

Matthew 24 Series - Answers to Revelation 20

Part 24 in the Series - The Murder of Stephen

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I would like to thank you again for taking the time to look at the Word of God with me today. I am honored and humbled that you would take the time to hear what I believe God has given to me and expects me to share concerning the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and it's present-day reality.

This past week, which has really not been any different than anything I've seen in the last 30 or 40 years in Missouri - we had temperatures a week ago that were around 70. A couple days prior to that, we had some of the most frigid temperatures I care to recall. But, you know, it is winter time. My experience with Missouri weather is that it is not at all uncommon to have unseasonably mild temperatures right in the middle of winter - but then winter comes back with a vengeance.

Usually, if we have a couple days of unseasonably warm temperatures - it is followed with some pretty severe weather. It's like, okay great, here's some warmth - but - uh oh - we're going to pay for it with some rough weather.

And so it was this past week. We had 70s last weekend, then storms this week.

Being one of the largest Baptist and Assembly of God, and Pentecostal regions in the country - our easily predictable weather - was instead determined to be the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. For those of you who are not familiar with the Ozarks, I wonder if you have ever heard of a little city in northern Arkansas called, Harrison. Apparently, Harrison Arkansas had an earthquake this past week which prompted some of the aforementioned denominationalists to reveal that this was a sign that we are in the 6th seal of the book of Revelation.

Even if we were having strange weather phenomena - to say that it is the fulfillment of Bible prophecy would once again play right into the hand of the globalists who are actually the ones staging the events for the purpose of gaining more and more control over people.

We have heard for years and years that patents have been awarded for weather modification devices. The U.S. government has a weather monitoring program called HAARP. Of course, the government says it is nothing more than a benign research and

study resource for monitoring the weather. Others say different things about it's real purpose. My message today is not about HAARP, whether the government is capable of creating and using weapons created by the weather - personally - I do not doubt that they have tried to weaponize the weather - simply because I believe the government is filled with "mad scientists" who are crazy.

However, if there are strange weather occurrences, particularly ones that cause tragedy - I have no problem whatsoever believing that men's governments are behind it. And they are more than willing to allow the religious people in this country to lay the blame on God - calling it the fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

Getting the gullible, unlearned in the Scriptures sheeple to believe such lies does not but further the evil agenda of those seeking to dominate people through whatever means they desire.

And again, it is absolutely laughable to hear these same religious people continually bash the "democrats" as the evil ones and somehow the "republicans" are the good, God fearing politicians that are just trying to do the will of God but the devil and the dems keep thwarting them - yet - some of these same religious people who would discover something like HAARP and call it evil - think nothing of the fact that HAARP came about because of the republicans.

The world is crazy. It's simply crazy and the biggest reason why is found in the words of Christ, James 1:8 - "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Here's a couple of examples. Religious people love to say things like:

"Oh, Jesus is my King. Oh, how I love Jesus."

Then to their neighbor, "I sure hope you voted for Trump and the republicans."

"The Bible is the Word of God. It teaches us everything we need to know about living. I am so grateful for my liberty in Christ."

Then to their children, "Freedom comes from the Constitution and I'm so glad those brave founders fought and died for the Constitution and our braves soldiers all over the world today are fighting for our freedom."

On Sunday at church: "America is the greatest country for freedom in the world today."

Then on Monday at life: "Driver's license and fees, occupational license and fees, building permit and fees, zoning permit and fees, marriage license and fees, hunting

license and fees, state tax, federal tax, social security tax, unemployment tax, property tax, coming soon now, rain tax..."

Sadly, the most double-mindedness that I see in society today - comes from those who claim to be followers of Christ.

It is because we refuse to yield to the simple teachings of the Scriptures, the simple teachings of John the Baptist, of the Apostles, and of Christ Himself.

We have fallen into a trap of deception that requires everything in life to be measured by its "entertainment value." Everything - including what has come to be known as "Christianity" is become competition with Hollywood for the control of the minds of the people.

