel or Noah or Job in the end-time, Noah, Daniel and Job—or Job, Daniel and Noah—even though they, with their faith, stood before God, ‘they should save none other but their

own souls.’ And I imagine Ezekiel, when he prophesied, and all the things that Ezekiel went through; all the things that Isaiah went through—ended up being sawn in half—all the things that Jeremiah went through, that Daniel went through. So he’s got all these prophecies, used of God to bring these prophecies.

Daniel 12:5: “Then I Daniel looked; and behold, there stood two others, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the one on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river: ‘How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?’ And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, *saying*, ‘It shall be for a time, times, and a half *a time*. And when the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things shall be finished” (vs 5-7). Daniel’s sitting there watching this going on. So what does he say?

Verse 8: “And I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, ‘O my lord, what shall be the end of these things?’ And he said, ‘Go your way, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and refined. But the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, **but the wise shall understand**” (vs 8-10).

We’ve always looked at that and said, ‘We’re going to understand prophecy.’ Maybe, maybe, *maybe*! So far, if we were on a baseball team concerning prophecy, we’d all be batting about .0005. When are we going to understand? What’s the first, most important thing we have to understand? **Faith, hope, love, belief!** That’s what we have to understand more than anything else—right?

So, anyone that wants to set themselves up as a prophet; how about all the prophecies that David gave concerning Christ, concerning all of the sufferings, concerning the things that he went through. Can you imagine how David felt when he had to go through Psa. 22 and write that? What was the trial he was going through when that happened to him? *I don’t know, it doesn’t tell us*, but that’s a powerful Psalm there.

1-Peter 1:12: “To whom it was revealed that, not for themselves, **but to us** they were ministering these things, which now have been announced to you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit, sent from heaven—into which things the angels are desiring to look.”

I don’t think, brethren, that in our wildest imaginations, yet, or in our understanding of the Word of God—and I put myself right in that, too—that we fully comprehend what God is going to do

with this inheritance that He has for us. When we get to the Feast of Tabernacles I hope that God will inspire me enough so that we will be able to have little glimmer of that when we study into New Jerusalem. Can you imagine living in a place that is so fantastically beautiful that the streets are like gold, but as clear as diamonds, and that God has the wealth of the universe for our inheritance. Isn't that something?

Now we know a little more today that man is not made to go out into the heavens. They just discovered that man doesn't exist too well in nine days. They lost 25-percent of the muscle mass of their legs. You remember how interesting it was when you saw how that water forms into a ball—did you see that on the news? And how that when you light a flame it forms into a ball. Where there's no gravity, everything forms into its own little ball.

Now, all those who believe that the earth is flat, listen very carefully: *It's not flat!* But there will be those who believe it because they want to believe it! They don't want the Truth, they want their own deception. Now they're discovering what happens to the blood in weightlessness. It also is subject to the same thing as that drop of water. The blood pressure dropped way down, much lower than they expected, much lower. They're beginning to rethink in terms of this thing—and what does this do to Star Trek? Now, for all you Trekkies out there, who love it, sorry to burst your bubble, as it were. But you're not going to be traveling in space. I don't think that a baby born in space could live very long. That's my own personal opinion after reading that today.

So, man truly is earth-bound—isn't he? Oh, he can go out in space and he can fool himself with all of this sort of good stuff that all the technology they can have, but you know, God is just sitting up there, He's just looking. He knows man isn't going to go anywhere. We brag about our space shuttle and our rockets and all this sort of thing. And God says, 'Look at the heavens, I made those.' Quite a difference!

It's so fantastic! But even the angels are desiring to look into, they want to see, because of what we read in Hebrews, the first chapter: Unto which of the angels did He say at anytime, 'You are My Son this day I have begotten You'? Is that not what God says to us? Have you not been begotten again to a living hope? *Yes!*

Verse 13: "For this reason..." It says in the *King James*: 'gird up the loins of your mind.' And every time I think of that, I think of someone putting on a girdle. Like they used to, years ago, they would get these girdles and they would just squeeze down a woman's waist to about 12-inches around. I don't know how they ever did that. It's just beyond me. So

I translated it a little bit differently, which it means in the Greek: 'have your minds prepared for action.' And that's what it is—spiritual action, spiritual doing, whatever it is.

"...have your minds ready, be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (v 13). How do we do this?

Let's go to 2-Corinthians 10, here's how we do this. This is the battle, brethren, that we need to be waging. This is how we keep our minds ready, even though we're in the flesh. We have been given the begettal of God's Holy Spirit. But here's what we're to do, and here's how it should be done.

