

The Little Book

A Message from Jesus to the Churches

**From
Jesus Christ**

*“God, ...has in these last days
spoken to us by His Son”
Heb. 1:1-2*

Through His Friend
Joseph M. Smith

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Emphases not found in original scriptures are ours.
(2008 Printing)

Acknowledgments

It is because you love your children so much Heavenly Father that you are willing to share with us what you are about to do.

*Thank you Jesus for making your intentions clear to those who love you.
Thank you for warning us of what is to come and for giving us time to be ready.
Thank you for sending your Holy Spirit to lead us to repentance by softening our hearts and drawing us into a closer relationship with you.*

To God be praise, glory, and honor forever and ever. Amen.

Introduction

This Little Book Announces Christ's Second Coming and the Father's Invitation to the Wedding of His Son. It shows what we are to do to prepare to meet Him. Jesus Christ is going to facilitate this preparation by softening hearts. Jesus warns us and states the rewards, or consequences, for following, or not following, His commands.

Chapter One

A Message from Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ has an announcement to share with His Body—the Church!

But how could He share this new information (which has been in His Word all along) with all that believe in Him? If He revealed it to one denomination, the other denominations would reject it. If He showed it to the Pope, the Protestants would disdain it and vise-versa.

There is no way Christ would choose an ordinary Christian to reveal something to His Body! Or would He? And if He did, who would listen? After all, many assume there are no prophets in the Church today.

So how would God get our attention? How do you think Jesus Christ would make an announcement to the Church? In what form must this revelation come before the churches would accept it?

Does it matter how Jesus Christ chooses to reveal His will?

The question for us today is, “Will we be humble enough to accept His message if it were shown to us?”

What if Jesus Christ Himself were to open and reveal to our understanding a message already written down in His Word?

Would we believe a message if it came from Jesus Christ Himself?

This message comes from the Lord and is to all God's people. It is to all Churches, Denominations, Christian Groups, and Christian Organizations Worldwide. It is a message to the Jewish people as well, if they too will have ears to hear.

Today marks the day Jesus Christ is revealing this message to you! Jesus is going to show you what He is about to do and this message is your invitation to join Him in His work. **Will you listen to what the Spirit of Christ is saying to you personally and to the churches?**

The Little Book

The message begins to unfold in Revelation 10:1, the "Mighty Angel," or "Mighty Messenger," is none other than Jesus Christ. Jesus is both, "The Mighty Messenger" and "The Message."

Revealing the contents of *The Little Book* comes in the sixth trumpet (the second woe), "...in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound..." (v. 7). This means right at the end of the sixth trumpet.

The words of *The Little Book* are open. They are available to us today and they come from Jesus Christ Himself. *The Little Book* isn't a closed book. It isn't hidden. This knowledge is already here and is now ready to be gleaned. The information Christ is opening to our comprehension has been in the Bible for centuries. But now is the time for us to understand.

John, here in the tenth chapter, is representative of all believers or worshipers of God. We, as the Church today, are told by the voice from heaven to take *The Little Book* from Jesus Christ. **We are to eat and digest the contents of this *Little Book*.** The revelation to follow can seem encouraging at first, but is a hard reality to digest as we realize the scope and consequences for God's people.

The first instructions given by Jesus in this passage to John and to the Church today are as follows:

- (1) "...Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev. 10:11).
- (2) John (Church) was given "a reed like a measuring rod" (a standard of measurement) and told to, "...Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshipers there. But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles..." (Rev. 11:1-2 NIV).

What is Jesus talking about here? What exactly does Jesus say is happening?

Did you notice that this measuring, or sizing up, is being done among the worshipers of God and not in the world?

What does this mean to prophesy (to speak through inspiration of the Holy Spirit) again - like it is a second time?

The Church has been prophesying or preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God for the past nearly 1975 years. Has the message changed so we must go back and cover similar territory with a different approach?

A Call to All Believers in God

Let's see what Jesus Christ is showing us here. "...Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev. 10:11). We have some unfinished work to do. This "prophesy again" shows that a message must go out to the believers of God. It is additional instructions from our Lord to His Body—the Church.

The first message went to the whole world. The second message was sent to the Church first and then it will be given to the rest of the world!

What work needs to be done by "the going back again"?

The Little Book is a message from Jesus to the Churches! Jesus goes on to show the Church why *The little Book* was so bitter to stomach, yet it has a sweet taste in the mouth of every true Christian.

John, "...was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, 'Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshipers there. But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles...'" (Rev. 11:1 NIV).

The believers in God (the "Temple of God" and "the Altar") are to be measured to determine the faithful worshipers of God.

Where is the "Temple of God" today?

In 1 Corinthians 3:16 we read, "Do you not know that **you are the temple of God** and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (NKJV).

Christians who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them are part of the temple of God. These are measured for a purpose that we will see in a moment.

"The altar" is also to be measured. What group of people that are believers in God look longingly for a physical temple and "altar" to enhance their worship? Since 70 AD, the Jewish People have yearned for an "altar." Before 70 AD, the Jewish People (Israel) needed an altar as a part of their worship.

These two groups are to be measured by the same “measuring rod” or standard of measurement. Both groups have knowledge of the God of the Bible.

In the Old Covenant, what was the standard by which a person was measured to determine his relationship to God? The standard of measurement was the Law.

Today, in the New Covenant, what is the standard by which all believers of God are measured? **God gave us a new and better standard—His Son Jesus Christ!** We, the believers in God, are measured by our closeness to Jesus Christ. **Our relationship with the Father is measured by our relationship with His Son Jesus!**

Why is the measuring being done? What does it mean “to measure the people of God”?

This is the part of *The Little Book* that Jesus said would “make thy belly bitter.”

Measuring, throughout the Bible, has always indicated a time of testing. To measure means to size up or to test the strength, durability, or quality of character for a given purpose. We see that this testing or measuring of believers will be allowed to continue for forty-two months (Rev. 11:2) or three and one half years.

This same time of serious testing is prophesied in Daniel 7:21-27. We read in verse 25, “And he [the beast] shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”

This is the same time Jesus described in Matthew 24:21-22, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

THERE IS A MONUMENTAL TIME OF MEASURING AND TESTING COMING UPON THE CHURCH!

During the intervening years since Jesus returned to heaven, the Church has fallen asleep. See Matthew 25:1-13.

The intent and purpose of this book is to awake and to warn the Church of the hard times to come. It also announces to the Church the Good News of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ so we will prepare for that great event!

Being called a Christian is not enough! A sleeping Christian is not worshiping!

A true worshiper of God must, “...love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength...” And, “...love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:30-

31 NKJV).

In John 4:22-24 (NKJV) we receive additional instructions about worship from Jesus. “You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. [Jesus said, “Salvation is of the Jews,” meaning that one of the announcements and witnesses about God sending Jesus Christ into this world came through the Old Testament. The other announcement and witness, of course, is that of the New Testament.] But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

This worship is not just head knowledge. Knowing about God, or being familiar with the name of Jesus Christ, is not what God is looking for here. Being a great Bible scholar, theologian, or a Bible academic at a noted university will not do it. Having great titles, names, and letters, before or behind one’s name, will make no difference. Being a great lecturer on a large speaking circuit, talking about God or the Bible, will be useless if one trusts in it to give status or importance when being measured.

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46 NIV).

God is looking for those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. *Jesus is searching for those who are “in love” with Him—they will be part of His Bride!* He is looking for those who have a deep, love-filled relationship with Him.

This relationship desires Jesus Christ to dwell in the deepest part of our being. It is asking Jesus to live in us and through us so we can reflect God’s love to one another and to the world.

The Gentiles

But why are the Gentiles left out? And who are called “Gentiles” today?

“Gentiles,” here in Revelation 11:2, is referring to “nonbelievers” or “nonworshippers” of God. In this revelation, a “Gentile” is a person not having a relationship with God. Daniel was told by the messenger, “...Go *your way*, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand” (Dan. 12:9-10 NKJV).

These “Gentiles” do not have the Holy Spirit and, by nature, don’t desire to worship God. These “Gentiles” are **not gentiles by race or ethnic origin necessarily, but are gentiles in their relationship with God.** They are spiritually Gentiles for sure and not solely by ethnic origin—cut off from God as far as their worship is concerned.

I speak here in a broad sense when I say, in the modern “civilized” world today, many people are where they want to be, spiritually speaking. We have, in some measure,

reached a saturation point in many areas of the world when it comes to preaching the Gospel. People are for or against the message from God. Almost all the Churches in modern nations are in decline and floundering. In the few churches that are seeing growth, it is primarily transfers from other churches that are making up most of the growth. People have had enough contact with God to know that they are where they want to be, with or without Him. Many denominations are considering changing days and times for worship to attract people back to church, but with only limited results. People have made up their minds. In Revelation 22:11 Jesus said, “Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy” (NIV).

As you read *The Little Book*, understand that we are near the threshold of tribulation like the world has never experienced. God is giving us time to repent of our own spiritual drowsiness and to reach out to the people of God so this “prophesy again” and “the cry” of Matthew 25:6 can take place.

God is giving us time to reach out in an attitude of humility to our loved ones and to the sleeping and wounded believers everywhere with a sincere desire for reconciliation. We must encourage them to reconsider their relationship with God and the offer of salvation.

