

## **How to Study & Teach the Bible – 10/21/18 – Part II**

- 1. Believe it**
- 2. Pray for understanding**
- 3. Study it**
- 4. Meditate upon it**
- 5. Memorize it**
- 6. Rightly divide it**
- 7. Correctly interpret it**

Last week we left off discussing that the bible is written to three groups of people:

1. The Jew
2. The Gentile
3. The Church

There is false teaching called replacement theology, this false doctrine asserts that the New Covenant through Jesus Christ supersedes the promises God exclusively made to the Jewish people. And that now, the Church has succeeded the Israelites as the people of God, and has inherited these promises which are no longer physical in nature, but spiritual. The church is spiritual Israel. But this cannot be, for it contradicts Romans 11:25-26:

<sup>25</sup> For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

<sup>26</sup> And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

There are 5 covenants in the Bible (all found in the OT):

1. Noahic (Genesis 9:11)
2. Abrahamic (Genesis 12:1-3)
  - a. He will be made into a great nation (12:2)
  - b. This nation will be led into the Promised Land (12:1)
  - c. Through him (Abraham) all people of the earth will be blessed (12:3).
3. Mosaic (Exodus 19-24)
4. Davidic (2 Samuel 7:12-17). A Royal Grant covenant to David and his descendants that his house will rule over Israel forever. The promise of an eternal kingdom is ultimately fulfilled when Christ returns.
5. New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Joel 2:28-29; Hebrews 8:6-13). God promised He would give His people a heart to follow Him (Jer. 32:34). He will be their God, and they will be His people. He will forgive the sins of His people (Jer. 32:34b). This promise finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 8:7-13; 9; 10:11-24). The Gentiles partake of this covenant the moment they are saved.

A covenant is a binding agreement between two or more parties. When we speak of Biblical covenants, we are referring to instances where God has entered into an agreement with mankind that involves both promises and responsibilities for each party. Each covenant was sealed with a sign: Noahic—rainbow; Abrahamic—circumcision; Mosaic—the tablets written with the finger of God; Davidic—the virgin birth of Christ (Acts 2:30); New Covenant—the Holy Spirit.

Not all covenants are applicable to you and me.

There are 8 dispensations. God's dealings with man can be represented by the following eight dispensations:

1. Innocence – the garden of Eden (Gen. 1:28-3:6)
2. Conscience (Gen. 3:7-6:7; Acts 17:30)
3. Human Government – capital punishment established (Gen. 8)
4. Law (Ex. 19 – Acts 1)
5. Church (Acts 2 – Rev. 4)
6. The Tribulation (Dan. 9:27; 12:1; Matt. 24:21; 24:29; Rev. 7:14; 13:5)
7. The Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20)
8. The Fullness of Times – Eternity Future (Eph. 1:10)

And this is hardest one for Christians to grasp; the teaching of dispensations.

There is some divergence in the list of dispensations. Many insert a dispensation of “promise” before the Law. However, the promise God made to Abraham was not a dispensation, but rather a covenant that applied only to Abraham and not all of mankind (see covenants).

Not all dispensations conclude as a new dispensation begins. Two past dispensations are still in effect today: the dispensation of Conscience and Human Government. The unreached tribes in the far reaches of the earth hidden from civilization are still under the dispensation of Conscience (Rom. 2:14-15), and everyone is still under the dispensation of Human Government (Rom. 13) and will be until Christ comes back to take possession of all kingdoms (Dan. 2).

Many believe the tribulation is an extension of the dispensation of the Law because once again God begins dealing with Israel. While this concept is true, during the tribulation God is also dealing with the Gentile nations alongside Israel. What will occur during this period will affect all mankind. The worship of the image (abomination of desolation), though originating from the temple, will be global.

The Antichrist will require all who dwell upon the earth to worship this image (Rev. 13:15). We know that to gain the Jews' favor, the Antichrist will allow them to once again sacrifice in their temple (which is yet to be built). However, though these sacrifices will be according to the Levitical system, they will not be valid or accepted by God because the sacrifice of God's Lamb was once for all and forever (Heb. 10).

The dispensation of the tribulation is also not an extension of the dispensation of grace. During the tribulation, God is not pouring out grace, but judgment. The word grace is not found once during the description of the events that will transpire during the tribulation.

The church will not go through the tribulation (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 5). There is a teaching that is lately becoming prominent, and this is that church will go through some part of the tribulation.

The two Advents:

The OT prophecies regarding Christ did not distinguish between His First Coming and His Second Coming, thus when Christ came, the Jews were expecting a revolution; they were expecting a Messiah King.

John 6:15: When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

But the Jew would not receive a Messiah who would come as a meek suffering servant.

Matthew 21:5: Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

But the OT prophets prophesied of a coming golden age for Israel, where Messiah would sit on His throne in Jerusalem ruling the world with a rod of iron. Instead, their Messiah was arrested, tried and crucified; suffering shame at the hand of their oppressors.