Last week I mentioned briefly the rise of the popularity of Jack VanImpe in the 1960s and continuing through the 1970s. Jack had come up with this highly compelling, drama filled preaching that literally kept the church people in the pews - sitting on the edge. One of the things I remember most was his vast imagery of a Chinese army of 50 million horseback riders who would invade Israel through the dried up Euphrates river - and on and on he went.

He tried to explain why and how an invading army of horseback riders would be the only way a modern, effective invasion could take place - and you know what? They believed this ridiculous Hollywood, made for movies description of things in the book of Revelation.

The 1960s was a time in American life where a movie like the "Creature from the Black Lagoon" was so thrilling, because the advancements in Hollywood cinema were showing things on TV that we just hadn't seen before. So, a reenactment of Red Chinese invading armies riding on horses through the dried up Euphrates River - well - it was reasonable at that time.

Is it reasonable today? Hardly.

In the 1960s, the mark of the beast of Revelation 13 was some type of tattoo. In the 1960s, tattoos were taboo. Very few people had tattoos in the 1960s. In fact, I only knew of a few people that had them - and the one I remember the most was the anchor tattoo that men who had been in the navy had.

Oh boy, once it came out there was something called a micro-chip that was being developed - that took the religionists to a whole other atmosphere of Bible prophecy and it's being fulfilled in our lifetime.

Interestingly, enough, there was a news broadcast that my wife and I saw this past week where an Arkansas legislator was wanting to pass a law prohibiting businesses in Arkansas from forcing their employees to be micro-chipped as a condition of employment. I'm actually finding similar "statues" all over America where they are trying to prevent businesses from requiring the micro-chips. My guess is that this is making the Anti-Christ really mad.

So supposedly strange weather phenomena, earthquakes in unheard places in America, micro-chip legislation, yet - many among us fail to yield to the simple words from the book of Revelation - chapter 1 says that book was written to the 7 ecclesias in Asia - it was written concerning things which must shortly come to pass, and for the time is at hand.

Now, I don't speak the way I do to try to belittle or make fun of people who believe that all these things around us are the fulfillment of Bible prophecy - I speak the way I do in hopes that they will see the foolishness and the double mindedness in these things and hopefully wake up. Wake up before it's too late.

Before it's too late for what? I hate to say it, but the doom and gloomers, in many ways have it right. There is a one world government plan for world domination. There is a plan to reduce the world's population. There is a plan for forced inoculation - which is actually part of the plan for population control. But folks, the Bible does not teach that Jesus is coming back to this earth to rescue us before these things come about.

These things are coming - everything around us is screaming at us with warnings - but the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ - the only thing that can stop it - and we have been told that the Kingdom is in the future!

Can you see the hopelessness created by this false theology?

Look, I get it, I can see why so many people are hoping for a Superman or Batman type saviour to come riding through and save Gotham City from the Joker - but folks - it's not going to happen.

But hope is not lost. We have the greatest hope ever - and it's sitting right in our laps.

All we have to do is say, Yes, to the King - which means say, No, to those who are trying to bring all this to pass against us - and the enemies will wither and fade away.

This past week, a quote unquote Christian businessman in New York closed his business for one day in protest of the new abortion law in New York. There was apparently a sign on the front door that said:

“CLOSED TODAY. Today is a day of mourning in New York State. We will not collect sales tax today for a tyrannical government that murders babies. We will resume regular business tomorrow, collecting sales tax under duress. End Abortion Now.”

Wow. One whole day. That'll show them. Then after that day, they'll collect sales tax under duress. Do you think these people running the state of New York care whether the tax is collected under duress or not? Does a "duress paid tax" differ from a non-duress tax paid?

Who is required to collect sales tax? Look it up for yourself. You must have an agreement with the state of New York in order to be a tax collector. You have to have a tax id number. You have to be a registered corporation. If you are a corporation, you are a creature of the state. You voluntarily agree to obey the laws of your creator.

No one is holding a gun to anyone's head and forcing them to be a corporation. People voluntarily go to the state for supposed benefits of being incorporated. The supposed benefits that are offered - come with strings attached. Someone once said, "Come shekels, come shackles."