Some may think that as soon as a person rejects the clear offer of salvation presented to them that he or she is, then and there, doomed to hell, never again to have another chance for accepting the offer of salvation from Jesus Christ. This simply is not true. God is love. And He continues to reach out to us with His love as long as we are alive. God is not a one-chance God. How many times has God, through Jesus Christ, helped us after wrong decisions were made?

You may begin to see that this is a different focus than Matthew 28:18-20 and it is! God is doing something new. **This is the same message and the same messenger, but its focus is toward the people of God rather than the world in general.**

This new message, which is the old message with urgency, is to the people of God! This prophesying again, or crying out to God’s people, is for a dual purpose—to wake us up and to explain what we must do.

Jesus Christ is making a call for an “awakening” and a “revival” among all believers in God worldwide!

By this “prophesy again” and “the cry,” ***Jesus is announcing His plans for transformation and reconciliation on a scale unheard-of before in the history of the world!*** This will be motivated by the Holy Spirit in the worshipers of God worldwide before and during the great tribulation!

At this point you may begin to say, “This all sounds confusing.” But remember, it is Jesus who is the revelator. He is the one who has given us *The Little Book* and it is open

for us to understand.

Chapter Two

Instructions from Jesus

Matthew 24 and 25 contain one of the last recorded conversations from Jesus to His disciples two days before He went to the cross. After leaving Jerusalem and returning to the Mount of Olives, Jesus sat down with His disciples and they asked Him an important question. **“...Tell us,... what *shall be* the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?”**

One of the signs of Christ's Second Coming is found in Matthew 24:14, “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” This sign had the whole world as its intended target.

But Jesus went on to show another sign of His coming as He began to explain the story of the virgins.

A “Cry to Wake up” Must Go Out

“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the Bridegroom” (Matt. 25:1 NIV).

“At that time” of the Kingdom of God is now! The time is the same setting as Revelation 10, just before the days in which the seventh angel (or messenger) begins to sound. The Kingdom of God has been growing like a little leavening in flour for over 1970 years. The Kingdom of God, unknown to most people, has permeated the whole earth.

“Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps” (Matt. 25:2-4 NIV).

These ten virgins are representative of the people of God today just as the “Temple of God” and “the Altar” in Revelation 11 are the people of God.

These ten virgins picture people who only believed in the one true God, thus virgins. But they all had one thing in common. They all slumbered and slept. They figured, “The Lord (Bridegroom) is taking His time so we can get a little rest before He arrives.” They all became drowsy and fell asleep.

But, **“At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the Bridegroom! Come out to meet Him!’”** (Matt. 25:6 NIV). **“At midnight”** is “...in the days when the seventh angel [or

messenger] is about to sound his trumpet..." (Rev. 10:7 NIV).

This “cry” is the center of Christ’s message for us today! This “cry” is the “prophecy again” of Revelation 10:11.

Remember the question Christ’s disciples asked at the beginning of this time of instruction? “...Tell us,... **what shall be the sign of Thy coming**, and of the end of the world?” (Matt. 24:3).

“The Cry” is one of the Signs of Christ’s Second Coming!

Have you ever thought about whom is to make this cry? I, Joe, asked Jesus that question.

Here is His answer: **THE BRIDE! It is the bride who is to make “the cry”!**

Who else could it be? The bride is the only one who would have been up all-night! She knew her Lord and Master was coming. She was fervently preparing for the wedding! This was not the time for her to sleep!

There is so much to be done before a wedding! The announcements must go out! The bridesmaids must be ready!

Those desiring to be part of the Bride of Christ are being asked to make a diligent effort to announce His coming to the whole family of God! **They are to invite everyone called by His Name (believers in God)**, the ones that were bidden to the wedding, **to prepare for the wedding of the Lamb.** (See Matt. 22:2-14.)

This “cry” going out to the people of God is one of the signs of Christ’s Second Coming! This “cry” signals the return of Jesus Christ! We are to announce Christ’s coming with fervor! **Jesus Christ is asking any of His believers that are awake to announce to the rest of the believers in God that He is coming again! We are to prepare to meet Him!**

The message to the followers of God today is, **“WAKE UP, OUR LORD IS COMING QUICKLY!”**

And it is this *Little Book* that gives us our instructions from Jesus.

The Bride of Christ

In the middle of Christ’s instruction to the twelve disciples, Jesus asked an important question. **“Who then is the faithful and wise servant**, whom the Master has put in charge of the servants in His household to give them their food at the proper time?” (Matt. 24:45 NIV).

This question has everything to do with the message Jesus Christ has for the Church today!

The wise and faithful servant will be the one to make “the cry,” “The Lord is coming”!

The faithful and wise servant will be none other than part of the Bride of Christ. It is the Bride who will be the, “...faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them meat in due season... Blessed *is* that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that He shall make him ruler over all His goods” (Matt. 24:45-47). A man usually places his wife over the entire household. And Jesus Christ is no different!

God wants the Bride to, “**Awake His Own**”—those called by His Name!

God wants the Bride to go back and entreat again all those who are His People!

God wants the Bride to reconcile His own people back to Him!

You see, it is our love relationship with Jesus Christ that will determine whether we are those who have been awake all night expecting our Lord and Master. The Bride didn’t go to sleep! She has listened to her Lord and has been making herself ready for the wedding of the Lamb. “These are those who did not defile themselves with women [spiritually pure and undefiled], for they kept themselves pure. **They [the Bride] follow the Lamb wherever He goes.** They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless” (Rev. 14:4-5 NIV). A bride, or a wife, will follow her husband wherever he goes. And Christians who have built a close, intimate, love-filled relationship with Jesus Christ will do the same. They will follow and obey these instructions from Jesus.

Those chosen as part of the Bride of Christ will heed this message from Jesus. They will announce His coming and help the bridesmaids, the rest of God’s people, prepare for the wedding.

This announcement to God’s People is our invitation to the wedding banquet of Jesus Christ! Will we prepare? Or will we have too many, other, “more important things” to do?

In the parable Jesus gave in Matthew 22, **all the original believers that were invited by the Father to the wedding of Jesus refused to get ready and go to the wedding banquet!**

At this point you may well say, “What’s the big deal? We have been preaching the Gospel to the whole world and telling everyone to repent for years. Besides, if we get all excited and tell everyone Jesus is coming again soon, we would look foolish if He delays

His coming.” So the consensus among Christian churches, denominations, and Jewish synagogues will be to pass on the whole idea. So it is that many will simply roll over and go back to sleep.

The key is, **what does the Father want? And will we obey His instructions?**

Who Are the Bridesmaids?

What are some of these preparations Christ wants the Bride to perform? This is where the bridesmaids, or virgins, fit into the story. But who are these ten bridesmaids or virgins?

In Matthew 25:2-3, “Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them” (NIV). The lamps here represent their capacity to carry the Holy Spirit—the oil has always represented the Holy Spirit. Some had it and the others did not. They all had access to the source of life, but all did not, for one reason or another, receive it.

I, Joe, asked Jesus, “Who are these virgins or bridesmaids?” Here is Christ’s answer:

**The “wise virgins” are sleeping Christians in atrophy.
The Jewish people are a type of the “foolish virgins.”**

Why are some called “wise”? They are wise because the Word of God and the Holy Spirit were planted in their hearts. **“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man...”** (Matt. 7:24 NKJV). These “wise” Christians started out with the best of intentions, but somewhere along the way they all fell asleep.

These “wise virgins” are Christians who have been sleeping. They have not been on fire with zeal for their Lord and their God. They have the Spirit of God, but have not been growing in the grace and knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **They found the Rock Jesus Christ but chose to go to sleep on the Rock rather than to build on Him!** These are those of whom Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24:12, “Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold” (NIV). Their love for God and His righteousness has almost disappeared. They have been caught up in the cares of this world.

Many Christians are sleeping. They are embedded comfortably in materialism or denominational doctrines. This keeps them “blinded” to a proper, personal, love-filled relationship with God. They need major adjustments in their lives to be ready to meet their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

The Jewish People Are a Type of the “Foolish Virgins”

“Wait a minute! How can you say the Jewish people are the ‘foolish virgins’ in this account”?

The Holy Spirit flashed, “The Jewish People” into my mind. **Now the Spirit and the Word will never be in disagreement!** What does the Word of God say about being foolish?

If you or I call someone a fool, we are in danger of hellfire (Matt. 5:22), but if Jesus calls one foolish then he is foolish indeed.

In Matthew 7:26 Jesus says, **“...every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man...”**

So the “foolish virgins” are all those who are believers in God (thus virgins) but have chosen to reject, to one degree or another, both Jesus Christ and His message. The Holy Spirit flashed the “Jewish People” to my consciousness to illustrate all those who have dismissed Jesus Christ as the Messiah and King. Many other people have rejected Jesus that are not Jews. They too have gone to sleep and are called to wake up before it is too late.

No Oil

What happens to those who are God’s People but have no oil? “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’ ‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves’” (Matt. 25:7-9 NIV).

“But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the Bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with Him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut” (v. 10 NIV).

“Later the others also came. ‘Sir! Sir!’ They said. ‘Open the door for us!’” (v. 11 NIV).