Clarence Larkin speaks of the mountain peaks of prophecy, two peaks, each representing an advent. But the prophets from their vantage point could not see the valley in between, they just saw one peak.

Luke chapter 24 best describes how this attitude affected the disciples' belief of the things Christ taught them and how they saw Him.

Luke 24:21: But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel...

And He will come again—at His Second Coming (Rev. 19).

Revelation 19:16: And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

## 7. Correctly interpret it

Biblical hermeneutics is the study of the principles and methods behind correctly interpreting the Bible.

We are not going to get into twenty-five dollar words here, but there are some things we need to keep in mind in order to correctly interpret scripture.

First off, there is only one correct interpretation, and don't think you always have the right one.

2 Peter 1:20: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

So the goal when studying the Bible is to find the right interpretation.

To correctly interpret scripture we need to understand the context of the passage (what is being discussed), the setting (what was going on at the time this was written), and the audience—we already talked about the three groups of people the Bible was written to.

Every verse has a combination of any of the following three applications: a historical application, doctrinal application or practical application.

And always ask the question does this apply to me? It is obvious that OT sacrifices do not apply to us. And it is obvious that the church does not have to fear whether or not they will be pressured into taking the mark of the beast; this only applies to the tribulation saints.

I'm reminded of the story of the man who desperately wanted to find out God's will.

So he picks up the Bible, closes his eyes, opens the Bible and places his finger on a verse.

The first verse he happened to turn to was Matthew 27:5 which says: "Judas went and hanged himself."

Since he was not sure how this verse applied to himself, he flipped to another passage and the Bible fell open to Luke 10:37: “Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.”

The man was quite upset and he did not know how he could ever obey that, so he decided to turn to one more place. Again he opened the Bible at random and to his horror his finger fell upon John 13:27: “Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.”

As you can see, this method could easily cause a person to take verses out of context!

Never interpret a complete statement in light of an incomplete statement.

Never form doctrine from vague or hard to interpret verses. Always form your doctrine from clear verses and then fit the unclear verses to that doctrine.

An example of this is the doctrine of predestination, which some interpret as the divine foreordaining with regard to the salvation of some and not others. But this contradicts a clear teaching in 2 Peter 3:9 of true divine will: The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. So what does the doctrine of predestination deal with? Well, keep coming and eventually you'll find out.

Always take the literal meaning of a verse except when it is impossible to do so.

Always compare scripture with scripture.

1 Corinthians 2:13: Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Let's put this principle into practice.

Turn to Matthew 10:28: And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

See what it says here, God will destroy the soul, He will annihilate it!

This verse can be used to teach Annihilationism. Annihilationism is the belief that after the final judgment those who end up in the Lake of Fire, both human beings and fallen angels (all of the damned) will eventually be totally destroyed; their existence will come to an end; their consciousness will be extinguished. By the way, this belief is held by many Seventh-day Adventists.

Another one of their favorite verses to teach this doctrine is:

Ecclesiastes 12:7: Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

But let's look at some other verses:

Mark 9:44: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Daniel 12:2: And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Matthew 18:8: Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt

or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

Revelation 20:10: And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

So does the Bible teach Annihilationism? No, so to destroy the soul would mean to put it in a state of perpetual torment.

And Ecclesiastes is referring to the believer, whose body will decay, but His spirit will go to heaven to be with God.

I want to give two more things before we close.

The rule of first mention and the rule of second mention.

The **rule of first mention** says that, in order to understand a particular word or doctrine, we must find the first place in Scripture that that word or doctrine occurs and study that passage, for it sets and defines the meaning of this word or doctrine.

Example: love

Ge:22:2: And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

So the example of love is given by a man who loved his only son (Hebrews 11:17 calls Isaac Abraham's only begotten son) and willing to offer him up as a sacrifice.

In the **rule of second mention**, when a word or doctrine is mentioned a second time, we are given a complete or fuller understanding of the word or doctrine in question.

Love is mentioned a second time in Gen. 24:67.

Gen. 24:67: And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

Here we have the love between Isaac, a type of Christ, and his bride, who by the way was sought by Eliezer, a type of the Holy Spirit, at the behest of Abraham, a type of the Father.

So this gives us a complete picture of the word “love.”

Another example is the six day creation: In Ex. 20:11 we told for a second time: “For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth...” agreeing with Genesis chapter one; so it was a literal six day creation, and not “six creative periods.”

So this is a basic outline of the Bible and how to study it and teach it.

Other things we will be covering in the future:

The 7 Furnishings of the Tabernacle

The 7 Baptisms (Heb. 6:2: Of the doctrine of baptisms...)

The 7 Raptures

The 7 Judgements

The 7 Sevens

The 7 Jewish Feasts

The 3 laws (civil, ceremonial, moral)

The two kingdoms (the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Heaven)

The 5 Crowns

The Fruit of the Spirit

The Mysteries

So stay tuned!