This is why the admonition to come out from among them and be ye separate is an eternal principle. Yes. It was first stated to the true Christians in the first century. It is an eternal principle that all of God's people - from that day it was spoken into existence - til now - still applies.

And the reason we don't get it today is because we have been deceived into believing that the book of Revelation and the King Whose Kingdom it reveals - is not for today.

We have bought the lie that if the King is a coming king - then the Kingdom is a coming kingdom - and what remains today are the kingdoms of men - and not only that - that God has ordained the kingdoms of men to be obeyed - no matter what.

This is the fatal deception that the greatest majority of people who call themselves Christians have believed and it is the reason we are in the shape we are in.

It must become the mission for those of us who are awake and aware - to tear down these lies and deceptions - which when the lie is uncovered - what will remain is the truth that will set us free - and that is the Christ is King now - He has a Kingdom now - and it is the responsibility of every living, breathing creature to conform to His Kingdom now.

When this happens, another eternal principle becomes a present day reality and that is that disobedience will be revenged - when our obedience is fulfilled. II Corinthians 10:6. I'm telling you that all that we see coming down the pike today - that which seems to be an out of control, runaway freight train - could be derailed in an instant. Overnight it could all change, if only people who claim to be God's people, would wake up and realize what God has given us with His King and Kingdom.

This is why the teaching of Fulfilled Bible Prophecy is not only important - it is the most important Scriptural truth we should be focusing on.

Fulfilled Bible Prophecy gives us the authority to preach the things we preach and live the way we live.

Living for Christ the King - today - in a world that believes He is only a coming king - and in a world that is currently controlled by the enemies of Christ - is a perilous place to be. But it doesn't have to be. On the Day of Pentecost - in one day - 3,000 people came to the understanding that this Jesus, whom you slew and hung on a tree, hath God made both Lord and Christ - King. And in a relatively short amount of time, these that have turned the world upside down, have come hither also, whom Jason hath received, and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another King, One Jesus.

Yes. It may be painful at the start because one man here or man there, or one woman here or one woman there may be easy pickings for the enemy - but I'd love to see what they would do with 3,000 all in one place! The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, very small, but once it gets going, it grows into a large tree - the Bible calls it the greatest among herbs.

In order to stand against an evil agenda today - because as we clearly see - most of the evil agenda comes by way of legislation from men's governments - or from corporations

which are creatures of men's governments - a man must find authority to do so - and that authority must come from God in Heaven.

This is why I've gone through so much detail to show that the central theme of not just the New Testament books, but the entire Bible itself, is that the Kingdom of God is at hand - meaning specifically - the generation to whom our Lord was sent. The generation, nation, time, people and place - where Christ was executed.

This was such a monumental event in the history of creation that God chose the words, "end of the world" "the last days" "the last day" "the heavens melting with a fervent heat" and other extreme language to describe what happened at that time.

The days where God allowed the nations to walk in their own ways - Acts 14:16 - those days are over.

From AD70 on - men not only have the authority to preach that Christ alone is King of kings and Lord of lords - that he is the last of the kings and the last of the lords that God allows for His creation - but we have a mandate to preach and live those things. And when we fail to do so - we bring to ourselves damnation and all kinds of misery as a result of our disobedience to the fact that God - once He sent His Son to walk this earth - no longer allows men to set up their own governments and govern themselves according to their own wishes and desires. It isn't allowed any longer.

And the reason He allowed it in the Old Covenant world was to show us what would happen to us in the New Covenant World if we rejected His Kingdom.

This is why there are unbelievably evil people with an unbelievably evil agenda are accomplishing their evil in the world today. Their only resistance has been neutralized. And what resistance they should have, has been turned into their biggest supporters because they've convinced their supposed resistance that any fight they would offer would be a fight against fulfilled bible prophecy and to fight against bible prophecy is to fight against God Himself.

I realize that I am repeating myself many times over since I started this series, but I have to. We live in a time where black has become white. White is now black. Night is day and day is night. Listen, we've been told that brainwashing is a really bad thing. But the truth is - brainwashing is exactly what we need. Our brains have been become filled with all sorts of garbage - we are brain-dirtied and we need to have our brains washed.