“But He replied, **‘I tell you the truth, I don't know you’**” (v. 12 NIV).

Why didn’t Jesus know them? Some had an appearance of godliness, but refused the power that comes through Jesus. They had a form of religion or belief but denied Jesus and His message. They taught for doctrines the commandments of men. Tradition took the place of Truth.

It is time for all that have not believed Jesus Christ to **WAKE UP to the fact —The**

Messiah is coming!

The “Jewish People” and all who have rejected God need to be grafted back onto the Vine—Jesus Christ (John 15:1). They are representative of the ones in the story of the ten virgins who had no oil. They never had the Oil of the Holy Spirit because, as a group or individually, they have refused Jesus Christ as being The Messiah. Like the Apostle Paul said, a veil still covers their eyes. “But the people’s minds were hardened, and even to this day whenever the old covenant is being read, a veil covers their minds so they cannot understand the truth. And this veil can be removed only by believing in Christ” (II Cor. 3:14 NLT). They never bothered to build a relationship with Him.

Has God Rejected the Jewish People (Israel)?

As well as this instruction from Jesus, the Apostle Paul had much to say in Romans 11 (NLT) regarding this same topic. Paul asked an important question about the Jewish people: “...Has God rejected His people, the Jews? [And then Paul goes on to answer his own question.] Of course not!... No God has not rejected His own people, whom He chose from the very beginning...” Up to this point in history, “...most of the Jews have not found the favor of God they are looking for so earnestly. A few have—the ones God has chosen—but the rest were made unresponsive... Did God’s people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! His purpose was to make His salvation available to the Gentiles, and then the Jews would be jealous and want it for themselves... For since the Jews’ rejection meant that God offered salvation to the rest of the world, how much more wonderful their acceptance will be. **It will be life for those who were dead!**” (vv. 1-2, 7, 11, 15).

Wow! Isn’t that something? When God again softens the hearts of the Jewish peoples and all who have rejected Him before, **it will be as though they were resurrected from the dead!** In fact, spiritually speaking, that is exactly what will happen.

Paul goes on to say, “**And since Abraham and the other patriarchs were holy, their children will also be holy.** For if the roots of the tree are holy, the branches will be, too. But some of these branches from Abraham’s tree, some of the Jews, have been broken off. And you Gentiles, who were branches from a wild olive tree, were grafted in...” (vv. 16-17 NLT).

In verses 19-26, Paul quotes the Gentiles, “‘Well,’ you may say, ‘those branches were broken off to make room for me.’ Yes, but remember—those branches, **the Jews, were broken off because they didn’t believe God,** and you are there because you do believe. Don’t think highly of yourself, but fear what could happen. For if God did not spare the branches He put there in the first place, He won’t spare you either.

“**Notice how God is both kind and severe.** He is severe to those who disobeyed, but kind to you as you continue to trust in His kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off. **And if the Jews turn from their unbelief, God will graft them back**

into the tree again. He has the power to do it.

“For if God was willing to take you who were, by nature, branches from a wild olive tree and graft you into His own good tree—a very unusual thing to do—**He will be far more eager to graft the Jews back into the tree where they belong.**

“I want you to understand this mystery, dear friends, so that you will not feel proud and start bragging. Some of the Jews have hard hearts, but this will last only until the complete number of Gentiles comes to Christ. And so all Israel will be saved...” (NLT). **The Jewish hearts will remain hard only until the focus and direction of God’s call is changed from the unbelievers, or nonworshippers of God, to the believers in God.**

“Many of the Jews are now enemies of the Good News. But this has been to your benefit, for God has given His gifts to you Gentiles. **Yet the Jews are still His chosen people because of His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.** [Some Christians today do not believe this statement made by the Apostle Paul. Some consider Jews to be old history where salvation is concerned, but God is not so eager to wipe them out.] **For God’s gifts and His call can never be withdrawn.** Once, you Gentiles were rebels against God, but when the Jews refused His mercy, God was merciful to you instead. And now, in the same way, the Jews are the rebels, and God’s mercy has come to you. But someday they, too, will share in God’s mercy. God has imprisoned all people in their own disobedience so He could have mercy on everyone.

“Oh, what a wonderful God we have! How great are His riches and wisdom and knowledge!...” (Rom. 11:28-33 NLT).

The Holy Spirit is beginning to stir the hearts of some of the Jewish people today. Many of them are beginning to see “The Great Light” they have been missing for so long. Remember how the Church was to be measured—tried and tested? God still considers the Jewish people part of His family—His loved ones because of His promises to Abraham. God loves them even if He allowed them to have hardened hearts for a season. God is reaching out once again to the Jewish people. He wants them to know their hearts do not have to stay hard forever.

“If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (II Chron. 7:14).

We see then, that **God has not forgotten the Jewish people anymore than He has anyone else who has rejected Jesus or His message upon first hearing about it.** God has not walked away from His people even if they have turned their backs on Him.

What About Our Families—Our Children?

Where does this put the mates, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of converted Christians today? Remember what the Apostle Paul was saying in Romans

11:16 (NLT), **“And since Abraham and the other patriarchs were holy, their children will also be holy...”**

On the day of Pentecost, when God gave the Holy Spirit to the Church, the people asked, “What shall we do?” The Apostle Peter said, “...Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **The promise is for you and your children** and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:38-39 NIV).

Our children and grandchildren can claim the promise of salvation, “For God’s gifts and His call can never be withdrawn” (Rom. 11:29 NLT). God has not forgotten our children. God is now beginning to reach out to our relatives even though they may have rejected Jesus Christ upon first hearing the Gospel.

In 1 Corinthians 7:14 Paul states, **“For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.”** God respects the family structure that He put into place. **Anyone in the family that has the Holy Spirit makes the rest of the family Holy.**

How long does this holiness last? Until they leave home? No! For Abraham, all his generations were considered Holy as far as the promise of God was concerned. **“For God’s gifts and His call can never be withdrawn”** (Rom. 11:29 NLT).

How can God call someone holy when they don’t have the Holy Spirit? After all, we see in John 16:9 (NLT) Jesus said, “The world’s sin is unbelief in Me.” How can God call someone holy that does not yet believe in Jesus Christ? Part of the problem we have in understanding God is that we live in time and space and God lives in eternity. He is God, we are humans, and we see things from our human perspective. The answer is, “...God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did” (Rom. 4:17 NKJV). God views things from His ability and power and we see things from the here and now. He has the power to harden a heart and He has the power to soften it. **God sees what He is going to accomplish as being already done.** When we view things from our human perspective, we do not see what God sees.

God declares in Isaiah 55:8 (NKJV), *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,”* says the LORD. *‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.’* Then God further states in verse 11, *“So [therefore] shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”*

If God declares a person or peoples holy (sanctified—set apart to be made holy) then His words will accomplish all He declares. These words from Jesus are showing you how God is going to finish the work He has started so many years ago.

The Hearts of the Fathers

It is the desire of all worshipers of God to have our children come to know the Lord. Their hearts will not stay hard forever. Each one can, right now, approach God. The ears of God are open to hear their prayers whenever they choose to turn to Him.

If we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desires of our heart (Psa. 37:4).

“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘**plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.** Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and **I will listen to you.** You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,’ declares the LORD...” (Jer. 29:11-14 NIV).

This “cry” of Matthew 25:1-13, the “prophesy again” in Revelation 10:11 and the “turning the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” of Malachi 4:5-6 are all speaking about the same work God is diligently doing.

God is reaching out to our families and all sleeping and wounded brethren in the Spirit and love of Jesus Christ to encourage them back to Him before, and during, the great and horrible time of tribulation. In Malachi 4:5-6 we see, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse” (utter destruction).

“Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, **shall suddenly come to His temple**, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap” (Mal. 3:1-2).

Jesus used this quote from the Prophet Malachi to explain the work of John the Baptist. Yet we see a duality in this commission of announcing Christ’s coming. John announced Christ’s first coming. And yet Malachi was inspired to write, “But who may abide the day of His coming?”—clearly signifying the Second Coming of Christ. So, we see there is yet an announcement of the Second Coming of Christ to be made! This time He will come, not to the world as atonement for sin, but as King of kings and Lord of lords. He will not be coming to the world but to His Own People—His Temple. John the Baptist announced Christ’s first coming. The Bride of Christ will announce His Second Coming, not to the world but to the believers and worshipers of God—the Church!

John the Baptist went before the people of God in his day proclaiming Christ’s coming and calling all believers in God to repent. And so it is that those, working by the

same power and Spirit, will announce the Second Coming of Christ to the people of God today! The Bride will call all believers in God, both Christian and Jew alike, to repent and to change!

It is the Bride of Christ, working with the Spirit and Power of Jesus Christ, which will make ready the way for Christ's Second Coming just as John the Baptist prepared the way for His first coming!

It is the Bride, functioning with the Spirit and Power of Jesus, that will be instrumental in turning the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers!

Today Jesus Christ is announcing, through *The Little Book*, what He is about to do. He is preparing to move, through His Holy Spirit, to wake up and to make ready His People for His Second Coming!