1-Corinthians 10:1: "Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ..." That's far preferable. I look back and see all the roaring power I've tried to do in the past and it didn't get me anywhere. *Nowhere!* But you think at the time you're right. 'There is a way that seems right to a man, the ends thereof are the ways of death.'

So, if we can do it with the meekness and gentleness of Christ—and *that's exactly the whole trial that's coming upon the whole Church*. Did you know that? Are we willing, by choice, to follow Christ without someone having to make us do it? And if someone makes me do it, or makes you do it, have you done it? *No!* Because the Bible says, 'not by compulsion' because that's what it is by making you do it. Because of Christ, that's why we need to do it. That's why even though it is better to come to church because someone may threaten you that if you don't come to church dire things are going to happen, it's still better for you to assemble with God's people under that circumstance than to not assemble at all. How much better it is that you assemble together as a church and as a group because you *love Christ and because you want to! Because you want to of your own choice!* That's what he's saying here.

Look at what the Apostle Paul thought of himself: "On the one hand, when present with you I *am* base; but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you... [in letters that he wrote] ...But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the* flesh.... [that's why the Apostle Paul did what he did.] ...For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh.... [here's the key; here's how to have your minds prepared for action]: ...For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds" (v 1-4).

That is *being converted* in your mind and heart. And the hardest thing, the most difficult thing to do is to convert and change the mind. Of course, that's what God the Father is doing, working and changing our minds—right? *Yes!* What is that saying? *A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.* Isn't that true? *Absolutely!* And I'll tell you what, *no one is going to beat you into the Kingdom of God against your will.* That's why we have to *choose*.

And here is why we have to fight, v 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God... [The most powerful thing you have to fight against is that which you're walking around with between your eyes—*your own carnal mind.*] ...**and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ**... [The Gospel of Peter is the same as the Gospel of Paul.] ...and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled.... [Then he gives this; this is interesting]: ...Are you looking at things according to their appearance? If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ's, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ's, so also *are* we Christ's" (vs 5-7).

I found that to be true. My wife could probably recount to you more times than I can remember of where I have been wrong in what I've thought. I go back and see that. You know, it's not easy. Why? *Because it's a stronghold!* Now what is a 'stronghold'? *That's something that's got to come down.* What do they do when they have an old building they want to tear down? *They get the dynamite, that's the easiest way.* They blow it down. So, I guess spiritually speaking, that's what we need to do, through Christ.

1-Peter 1:13: "For this reason, have your minds ready, be self-controlled... [that is with Christ in you] ...*and* be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **As obedient children...**" (vs 13-14)—and that comes right back to v 2: 'unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood.' And it comes down here to v 22: 'and your souls have been purified by obedience to the Truth.'

So, you have vs 14, 2, 22. We'll talk a little bit more about that next time, because there's some people who think, 'Well, the grace of God delivers us from being obedient to anything other than just a purring in our hearts—which then is love toward God.' Not true!

"...do not be conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in *your former* ignorance. But according as He Who called you is Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all *your* conduct... [You want to mark that down as being 'the goal in life.']

...For it has been written, 'You be Holy, because I am Holy'" (vs 14-16). And the grace of God is what keeps us in that state of Holiness. That's what does it. That's what's so fantastic. That's why we need to really call upon the grace of God, live in the grace of God, all of these things as we're going along, brethren.

Verse 17: "And if you call upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons, be conducting the time of your *life's* journey in *the* fear of God."

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 13:1-2
- 2) Deuteronomy 21:15-17
- 3) 1 Chronicles 5:1-2
- 4) Matthew 1:25
- 5) Galatians 4:26
- 6) Isaiah 66:5-10
- 7) Hebrews 1:1-6
- 8) Colossians 1:18
- 9) Romans 8:28-29
- 10) Hebrews 12:22-24
- 11) 1 Peter 1:3, 2-5
- 12) 1 Corinthians 13:13
- 13) 1-Peter 1:5-10, 4
- 14) 2-Corinthians 5:1-5
- 15) 1-Peter 1:4
- 16) Matthew 6:19-21
- 17) Luke 12:13-21
- 18) 1 Peter 1:5-10
- 19) Daniel 12:5-10
- 20) 1 Peter 1:12-13
- 21) 2 Corinthians 10:1-7
- 22) 1 Peter 1:13-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 49
- 1 Corinthians 15
- Colossians 1:15
- Revelation 20
- Psalm 22
- Revelation 1
- 1-Peter 1:22

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