The world is in desperate need of being turned right side up - and the only thing that can fix it - is a return to the God of the Bible - period. We don't need a short term fix. We don't need an election where the lesser of two evils is the choice. We need to tighten up our bootstraps, determine that as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh - then get after it.

One of the things that should give us the strength for this type of undertaking is again found in the concept that for the believer, death has been destroyed.

In the many weeks that I have been laying out this argument, I have brought forth the passages of Scripture that point to death being destroyed - not in the future - but as a present day reality and understanding for the first century saints.

At the end of Revelation 20 in verse 14, we find death and hell cast into the lake of fire. My argument for many years concerning the 20th chapter of the book of Revelation has been that the thousand years was one day. I brought forth my Scriptural references for this last week.

While I believe that the official, if you will, date for death being destroyed was at AD70 - I want you to understand that I believe that from the birth of Christ - to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in AD70 was a transition period.

It is entirely Biblically accurate to refer to those days as "the last days." It is entirely Biblically accurate to refer to those days as "the end of the world" having already laid the case for that phrase meaning the end of the Old Covenant age.

An argument could also be made that those days were the "beginnings of the new world" they were the morning shadows of the first days of the New Covenant world."

In speaking of the Old Covenant World, the writer of the book of Hebrews says in Hebrews 8:13

In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Elements of the Old Covenant world are still in place after the resurrection of Christ. The temple was still in existence. Paul even went into the temple in Acts 21 and offered a sacrifice.

Just as there was an element of the Old World still seen because it was in the process of

vanishing away - not instantaneously - but vanishing - I believe there are several instances that occurred in the end of Old Covenant world that provide glimpses of the New Covenant World which was on the doorstep of implementation.

I am directly referring once again to what people understand and call death. I have laid out my argument that New Testament passages show that in the New Covenant World - what we think of death - does not occur for the believer. The soul of the believer - when the physical body ceases to be as we know it - the soul of the believer is in the presence of God the Father and His Son. Again, this is because death has been destroyed.

Last week, I said I wanted to look at the murder of Stephen as found in Acts 6 and 7. Let's go there today. We will need to begin in verse 1 of Acts 6.

[1] And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.

[2] Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

[3] Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

[4] But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

[5] And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

[6] Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

[7] And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

[8] And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

[9] Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

Let's stop here for just a minute and discuss the Libertines. As you should be able to easily see, Libertines is associated with and from the word liberty. These men were afforded liberty from Rome. It was not a good thing. I'm not going to spend a lot of time here - but to say that this type of liberty is free from restraint - including the Law of God.

The truth is, the Laws of God, provide the greatest amount of freedom available to

mankind - but does not offer freedom to disobey the Laws of God. We need to be wary of those who advocate for liberty apart from the Laws of God.

These Libertines were pretty bad guys. In Acts 22, I believe Paul encountered one of these Libertines. He was a soldier. When discussing freedom, the soldier said, "With a great sum I obtained this freedom." He was no doubt talking about wars and killing and fighting and bloodshed. But Paul responded, "But I was free born."

There are modern day libertines today who take very seriously their concept of freedom and liberty and that it was won with blood shed and violence. They will get very angry with anyone who does not put them on some sort of pedestal and almost worship them for "fighting for freedom." The freedom that Christ offers does not require blood shed. He already took care of that.

Verse 10.

- [10] And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.
- [11] Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.
- [12] And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council,
- [13] And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law:
- [14] For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.
- [15] And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

Chapter 7.

- [1] Then said the high priest, Are these things so?
- [2] And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,
- [3] And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.
- [4] Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.
- [5] And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.

[6] And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.

[7] And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

[8] And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

[9] And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,

[10] And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

[11] Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance.

[12] But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

[13] And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh.

[14] Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.

[15] So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers,

[16] And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem.

[17] But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

[18] Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

[19] The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

[20] In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

[21] And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

[22] And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

[23] And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

[24] And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian:

[25] For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.