As I, Joe, was explaining to my wife all that God was revealing, words rolled over my lips that shocked me, **“Bring My children back to Me, and I will bring your children back to Me and to you!”** Our children, now adults, pulled away from God as a result of our hardness under the weight of the law and the Old Covenant. God is going to bring our children back to Him and to us through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ because of His tremendous lovingkindness.

Now God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). If you join Him in the work of bringing Israel (His people) back to Him, God will also bring your children back to Him and to you. He has the power to harden hearts and He has the power to soften them. Never underestimate the power of God!

Where is the “Temple of God” Today?

In 1 Corinthians 6:19 we see, “...do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God...” (NKJV).

The Temple of God is Open for Sacrifice!

“‘Look! I am sending My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. **Then the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to His Temple.** The messenger of the covenant, whom you look for so eagerly, is surely coming,’ says the LORD Almighty” (Mal. 3:1 NLT).

The Messiah they seek has come to His Temple—into His Own People through the Holy Spirit. And what does the Apostle Paul say in Romans 12:1? “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service**” (NKJV).

The body of a Christian is the temple from which sacrifices to God are offered

daily!

Oh how the Jewish people need to know the Messiah they have been looking for, for so long, has come! And now He dwells within us through His Holy Spirit. Someday soon, they (if they are alive at the time) will be able to see His Second Coming. And with His Spirit in them, they will be able to rise to meet Him in the air and so they shall ever be with their Lord. They need this Good News!

Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is reaching out to the Jewish people and all those who have rejected Him.

So, let's summarize where we are to this point.

Jesus Christ is announcing His coming!

It is now high time for Christians everywhere to awake out of sleep. We must repent of our lack of diligence and prepare to meet Him!

He has chosen to reveal the contents of *The Little Book* of Revelation 10. He has shown that His Words of Matthew 24 and 25 reveal that part of the Bride, and those who awake out of sleep, will make a "cry" to all believers of God. In Revelation 10:11, "...Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings." This "prophesy again" of Revelation 10:11, and "the cry" of Matthew 25:6, both show a reaching out to the same group of people—the believers in God. Jesus Christ, through the power of His Spirit, is reaching out to our family members, loved ones, and all sleeping believers in God before the great tribulation begins (Mal. 4:5-6).

What God is working on is a revival of immense proportions! His plan is to orchestrate the greatest transformation and Spiritual awakening of all time! The work of the Holy Spirit in the Bride of Christ, combined with suffering during the great tribulation, will bring many believers from having a casual, passive, or sleeping approach into being devoted worshipers of God. "The cry" and to "prophesy again" mark the time during the sixth trumpet, shortly before the seventh trumpet. That message, the two witnesses, and the great tribulation will be the crucible used to produce the greatest spiritual harvest in history.

Will we wake up?

Chapter Three

The Bride of Jesus Christ (A Ministry of Reconciliation)

There are many denominations today that worry so much about “earning salvation” and “legalism” that they don’t want to consider that Christ might have something for them to do. They have become so frightened that they might be trying to “earn something” that they veer into the ditch on the opposite side of the road.

Yet Christ said, “...My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I, too, am working” (John 5:17 NIV). If Jesus and our Father are working, is it too much for them to ask us to work as well?

We can’t earn salvation. It is a gift. Salvation comes only by God’s grace through belief and faith in Jesus Christ and His redemptive work. However, Christ still has much for us to do.

Jesus did the will of the Father who sent Him. We are to do the will of Christ.

The responsibility of the Bride is to make “the cry” to the rest of God’s people to “Come Alive” and prepare to meet Jesus! With this announcement, many believers near spiritual death will come back to life.

When God begins to soften the hearts of all sleeping believers in God, **it will be as though they were resurrected from the dead!** Part of the Bride being made ready includes making sure the bridesmaids are also ready for the coming of Christ. “Blessed is that servant whom his Master, when He comes, will find so doing” (Matt. 24:46 NKJV).

It is so easy to see our brothers not trying to be Christian and do nothing about it. We see them caught up in sin and idly stand by watching. We see them being sucked into a whirlpool of physical desires and make no effort to help. ***They are adrift spiritually, not anchored to Jesus,*** and we don’t even care. Many Christians have no fellowship with the brethren, no Bible study, no prayer life, and little association with God and we do nothing. But, we are our brother’s keeper.

We read the story of the Good Samaritan and say we would never walk on by a wounded person. But, so many of us will leave a spiritually wounded Christian along the road of life and do nothing at all to help relieve his mental or emotional anguish as we rush off to church services, Bible studies, or in pursuit of other “religious” events.

Many Christians do not attend church anymore for various reasons. One example often cited is the greed seen in some church corporations. Is this a legitimate reason not to fellowship? No! But church and religion have become big business. The money-changers Christ chased out of the temple are back in some organizations and churches that are preaching “the gospel” today!

Christ is cautioning those preaching the Gospel to be careful not to do what Gehazi did. Gehazi tried to make a profit from the work of God done through Elisha.

Here we are standing at the brink of the great tribulation and the words of Elisha should be ringing in our ears, "...Is this the time to receive money and clothing and olive groves and vineyards and sheep and oxen and servants?" (II Kings 5:26 NLT). With such pending doom hanging over the people of God, is this any time to extract money from our spiritually wounded brethren?

Have you ever wondered why God was dealing with Israel in Elijah's and Elisha's day through prophets? It was because Israel, through the established religious community, had drifted so far from God that He couldn't work through them any more. What about us today?

Whatever happened to the instruction Jesus gave to His disciples, "...Freely you have received, freely give?" (Matt. 10:8 NKJV).

"Dear friends, if a Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:1-2 NLT).

By helping our brother recover from stumbling and falling short, we are fulfilling the LAW OF CHRIST!

That's right, it is Christ's *WILL AND DESIRE* that we awake our sleeping brothers. It is time to clear up anything that is keeping us apart and be reconciled to one another and to God.

God's Lost Sheep

The time has come when we should no longer be spending all of our time and effort reaching out to new converts *only*. We are to continue to preach the Gospel, but it shouldn't be our *only* focus. Jesus Christ is showing us that we now stand at the door of great tribulation. **Our focus and intended purpose now must be to go back and work again with those who have already been reached with the Gospel!** This is the time to encourage them to reconsider their relationship with God and to renew their love for Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It is time for all believers everywhere to recommit their lives to God and to build a stronger, love-filled relationship with Jesus Christ.

In Christ's parable of the lost sheep (Matt. 18:12-14), we see a sheep that was part of the flock but had wandered off. Why?

Why do people stray from God? For some, their love for God and the brethren could

have grown cold. For others, it could have been the lusts and cares of this world. Maybe they became offended, angry, upset, or they could have become embittered. Perhaps they were tired of spiritual abuse.

Whatever the reason, they are gone!

Here Jesus, who is the Good Shepherd, was not spending all His time looking for new sheep (people). He was going after the ones the Father had already given Him—the ones that had strayed—so none would be lost. He knew, "...it is not My heavenly Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish" (v. 14 NLT).

How many people have wandered in and out of our "flocks" and what are we doing about it?

Do we understand Christ's focus and intended purpose? In this parable, Jesus was spending His time and attention on the ones the Father had already given Him that were not with the flock!

We talk about being good stewards of what God has given us. Are we working hard with "the flock" the Father has entrusted to us? **There are many "sheep" out there wandering around in this world without shepherds seeking to find them!**

Can you Pastors, Priests, Bishops, and Elders over the flocks of God account for all the people God has placed in your charge? Where are all the people He has given into your care? Are they worshiping regularly with the brethren? Have some left the congregation? Why aren't they coming to Church or Synagogue anymore? Have you been looking for them?

"'Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!' declares the LORD... 'Because you have scattered My flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,' declares the LORD" (Jer. 23:1-2 NIV).

"...Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe *be* to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: [You slaughter financially those I have blessed for your own gain] *but* ye feed not the flock. [My people are not taught by your example how I love them and how to love Me.] diseased [the spiritually weak] have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick [the spiritually wounded], neither have ye bound up *that which was* broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away [You offend and abuse and you do not go back to find those you have driven away], neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. [Your corporate policies and doctrinal teachings have laid on believers burdens heavy to bear and because of this]... they were scattered, because *there is* no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. [Because My people were not anchored in Jesus Christ as their

foundation, they were scattered and became targets of psychological and metaphysical nonsense.] My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek *after them*. [You didn't lift a finger to help those you caused to suffer.]

“For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, *even I*, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day” (Ezek. 34:2-6, 11-12).

The Leadership of God's People must go back and confess their sins to God and their mistakes to the lost, wounded, and damaged people of God. They must help heal their wounds and lessen their pains. Those who did the damage must go back and make every effort to repair the suffering they have caused. It is not enough to just tell those in your congregations, “I am sorry.”

We must go to the ones not worshiping with us any longer and reconcile with them. As we are willing to do this, the Holy Spirit will be there to work healing and restoration. It is our repentance before God and our admission of the wrongs we have done to others that will cause healing among the wounded believers. Churches must confess the errors in their teachings and doctrines that do not come from Christ (Jas. 5:16).

“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matt. 5:23-24 NKJV).

Jesus Christ will call you into account for your stewardship over His People (Heb. 13:17). “...It is not My heavenly Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish” (Matt. 18:14 NLT).

Christ was happy to report to the Father that, “...Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled” (John 17:12 NKJV).