[26] And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would

have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?

[27] But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?

[28] Wilt thou kill me, as thou diddest the Egyptian yesterday?

[29] Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons.

[30] And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.

[31] When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him,

[32] Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold

[33] Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.

[34] I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.

[35] This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

[36] He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

[37] This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

[38] This is he, that was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

[39] To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt,

[40] Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

[41] And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.

[42] Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?

[43] Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

[44] Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen.

[45] Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David;

[46] Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.

[47] But Solomon built him an house.

[48] Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,

[49] Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

[50] Hath not my hand made all these things?

[51] Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

[52] Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

[53] Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

[54] When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

[55] But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

[56] And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

[57] Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

[58] And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

[59] And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

[60] And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

As I read this, I see the author refusing to state the obvious here in relation to Stephen. Rather than state - and he could have done so without jeopardizing the truth of the Word - he could have said they killed Stephen - he could have said Stephen died - and it wouldn't have changed a thing - but instead - God caused the author to say that this violent, bloody murder of Stephen - ended with Stephen simply falling asleep.

Do you believe that Stephen was immediately in the presence of His King when he

closed his eyes? He could have. The text doesn't say. He did call upon Christ to receive his spirit. Did He? Did Christ receive His spirit?

Did Stephen's soul sleep for just a little while longer? Did he have to wait until the resurrection at AD70?

I can tell you this, without any shadow of a doubt, Stephen was so unconcerned about what was coming next - that he simply fell asleep while those evil men stoned him to a bloody pulp.

This Stephen was a helper of widows and orphans. He was a just man. He was a man that loved God and knew Who God's Son was. And these evil men just up and murdered him. It was these men and others just like them who had killed the Christ, murdered the prophets, killed the followers of Christ and would kill again - to whom the wrath and judgment of God would be poured upon - and that happened at AD70 - just like Christ said, when in Matthew 24, He said, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

Stephen did not fear "death" because Christ had set in motion for death to be destroyed and those followers of His in the first generation knew that they could either be brought back to life - within minutes or days - and that their soul would not be left in the grave for very long because the time was at hand.

Revelation chapter 20, as I have said many times now, continues with the 2 central themes throughout the Scripture - 1) Judgment and 2) Kingdom.

As I have been laying out my argument for the thousand years being equal to 1 day - I want us to look at a couple other passages in the book of Revelation regarding judgment specifically. If we had been doing this the way we really should have been - I mean - continuing to build foundation then - proceeding to Revelation 20-22 - we would have seen this and I believe Revelation 20 would probably be easier to understand.

Look with me to Revelation 18 and we'll begin in verse 1:

[1] And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

[2] And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

[3] For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

[4] And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

[5] For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

[6] Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

[7] How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

[8] Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

Notice here that judgment comes in one day. In one day, death mourning and famine and she is utterly burned with fire, because of the judgement of God.

[9] And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,

[10] Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

For in one hour is thy judgment come. Days, hours, thousand - is all referring to the same thing. The central theme of Revelation 20 is the same thing as the rest of the Bible - Judgment and Kingdom.

Now a problem presents itself because we have not been able to lay much of a foundation here, either, but I believe that Jerusalem is called Babylon in the book of Revelation. The destruction and judgment of Babylon in Revelation is talking about Jerusalem. It's the same way that Jerusalem was called Sodom and Egypt - the city where our Lord was crucified in Revelation 11:8.

Was Sodom an evil place? Of course. Was there evil in Babylon? Of course. Was there evil in Egypt? Of course.

But friends, Sodom did not kill the Son of God. Babylon did not kill the Son of God. Egypt did not kill the Son of God.

Combine all the evil of Sodom with all the evil of Babylon with all the evil of Egypt and it will not come close to the evil that Jerusalem had accumulated unto herself when at the end - the inhabitants murdered the very Son of God.

Again, this goes back to people failing to realize just how hugely important the first century was. The first century had John the Baptist revealed in it. Killed him. Christ was revealed in it. Killed him. The disciples, the apostles, killed, persecuted. Stephen. Killed him. The end of the temple. The end of Jerusalem. This was without question, the most significant time period for all of God's creation.