When we lose a few from our fellowship, we immediately ask God for more people and go on as if nothing has ever happened. We expect the Father to bring us more people so we can continue to use and abuse them until they have had enough and leave as well! Why should God give us more people when we can't account for everyone He has already given us?

Collateral Damage

Every organization of believers in God that has existed for very long has had collateral damage. Numerous Christians and Jewish people have been turned off by religion. Many have pulled back from their Churches and Synagogues because of glaring examples of hypocrisy and double standards.

We, as the Churches and Synagogues that are suppose to represent God, must repent. Then we must move in an attitude of humility to bring these believers in God back to Him.

What about the wounded spiritually? We must reach out to them. What about those we forced out of our Churches and Synagogues because, “his hair was too long,” “her dress was too short,” “they wore makeup,” or “they were married before their present mate?” What about those that were “drinking,” “dancing,” “smoking,” “gambling,” and “card playing?”

Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master, is asking us to stop and help the beaten and wounded spiritually. We are to follow His example and leave the ninety-nine and go back and release His lambs caught in the brambles and thickets of spiritual darkness.

Some groups and organizations have preached the Gospel with total disregard to the damage they have caused along the way.

We must, at Christ’s command, go back and repair the collateral damage we caused by our zeal and ignorance. We are instructed here by Jesus Christ to reach out to those we have offended. Many believers have been shot down by “friendly fire” from well-intentioned Bishops, Pastors, Priests, Rabbis, and even Members, never again to return to regular fellowship with the brethren.

When an animal is wounded, it will crawl off somewhere to a protective hole or safe place to rest and to heal from its wounds or to die. A person who gets hurt (spiritually) is no different. **The wounded just want to find a comfortable place where they can go to sleep and not get hurt anymore.** If left in that wounded condition, cut off from the body of Christ, spiritual hypothermia can set in and death could be the result. Many of those “virgins” are sleeping because they have been wounded. It is time to wake them up, dress their wounds, and feed them nourishing spiritual food.

Some of the best and most nourishing food we can give the spiritually wounded is to say we are sorry for our lack of concern and the pain we have caused! Every Church, Synagogue, Denomination, and Ministry must go back, “prophesy again,” and apologize for not allowing Jesus Christ to do His work in us. **“...It is not My heavenly Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish”** (Matt. 18:14 NLT).

Isaiah spoke of this time in chapter 58 of his prophecy, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people [called by My Name (Christians)] their transgression, and the house of Jacob [Judah (Israel)] their sins” (v. 1). Israel had some wrong approaches to their methods of gaining a relationship with God. But God goes on in verse 6 to say **the self-sacrifice He is looking for reaches out to others who are oppressed.**

Loose the Bands of Wickedness

Many believers feel they have somehow crossed a line that doesn't allow the grace of God to reach them any more. They think their sin has been too great or the sacrifice of Christ wasn't big enough to cover all their sins. Some are harboring hatred, animosity, or resentment toward others that they find hard to let go. Others will not forgive and, therefore, they remain unforgiven. Thus they are **trapped in bands of wickedness and are chained by their own unwillingness to forgive.**

Undo the Heavy Burdens

God is calling all believers to go back and find the wounded we have trampled on and left along the roadside as we hurried to preach the Gospel. Many of us are like the "Pharisees" that have rushed on by the spiritually wounded person in our pursuit of "preaching the Gospel to the world."

I, Joe, have been guilty of this very thing—in rushing off to "Church" and leaving my spiritually wounded children along the roadside of life hurting inside. **May God have mercy on us all as we examine our lives and repent of how hard and insensitive we have been!** We must repent and obey the will of Christ. We are to "Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2 NLT).

We have a command from Jesus Christ to go back and "prophecy again" by reaching out to our wounded and hurting brothers before the great tribulation begins!

Let the Oppressed Go Free

We are called upon to take this time, just before the great tribulation, to release others who feel oppressed by us in some way. Have we ever asked others if they felt wronged by us? They may be depressed through pressures from us and we may not even realize it.

Break Every Yoke

Almost everyone has some unresolved conflict or strain in a relationship. Are there any problems in your family? Are there difficulties between you and your children? How about uneasiness between relatives, neighbors, or friends? Maybe there are frustrations between you and people at work.

This is the commandment we have from Him, "...that he who loves God *must* love his brother also" (1 John 4:21 NKJV). Christ's love for us has covered all our sins and it is our love for our brothers that will relieve them of all of their wrongs toward us. Jesus Christ is instructing the believers in God to undo the wrongs, the condemnations, and incriminations we have heaped on others.

Ministry of Reconciliation

“All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and **gave us the ministry of reconciliation**: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. **We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God**” (II Cor. 5:18-20 NIV).

The word of Jesus for us today is to reconcile all sleeping and wounded believers in God back to Him before and during the great tribulation! He has given us this ministry of reconciliation. We are, therefore, Christ’s ambassadors. Jesus is making His appeal, through us to all sleeping believers, to “Wake up” and become restored to God.

Can we imagine our loved ones suffering the horrors of the great tribulation because we never took the time to share the Good News of God’s love through Christ? They need to experience God’s love and kindness through us.

The Firstfruits

Many shudder at definite numbers being spoken of in Bible prophecy. They are fearful we might start setting days, dates, or something else. But remember, it is Jesus Christ speaking here. He is the revelator. He is revealing, not hiding. He is counting and setting the numbers of people. If we start setting numbers, dates, or times we can get into trouble. But as King and Lord, Jesus can set any numbers He chooses!

Why do we have such a hard time with the words of Jesus? Do we have difficulty hearing His voice? Or is it just because we don’t believe what He says?

As Jesus continued with the story of the bridesmaids, He explained about **the urgency of the door being shut**. Some will be ready, in a moment’s notice, to make this “cry” because they recognize their Master’s voice and are ready to do the will of Jesus. Others will not be able to tell for sure if *The Little Book* is from Jesus. They will not be familiar with the voice of their Master and may have to set up and organize committees to study and research to try to prove if it really is Jesus. While they are busy groping in the dark looking for the Light, the door or opportunity will slam shut. They will miss their chance to be part of those who reflect the Light and will of Jesus.

The 144,000 worshipers of God in Revelation 7 are also called the firstfruits in Revelation 14. They are the same group of worshipers that are part of the Bride of Christ. There may also be many thousands with the 144,000 who will come alive enough spiritually to enter the wedding banquet before the door is shut.

“Then I [John] saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: **‘Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a**

seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.’ Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel” (Rev. 7:2-4 NIV).

This gathering of Israel is also mentioned in Isaiah 49 where God says that Israel (or Jacob) would be brought back to Him though Israel be not gathered (v. 5). And He went on to say in verse 6, “...It is a light thing that thou shouldst be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel...”

This restoring or preserving (sealing) of Israel as the firstfruits will be accomplished as explained in Revelation Chapter Seven. There will be 12,000 from each of the tribes of Israel mentioned. These converted Christians will be sealed before the great tribulation begins.

“Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who had His name and His Father’s name written on their foreheads. And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. These are those who did not defile themselves with women [spiritually speaking—other religions and other gods], for they kept themselves pure [virgins]. **They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb.** No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless” (Rev. 14:1-5 NIV). A bride or a wife will follow her husband wherever he goes.

In 1 Corinthians 15:23, Paul shows more detail, “But each in His own turn: Christ, **the firstfruits**; then, when He comes, those who belong to Him” (NIV). We see here the progressive maturing of the family of God. It started with Jesus Christ then the firstfruits. The firstfruits (144,000) are sealed before the great tribulation begins to help other believers through the most difficult time in the history of the Church (Rev. 7:3, 14).

It may be helpful to explain a little about how the Bride is pictured as we get different glimpses of her in the Bible. Each photo is a different pose and has different dimensions or perimeters as she comes into view through different portals. Not every setting shows the complete picture of the Bride. The same is true of most family pictures we take. It is hard to get all members and extended family together in the same place and at the same time for a family picture.

If the Bride of Christ does her responsibility well, many thousands and perhaps millions of now sleeping Christians and Jews will be able to be a part of an earth-moving revival before and during the great tribulation!

Chapter Four

What are We Going to Do with this Revelation from Jesus Christ?

Here we are at the crux of this revelation from Jesus.

Jesus continues with the rest of His instructions to the disciples in Matthew 25:14-46. These two stories about the Kingdom of Heaven (Talents) and His Second Coming bring us to where we are today.

The story of the talents illustrates Christ's instruction to us as we come to understand the need for the Gospel to be preached to the whole world. We realize "the cry" needs to go out to the People of God. **We are to use wisely the physical and spiritual resources God has given us for advancing the Kingdom of God and announcing Christ's Second Coming!** Part of our judgment will be based on what we accomplish with the physical and spiritual gifts He has given us.

We are to be using all our physical talents and abilities to reach out to all sleeping believers in God! We are to join with the Father in His dramatic, end-time movement to prepare all His People for the Second Coming of His Son.

Look, **the Father is serious about our commitment to announcing the Second Coming of His Son!** If we are not interested in His instructions, He will say, "Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:30 NLT). If we fail to follow Christ's commands, we can take our place with the hypocrites (Matt. 24:47-51).

Jesus Christ is asking each Jewish Synagogue, every Christian Denomination, and every Member of His Body to wake up and repent of doing our own activities and ignoring His Word and the inspiration from the Holy Spirit! Jesus wants us to be on fire now with zeal to accomplish all He has directed us to do!

Jesus said about Himself, "After He has gathered His own flock, He walks ahead of them, and they follow Him because they recognize His voice" (John 10:4 NLT).

Is Jesus leading your Life, your Church, Denomination, or Synagogue? Are you hearing His voice? Are you willing to listen to this instruction from Jesus and follow His commands?

Remember the 144,000 sealed saints follow Christ "wherever He goes." How is it that they could follow Jesus so closely? It is because they knew His voice—they were listening to His every word!

The words of Jesus are ringing out to us today, **"Who is a faithful, sensible servant,**

to whom the Master can give the responsibility of managing His household and feeding His family?” (Matt. 24:45 NLT).

This responsibility is squarely on the shoulders of everyone hearing and reading this message today!

The Future for the Believers of God

We, as the end-time Church, play a major part in what is to happen soon. Individually, our future is not cast in stone. It will be determined by how we respond to these instructions from Jesus.

John (Church) was told to eat *The Little Book*. It was, “**...in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter**” (Rev. 10:10).

It is sweet indeed to hear that Jesus Christ is coming again quickly!

Hallelujah! Praise God!

We rejoice with exceeding great joy when we realize that Jesus Christ our Lord and Master is coming soon. It is indeed sweet in our mouth to taste the reality of what we have been looking forward to for so long.

Here Jesus shows the bitter reality of the rest of *The Little Book* as it applies to the believers of God today.

One of the sad parts of *The Little Book* is that so many will not wake up to the call for repentance and transformation! They will have chosen, by default, to suffer tribulation rather than wake up to this announcement and message from Jesus Christ!

What is our responsibility to these, our brothers and sisters, as we see the tribulation approach?

Some Christian denominations have taught that a few chosen believers—the firstfruits, will be raptured away to a place of safety or even to heaven before the beginning of the great tribulation. This thought is not confirmed in the words of the Bible or in *The Little Book* from Jesus Christ.

When military personnel are trapped or captured, great effort is often made to rescue them and care for the wounded. The rescuers are willing to lay down their lives for fellow comrades. If this brotherly love exists between people that are not even related by blood, how much more should we want to be where our brothers are when they need God in the flesh? After all, we are related by blood—the blood of Jesus!

If your children were in a home that was on fire, could anyone keep you from trying to get them out? Teams of police officers and firemen would have a difficult time

keeping you from risking all to save your children. You would fight against all odds to help them.

You may have heard the term “fair-weather friends.” A fair-weather friend is only around when everything is going well, but when everything is going wrong and you need a friend, they are nowhere to be found. God is not that way! And God, in us, is not that way either!

So it is with brothers and sisters who have the love of Christ in them. It is not the will of God that some few should be in comfort, having “high tea” while other members of our family are in great suffering. “...If one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it...*” (1 Cor. 12:26 NKJV).

“But he that shall **endure unto the end**, the same shall be saved” (Matt. 24:13).

“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but **for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened**” (Matt. 24:21-22).

If the elect were to be carried off somewhere, why would the days have to be shortened?

Satan will be allowed to persecute the believers in God until God has accomplished His plan and purpose of refining His children through suffering. Read again Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 11:2. Prophecies show the great tribulation will last seven years. The Church will only suffer three and one half years. The days of tribulation will be cut short for the elect who worship God. Then Jesus, at His coming, will pour out God’s wrath upon all the wicked that have not been sealed by God as His special people. It is the time that Jesus will pour out the seven last plagues upon the earth. He will finish the rest of this ministry as prophesied in Daniel 9.

At this point, we need to understand God’s love more clearly. God has said I will never leave you nor forsake you (Heb. 13:5; Deut. 31:6). As Jesus was praying so earnestly in the garden before He was falsely arrested, He said, “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (John 17:20-23 NKJV).

We are to grow in the love of God so we will love each other as the Father loves Jesus. Our love is to mature so we can be one with the Father, the Son, and one another.

Do we love our believing brothers and sisters as much as we say we love God? **We**

have many opportunities to prove our love for Jesus by how we show His love to our brothers and sisters! Our love for one another is being tested to see how much of God's love we have!

In 1 John 3:16-19, **“We know what real love is because Christ gave up His life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian friends.** But if one of you has enough money to live well, and sees a brother or sister in need and refuses to help—how can God's love be in that person? Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions. It is by our actions that we know we are living in the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before the Lord” (NLT).

The love Christians show to one another must be so strong the world will be able to tell that Jesus Christ was indeed the Son of the living God. They will also be able to see the Father's love is in us in the same way it was in Jesus Christ! How is your love for fellow believers on this scale of measurement? Remember the measuring in Revelation 11:1? We are measured to determine God's love in us.

Our love for the Father is determined by our love for Jesus. Jesus measures our love for Him by how we love one another.

Jesus said, **“I command you to love each other in the same way that I love you. And here is how to measure it—the greatest love is shown when people lay down their lives for their friends.** You are My friends if you obey Me” (John 15:12-14 NLT). And, “Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had. Though He was God, He did not demand and cling to His rights as God. He made Himself nothing; He took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. And in human form He obediently humbled Himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross” (Phil. 2:4-8 NLT).

Those who are part of the Bride of Christ, the firstfruits that are sealed for God's purposes, will be like the Red Cross to other believers that must also suffer during the great tribulation.

We must love our brothers and sisters so much that we are willing to give up our own lives, if necessary, to help them through difficult times.

Do you remember these words of Jesus? “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:12-13 NKJV). We can bring much glory to our Father and Jesus by following the Holy Spirit as He guides us in helping our brothers and sisters. If we believe and trust Jesus, there is no limit to the love of God that can flow through us.

The suffering the people of God will endure depends on what God must allow to

prepare us for eternity with Him! This is explained clearly in Hebrews 12:5-15 (NLT), “...My child, don’t ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don’t be discouraged when He corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those He loves, and He punishes those He accepts as His children.’ **As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as His own children.** Whoever heard of a child who was never disciplined? If God doesn’t discipline you as He does all of His children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really His children after all. Since we respect our earthly fathers who disciplined us, should we not all the more cheerfully submit to the discipline of our heavenly Father and live forever? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God’s discipline is always right and good for us because it means we will share in His holiness. **No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it is painful! But afterward there will be a quiet harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.** So take a new grip with your tired hands and stand firm on your shaky legs. Mark out a straight path for your feet. Then those who follow you, though they are weak and lame, will not stumble and fall but will become strong. Try to live in peace with everyone, and seek to live a clean and holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord. **Look after each other so that none of you will miss out on the special favor of God. Watch out that no bitter root of unbelief rises up among you, for whenever it springs up, many are corrupted by its poison.”**

This is the reality of *The Little Book*—the revelation from Jesus Christ. This is the part of *The Little Book* that is bitter in the stomach. “And I took *The Little Book* out of the angel’s hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter” (Rev. 10:10). **Some of the bridesmaids, believers in God, will choose not to wake up! Or will choose to wake up too late!** As a result, they will suffer God’s refining during the great tribulation. Jesus Christ Himself will tell them, “...I tell you the truth, I don’t know you” (Matt. 25:12 NIV).

Why didn’t Christ know them? It is because they never bothered to build a relationship with Him! He stood at the door of their hearts, year after year, and wanted to have an intimate, love-filled relationship with them, however, they never had the time for Him!

He wanted to share wisdom, knowledge, and understanding with them, but regrettably, they never had the time! Christ wanted to share His love, joy, peace, faith, and patience, but sadly, everything else was more important!

The bitter part of this book is that so many of the believers in God will not build a close relationship with Jesus and will, as a result, endure much suffering.

We are heading into a time of testing for the people of God like the world has never seen. Many will suffer martyrdom because they love Jesus and one another. Many others will choose to die in order to protect their loved ones and other members of the Body of Christ.

Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth

We must either, follow the leadership of Christ by doing His will, or take our place with the hypocrites! (Matt. 24:51).

There will be much weeping and gnashing of teeth when many believers in God realize their fate. How many then will wish they would have been more diligent about their relationship with God? Many will desire to turn back time and live a love-filled relationship with their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. **But the door of opportunity will be closed!** Now the only way for them to show their allegiance to Jesus is to suffer for their belief in Him. There will be much weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Then many of the Jewish faith will come to realize that they should not have ignored the pleas of Christians to examine Jesus Christ as the Messiah they had been looking for, for so long. They too will bewail the predicament in which they find themselves. There will be “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Jesus spoke of this same time when He said in Matthew 8:11-12, “And I say unto you, ‘That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. **But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**”

“Then He said to His servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, **but those I invited did not deserve to come...**’ But when the King came in to see the guests, He noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ‘Friend,’ He asked, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless. Then the King told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ **For many are invited, but few are chosen**” (Matt. 22:8, 11-14 NIV). (See Rev. 19:7-8.)

Do you see in the parable of the Wedding (Matthew 22) that the Father has invited all the Christians that were previously called, or converted, to join Him at the Wedding Banquet of His Son but they all refused to participate? “But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise” (v. 5).