Of all of this significance, what I want you to see today is verse 10. "For in one hour is thy judgment come." Revelation 20's use of the word thousand is for completion - the judgment on Jerusalem according to Revelation 18 was completed in one hour.

Go down to verse 19:

And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

[20] Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

[21] And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

This is a direct reference back to Matthew 23.

Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

[32] Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

[33] Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

[34] Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

[35] That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

[36] Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

[37] O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

[38] Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

And Matthew 23 is a direct reference back to Daniel 9:27

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Friends, the book of Revelation is a history book. It details the judgment that God poured out upon Israel and those wicked jews that killed the prophets, our Lord and His first century followers.

It is a book that establishes the Kingdom of Christ at AD70. It is not a book about futurism. It is not a book that describes a future judgment and a future kingdom. It is not a book that enables the modern day globalist to rain down terror upon mankind because God has ordained it to be so and calls it fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

Before we leave Revelation 20, I want us to go back to verse 9. Look with me please to Revelation 20:9. We will not finish here today. We'll go as far as we can, then Lord willing continue next week.

And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

There is a lot to discuss about this verse but I think we can cover it fairly quickly. There are some out there who believe that the beloved city is a physical, rebuilt Jerusalem. These are people who believe in the reinstatement of animal sacrifices, red heifers, etc, jews are God's chosen people etc.

I have already provided an overwhelming amount of Scripture showing that not only is this error - but it is utter blasphemy to say that it is the plan of God, the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, for the temple to be rebuilt and worse - for animal sacrifices to be reinstated.

I can't believe we would even have a discussion among sincere followers of Christ that animal sacrifices would be the Will of God.

But this what happens when we let our guard down and allow the simplicity that is in Christ be replaced with Hollywood christianity and with things such as government subsidies for people and organizations who are supposedly tasked with teaching the Bible.

I mean, preachers and churches quote unquote today receive tax exempt status and the tax deductible gift - from the same people who pass laws saying that abortion is legal -

even after a baby is born. I can't believe that we could even entertain discussion about whether or not someone who claims to be preaching the Gospel should go to these people and ask for permission to minister. That simply blows my mind.

We've talked about this before - can you imagine any of the disciples going to someone in the Roman government and asking permission to do what the King of kings told them to do? It's beyond comprehension.

Lazarus - laying in the grave for 4 days. His sisters weeping and crying over Lazarus - upset that Christ didn't come and heal him - but rather let him quote unquote die. Then, when Christ finally made it and asked where Lazarus was buried. When he wanted to see - Lazarus sisters said, "By now he stinketh." He's been in there 4 days.

Then with a loud voice - one that could wake the dead - Christ cried out, "Lazarus, come forth." Then, here he comes, still wrapped in the burial clothes. But here he comes, in the same body that he apparently had left days before.

From that point on, who do you think Lazarus thought was King? When Christ told Lazarus in the upper room, "All power - all authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth" do you think Lazarus doubted? Did Lazarus go get a license to preach? Did Lazarus go get a license to heal the sick? Come on, if you could simply put yourself in the shoes of these people, live their life for one day - after the resurrection of Christ - no way would you ever consider asking permission from a man to do what God told you to do.

Friends, I went to quote unquote bible college. I had the syllabus on how to quote "start a church." I was taught how to get a lawyer and organize a charter and set up a board of trustees and incorporate with the godless state. My how we have lost what it truly means to be a follower of Christ. Would to God that we could walk 1 day in the life of some of those who followed Christ after His resurrection.

I truly believe that if we can begin with changing our minds and truly believing the words as they were written - that the Kingdom of God is at hand - literally meant over 2,000 years ago - and we understand the truth that Christ is King - right now - I believe we can begin to receive some of the boldness that those men possessed. I believe that our portion could be even greater because blessed are those that have not seen - and yet still believe.

We are out of time again. Lord willing, we will pick up here again from Revelation 20 and hopefully we will be able to identify the real beloved city of Revelation 20:9.