What is your attitude to this *Little Book* which is your personal invitation from the Father to the wedding of His Son? Are you making light of it? Are you too preoccupied with the cares of this world and the pursuit of riches to be bothered with a call to prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus and the Kingdom of God?

Our calloused, don’t care, Laodicean attitudes have made the Father very angry! The Father said, “**The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy!**”

ALL CHRISTIANS AND JEWISH BELIEVERS WAKE UP! THE FATHER IS TALKING ABOUT US!

The great tribulation is not coming upon us for no reason! God is preparing to wake us up by chastising the Church!

These parables are for the benefit of the believers in God. We must have the righteousness of the saints. “All who are victorious will be clothed in white. I will never erase their names from the Book of Life, but I will announce before My Father and His angels that they are Mine” (Rev. 3:5 NLT). All believers must be clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ!

IT IS NOW HIGH TIME FOR ALL CHRISTIANS AND JEWISH BELIEVERS ALIKE TO REPENT OF OUR LAODICEAN ATTITUDES!

Into Outer Darkness

To be in outer darkness is to be away from the source of our light. “When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, **‘I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the Light of life’**” (John 8:12 NIV).

“Then Jesus told them, ‘You are going to have the Light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the Light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put your trust in the Light while you have it, so that you may become sons of Light...’” (John 12:35-36 NIV).

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world. When we are not with Jesus we are in darkness.

There is a small window of opportunity now, for believers in God, to wake up before the great tribulation starts.

This *Little Book* is our wake-up call from Jesus Christ! It is His announcement that He is going to seal those who have an intimate, love-filled relationship with Him before tribulation like the world has never seen begins.

Once the door is shut and the great tribulation begins, the believers who would not wake up will cry and gnash their teeth. Why? Because they didn’t heed the message to wake up and draw closer to Jesus Christ.

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ‘I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing;’ and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked; I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be

zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches””” (Rev. 3:14-22 NKJV).

These are fellow brothers in Christ. They never had time for Him. ***They thought they were good enough spiritually.*** They thought they understood. They thought they had a relationship with God. They thought they could see spiritually. They thought they had it well enough together to slip into the door and be with Christ at His wedding. But sadly, they were spiritually poverty-stricken and bankrupt. They were spiritually blind and naked.

Jesus said, “I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten...” (Rev. 3:18 NKJV).

I am saddened to say this is many of the Body of Christ today. Many just think they are rich Spiritually. **They think they have a relationship with God and with Jesus Christ, but they are grossly out of touch with our Lord.**

What Will It Take?

What will it take for us to wake up and have a close walk with Jesus? My heart goes out to all God’s People worldwide. **How long will we continue our passive approach toward God? How long will we give God the worst of our time and efforts?** How long will God continue to be an afterthought in our busy lives?

It is sad to realize that many Christians can go days without even thinking about God or their relationship with Jesus.

What will God have to do to get our attention? God is allowing Satan to devise his wicked plans to attack the believers in God (Dan. 7:21, 25; Rev. 11:2). Part of the great tribulation is Satan’s attempt to wipe out the People of God. Satan doesn’t realize that he is being allowed to accomplish God’s purpose of maturing the children of God through many trials and tests in preparation for their entry into an everlasting relationship with their Father.

Everyday we waste precious time and spend our lives on that which has no value. Meanwhile, Jesus has been left outside, standing at the door to our hearts, knocking and wanting to build a relationship with us.

The question for us today is—how much of Satan’s attacks will it take before we realize God wants our attention? What will be the toll in our fleshly suffering before we turn to God with all our hearts? God is asking, “What will it take for you to love Me?”

What will it take to draw you closer? What will it take to stir your soul?" Our suffering does not bring pleasure to God. He just wants us to turn to Him!

I write these words with tears streaming down my face. I love God's People with all my heart! Why do we always take the way that leads to so much suffering? Why don't we listen to Jesus and follow Him?

Why are we so hard of heart? Why can't we turn to God now with all our hearts and avoid so much pain and suffering? What will it take for us to follow Jesus and His instructions?

I plead with you, through God's great mercy, please take the time right now to turn to God in heartfelt repentance! Cry out to God with all your heart, with strong crying and tears! Plead with God for His mercy and forgiveness and humble yourself before His throne! Begin to respect His Word, the Holy Bible, once again! Let Jesus back into your heart! He will be so happy to teach you and to lead you into a yielded, love-filled relationship with Him!

Your Relationship with God

Where are you in your relationship with God? Has your life become unbearable? Is your load of cares and worries about to crush you? Has peace of mind and heart vanished from your life? Are you lonely and depressed?

"...Come to Me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you. Let Me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29 NLT). Cast all your cares upon Jesus because He cares for you (1 Pet. 5:7).

If we turn to God with all our hearts and minds and confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of all our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Have you known of God all your life but have never bothered to get to understand His plan for you? Have you been slack in your response to Jesus? Have you been trying to run your own life instead of allowing Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Master? Have you been one of the sleeping believers in God that hasn't given God much time during your busy life?

It is not too late if we respond to this urgent call!

Begin once again to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Pet. 3:18). Be praying and studying the Word of God with all your heart, like your life depended on it—because it does! And stop relying on your own understanding.

Trust in Jesus with all your being, no matter what is happening around you. Continue to **do good** to your brothers and sisters. Find other brethren with which to

enjoy the close bonds of fellowship and continue always to **dwell in the way of God’s love for one another. Delight yourself in Jesus Christ** as your Lord and Master and He will give you the desires of your heart as you put Him and His ways first place in your life. **Commit your entire life** and everything you do to Jesus and He will direct all your ways by showing the fruit of His righteousness through you. In all your sufferings, **rest in Jesus**, even if it means dying for Him. **Wait patiently for Jesus** by continuing to humble yourself before Him. And **submit yourself to Him** by pouring out your heart to Him in prayer day and night without ceasing, even if you are writhing in pain, and He will lift you up. (See Psa. 37:3-7 and Jas. 4:7-10).

“...To this *man* will I look, *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit*, and trembleth at My word” (Isa. 66:2).

Many Are Called but Few Are Chosen

Many have been called to a close, love-filled relationship with Jesus Christ. They have been offered an intimate understanding of His love, His grace, and His patience. But they have been unwilling to dedicate their lives to growing in the grace and knowledge of their Lord and Savior. Everything else has been more important. The cares of this life have taken the place of Jesus Christ. And because they have not chosen to clothe themselves in His righteousness, they will not be chosen and sealed. “For many are invited, but few are chosen” (Matt. 22:14 NIV).

The 144,000 Christians in Revelation 7, which are those called the firstfruits in Revelation 14, are of the Bride that will enter the marriage of the Lamb. “And while they went to buy [went out to get truly converted], the Bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut” (Matt. 25:10).

Only a comparatively few will be “chosen” and “sealed.” Will you?

Believers that will not wake up to the announcement of our Master’s coming will have to suffer the ravages of the great tribulation.

This is what Christ was talking about when He said, “I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire...” (Rev. 3:18).

John wrote, “After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. **They were wearing white robes** and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb’” (Rev. 7:9-10 NIV).

“Then one of the elders asked me, **‘These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?’**

“I answered, ‘Sir, you know.’ And he said, **‘These are they who have come out of**

the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’ Therefore, ‘they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. [See Dan. 7:21, 25.] For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; He will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes’” (Rev. 7:13-17 NIV). They finally recognized their Lord and Shepherd Jesus Christ. They, through much tribulation, entered the Family of God.

These will go through the fiery trials of the great tribulation. “They” could be most of the believers in God alive today!

This is the bitter news of *The Little Book*. **This reality of the message from Jesus should cause all of us to seek a closer relationship with Him!**

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified” (I Pet. 4:12-14). Then Peter goes on in verse 17 to say, “**For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God:** and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?”

“...But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames” (I Cor. 3:10-15 NIV).

It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22 NLT).

People grow up fast under hard times and conditions. So it is with Christians during many trials.

Jesus and His Return

Jesus concludes His discourse to His disciples with the story of His return in Matthew 25:31-46 (NLT). He likens the people unto sheep and goats.

“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit upon His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in His presence, and He will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep at His right hand and the goats at His left. Then the King will say to those on the

right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was thirsty, and you gave Me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited Me into your home. I was naked, and you gave Me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for Me. I was in prison, and you visited Me.’

“Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see You hungry and feed You? Or thirsty and give You something to drink? Or a stranger and show You hospitality? Or naked and give You clothing? When did we ever see You sick or in prison, and visit You?’ And the King will tell them, **‘I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these My brothers and sisters, you were doing it to Me!’**” Notice it was because we helped our brothers and sisters that we were doing it to Jesus personally.

“Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, ‘Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his demons! For I was hungry, and you didn’t feed Me. I was thirsty, and you didn’t give Me anything to drink. I was a stranger, and you didn’t invite Me into your home. I was naked, and you gave Me no clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t visit Me.’ Then they will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help You?’ And He will answer, ‘I assure you, when you refused to help the least of these My brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help Me.’ And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.”

Whether we are in good times or bad times, we have this command from Jesus to aid, help, and assist our brothers in all their physical and spiritual needs. “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35 NIV).

Warnings

The end of this *Little Book* comes with a warning. Don’t take the words of this book lightly, as though it didn’t come from Jesus Christ, by His Word, and through the Holy Spirit. And don’t deny the clear guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Anyone who will put down and speak negatively about the work of the Holy Spirit is in danger of eternal damnation. “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age, or in the *age* to come” (Matt. 12:32 NKJV).

But to everyone who accepts these words of *The Little Book* from Jesus, He will say, “Truly, anyone who welcomes My messenger is welcoming Me, and anyone who welcomes Me is welcoming the Father who sent Me” (John 13:20 NLT).

The leadership of God’s People must teach all believers to seek the Lord urgently with their whole hearts, minds, and beings. And remember the words Daniel wrote, “Those who are wise will give instruction to many. But for a time many of these teachers will die by fire and sword, or they will be jailed and robbed. While all these persecutions are going on, a little help will arrive, though many who join them will not be sincere.

And some who are wise will fall victim to persecution. In this way, they will be refined and cleansed and made pure until the time of the end..." (Dan. 11:33-35 NLT).

Remember the Spirit and the Word will always agree. They will never be in disagreement. The Spirit will clarify and confirm the Word and bring us into better understanding of the Truth—Jesus Christ.

Some may scoff and say, "Who would approach any prophetic scriptures in such a dogmatic way?" But remember these are the words of Jesus Christ. "After Jesus finished speaking, the crowds were amazed at His teaching, for He taught as one who had real authority—quite unlike the teachers of religious law" (Matt. 7:28-29 NLT).

Why is it so hard to believe Jesus? Many consider the book of Revelation beyond figuring out and you know, humanly speaking, they are right. When men try to figure out prophecy, they come up with so many "interpretations" and numerous "ideas."

Remember Jesus is the revelator and He will reveal what we need to know when it is time for us to understand. "When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not be presenting His own ideas; He will be telling you what He has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring Me glory by revealing to you whatever He receives from Me. All that the Father has is Mine; this is what I mean when I say that the Spirit will reveal to you whatever He receives from Me" (John 16:13-15 NLT).

Jesus Christ has announced to His Bride, by the Holy Spirit and His Word, that He is coming again quickly! He has instructed the Bride to awake all sleeping believers so they can prepare for His arrival. He has warned all believers, if they are not spiritually ready, they will be refined through many hard and difficult times.

Jesus promises the Bride will be placed in charge of the entire household of God, to give them everything they need for their spiritual growth and development, because she was a faithful and wise servant.

Jesus has given *The Little Book* to the Churches in the sixth trumpet, before the voice of the seventh trumpet (messenger) begins to sound.

We must eat and digest *The Little Book*. "...And He [Jesus] said unto me, 'Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey'" (Rev. 10:9).

Jesus Christ is instructing the leadership of His People to deliver this announcement, the instructions, and warnings of *The Little Book* to all believers in God!

***The Little Book* is to go to every Christian Denomination, Church, and Ministry, as well as every Jewish Synagogue (every part of the Jewish Community) and to all believers in God worldwide. "...You must prophesy again about [or before] many**

peoples, nations, languages, and kings” (Rev. 10:11 NLT).

The Two Witnesses

Of all the information covered in the book of Revelation, the two witnesses generate many questions and much controversy. To mention them earlier would have disrupted the continuity of the points being made at the time.

I, Joe, was praying and asking Jesus, “Who are these two witnesses?” Here is what He inspired.

Do you remember why the measuring was being done? The worshipers were found in “the temple” and “the altar.” Those of “the temple,” as we saw earlier, are those of the New Covenant and those of “the altar” were from the Old Covenant approach. How are “the temple” and “the altar” tied in with the two witnesses? We will see in a moment.

The two witnesses are represented by the two olive trees mentioned in Revelation 11:4. They are also described in Zechariah 4:11. There are two olive trees in both accounts. In God’s plan there was always to be two witnesses. They poured out their golden oil into the candlestick (Zech. 4:12). (Jesus, in Rev. 11:4, says two candlesticks.)

In Zechariah 4:12 (NLT), these two olive trees (branches) “pour out golden oil through two gold tubes.” (These candles use liquid oil not solid wax.)

Why was there only one candlestick mentioned in Zechariah 4:11 and two candlesticks shown by Jesus in Revelation 11:4? Jesus showed that, at Zechariah’s writing, there was only one candlestick giving Light to the world—the Old Testament or the Old Testament of Jesus and the Old Testament Church. When John had written the book of Revelation, there were two candlesticks giving Light to the world—the Old and New Testaments. These were the Old and New Testimonies of Jesus and the two distinct groups or Churches of believers and worshipers of God.

We see here that the Holy Spirit is poured out through the lives of the two witnesses (olive trees). They bring light to the Old and New Testimonies or old and New Testament churches (the candlesticks) and cause the Light of Jesus to shine forth into the world! The Churches of God are also pictured as candlesticks (Rev. 2:1, 5) and they should also bring understanding to the Old and New Testimonies of Jesus.

The way that pointed to Life—Jesus, is offered to the world through two sources—the Old and New Testaments.

The two witnesses are dedicated to pouring out the TRUTH about Jesus from the Old and New Testaments. They will reflect the Light (Jesus). They will bring life and vibrancy to the testimony of Jesus as the Holy Spirit is poured out through them with power!

At this point, some may ask, “The Old Covenant has ended, so why are we so concerned about the Old Testament? Besides, weren’t the Law and the Prophets only until John?” It is true we now live under the New Covenant and the Old Covenant is no longer in effect. But this does not mean the Old Testament of Jesus is no longer valid. The Prophets pointed to the coming of the Messiah and His Kingdom. The Prophets are witnesses to the historical record of the First and Second Coming of Christ.

The two witnesses will represent Jesus through these two testimonies of Him. Both the Old and New Testaments or testimonies proclaimed the coming of the Holy One—Jesus Christ. These two testimonies introduced the true Light and Life to the world.

These two witnesses will pour out, through the Holy Spirit, a bright reflection of Jesus, the true Light, to this world.

In Luke 9:30-31, we see the example of the transformation, “Then two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared and began talking with Jesus. They were glorious to see. And they were speaking of how He was about to fulfill God’s plan by dying in Jerusalem” (NLT). Moses—represents the Old Testament. And Elijah (‘Elijah, ay-lee-yaw;’ or prol. ‘Eliyahuw, ay-lee-yaw’-hoo; God of Jehovah) or the Lord Jesus Christ—represents the New Covenant. Jesus said, “...There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom” (Matt. 16:28). What they saw was Jesus and Moses talking in the Kingdom. Both the Old and the New Testaments testify of Jesus. “For the law was given through Moses; God’s unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17 NLT).

Moses said in Deuteronomy 18:15 (NLT), “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your fellow Israelites, and you must listen to that prophet.” Moses was not referring to Elijah the Tishbite, of King Ahab’s time. Moses was referring to Jesus Christ!

The transformation before His disciples was as if Jesus was narrating a movie of Himself and Moses as they talked to each other about His pending death and resurrection. Moses was representative of the Law and the Prophets and Jesus Christ was the messenger of the New and better Covenant.

One witness will come out of, or speaks from, the temple—representing the Church today and the New Covenant. And **one witness will come out of, or speaks from, the altar**—representing the Jewish People—Messianic approach and the Old Testament—Old Testament of Jesus Christ. The witness confirming the Old Testament will help remove the veil that clouds the minds of those from the Old Covenant approach (II Cor. 3:14). So, regardless of where a person might have heard of the God of the Bible and the Messiah to come, there will be a clear and recognizable witness to the Second Coming of Christ.

God has spoken to the world through two testimonies that comprise our Bible today. **These two witnesses will represent God’s complete testimony to mankind.** The Old

Testament witness will cover all the prophecies pointing to the coming of Christ and His Lordship over the whole earth. The gospel was preached through the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. (Rom. 1:2-3 NLT; Heb. 4:2.)

The witness to this world will be complete. There will be no stone left unturned regarding the witness of Jesus Christ as the Messiah and the King of kings and Lord of lords. Regardless of how or when people have come into the knowledge of the God of the Bible, they will have a warning and a witness that Jesus Christ is coming again soon in power and great glory.

Jesus said, “Salvation is of the Jews,” meaning that one of the announcements and witnesses about God sending Jesus Christ to bring salvation into this world came through the Old Testament. This witness, through the Old Testimony of Jesus, will bring anyone from that approach “up to speed.” They may be playing a game of “catch up,” but God will not forget anyone who seeks to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

For one half of the great tribulation there will be these two witnesses shining as bright beacons reflecting the Light of Jesus. These two witnesses will show the extent to which God is willing to reach out in love to people everywhere and to leave a Light on — Jesus shining brightly.

“...For the essence [essential part—the most important quality] of prophecy is to give a clear witness for Jesus” (Rev. 19:10 NLT).

As we meditate on these words, remember Jesus said, “Blessed is he who is not offended in Me” (Matt. 11:6).

Let’s all take heed to this message from Jesus and awake from spiritual sleep! Then desire with all our hearts to, “...grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!” (II Pet. 3:18).

“Watch [keep awake] therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36 NKJV).

May the grace and love from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

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