

Peter James & John – Rightly Divided

Series 1-20

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Introduction to the Series: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided

Throughout church history, few portions of Scripture have been as misunderstood—or as misapplied—as the General Epistles of Peter, James, and John. Though rich in devotion and instruction, these letters are often taught without recognizing their **distinct audience**, **doctrinal setting**, and **dispensational context**.

At first glance, they appear to mirror Paul’s epistles. But a closer, rightly divided examination reveals something profound: these letters are **not written primarily to the Church, the Body of Christ**, but to **the Jewish remnant—believers navigating the unique trials of the Tribulation period**. From James’ opening greeting “to the twelve tribes scattered abroad,” to Peter’s references to suffering “in heaviness through manifold temptations,” to John’s warnings against Antichrists, these epistles point prophetically beyond the Church Age.

Yet they are not irrelevant to us. When handled with care and precision, these writings edify the Church devotionally while enlightening the future doctrinally. In them, we see:

- **James** emphasizing works—not for salvation, but as endurance in faith during judgment.
- **Peter** bridging the gap between law and grace, warning of fiery trials ahead.
- **John** proclaiming the love of God while drawing sharp lines between truth and error—light and darkness.

This series will carefully explore all three epistolary voices—not harmonizing them into Paul’s gospel, but rightly dividing their content according to **2 Timothy 2:15**, distinguishing the **Jewish prophetic program** from the **mystery revealed to Paul**.

We will see how these letters fit into the **timeline of God’s dealings with Israel**, their practical value for believers today, and their prophetic depth for those who will endure the darkest days of human history. We will examine the typology, the doctrine, the warnings, and the hope embedded in each chapter.

Above all, this series aims to do what Peter, James, and John themselves desired—to strengthen the brethren. Whether in the upper room, on the Mount of Transfiguration, or by the fires of trial, these three men stood with Christ. And in the final letters of their lives, they call others to do the same.

1 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Introduction: Written to the Twelve Tribes Scattered Abroad

Introduction: Dispensational Clarity in the General Epistles

The epistle of James opens with one of the boldest and most dispensationally revealing declarations in the New Testament:

“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.”

(James 1:1)

For the believer who rightly divides the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15), this is not a throwaway line—it is a **doctrinal lighthouse**, guiding the reader to navigate this epistle not through the lens of Pauline church doctrine, but through **Jewish prophecy, Tribulation application, and remnant instruction**.

Sadly, many Bible teachers, seminaries, and devotional readers pass over this verse as a mere salutation, and in doing so, they miss the key to the book’s proper interpretation. Once that address is understood—to *the twelve tribes*—the rest of the book falls perfectly into place, with **works-based warnings, Second Coming language, and endurance expectations** that align not with Church Age grace, but with **Tribulation survival**.

This essay launches our 20-part series on *Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided*. We begin with James, the first of the General Epistles and the most **misapplied** in contemporary preaching. James is often quoted in pulpits to support lordship salvation, works-based righteousness, and conditional security. But when **rightly divided**, these doctrinal pitfalls disappear, and the epistle stands as what it truly is: **a prophetic instruction manual for the Jewish remnant facing the last days**.

I. James the Man: A Jewish Leader to a Jewish Audience

The James who authored this epistle was not James the brother of John—he was martyred early in Acts 12 (Acts 12:2). This James is the **half-brother of the Lord Jesus Christ**, often referred to as “James the Just,” a prominent figure in the early Jerusalem church and a key authority figure among Jewish believers.

“But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother.”
(Galatians 1:19)

He was deeply respected by the Jewish church, which remained **in and around Jerusalem**, even as Paul’s ministry extended to the Gentiles. His position was particularly influential at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, where the question of Gentile salvation apart from the law was debated.

“Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.”
(Acts 15:19)

James was **not** an apostle to the Gentiles. He spoke **from and to a Jewish position**, even while acknowledging the work of God among the Gentiles. His focus was on his people, and his epistle reflects this **ethnic and prophetic priority**.

II. “To the Twelve Tribes Scattered Abroad” – Not the Church

The most crucial interpretive key in James is found in its opening words:

“To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad...”
(James 1:1)

This is not spiritual metaphor. James is not “spiritualizing Israel” into the Church. This is a literal address to the **literal twelve tribes of Israel**, not the Body of Christ. And though some claim the tribes are “lost,” the Bible never loses them—God always knows who and where they are.

“And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”
(Revelation 7:4)

These tribes are scattered—yes. But they are not absorbed into the Church. They are still a distinct **national and prophetic people**, and God is not finished with them.

“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”
(Romans 11:25)

James' epistle is not written to the Bride of Christ, sealed with the Holy Spirit and justified by grace through faith without works. It is written to **God's covenant people**, who are **under chastisement, under testing**, and heading into a time of **fiery trial**.

III. Why the Modern Church Misapplies James

The confusion arises when readers, especially preachers and teachers influenced by Reformed theology or lordship salvation, **read James through the lens of Paul's epistles**—as if James is just another instruction manual for the Church.

But Paul and James write **from different positions**, to **different audiences**, for **different dispensations**.

- Paul writes to **the Body of Christ**, saved and sealed by grace through faith.
- James writes to **the twelve tribes**, tested under fire, needing endurance and works.

Trying to reconcile James 2:24 with Romans 4:5 will result in doctrinal schizophrenia:

“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”

(James 2:24)

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

(Romans 4:5)

These aren't contradictions when rightly divided. James isn't undermining Paul—he's writing to **a different group under a different test**. The Church is not tested in the same way the Tribulation remnant will be.

IV. The Language of Testing, Not Security

One of the dominant themes in James is the **testing of faith**.

“Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”

(James 1:3)

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation...”

(James 1:12)

This is not about day-to-day struggles in the Christian life—it is **doctrinally aimed at those who must endure to the end** (Matt. 24:13), **refuse the mark of the beast**, and hold the **testimony of Jesus and the commandments of God** (Rev. 12:17; 14:12).

James is preparing his readers for:

- Testing by fire (James 1:3),
- Judgment without mercy (James 2:13),
- Temptation by riches (James 5:1–3),
- And persecution unto death (James 5:10–11).

This is **Tribulation ground**, not Body of Christ ground.

V. Tribulational Endurance – Not Eternal Security

James repeatedly emphasizes the need to **endure**:

“Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job...”
(James 5:11)

Job is the classic picture of the Tribulation saint: a man who loses everything, is afflicted by Satan, falsely accused by his friends, and finally vindicated by God.

James uses Job as a **model**, not of Church Age security, but of **faithful endurance through severe trial**—the kind that the Jewish remnant will face under the Antichrist.

Compare:

“Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”
(James 5:8)

This aligns with:

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

VI. The Law of Liberty – Not the Gospel of Grace

James 1:25 speaks of *“the perfect law of liberty”*. This phrase, though beautiful, is often misunderstood as referring to grace. But James still uses the word “law” deliberately.

Unlike Paul, who says:

“Ye are not under the law, but under grace.”
(Romans 6:14)

James speaks of law in positive terms:

- *“So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”* (James 2:12)
- *“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”* (James 2:10)

He is not referring to legal justification by works alone, but to **a works-based obedience system** under the framework of **faith and law**, precisely the structure used during the **Tribulation period**.

This again echoes Revelation 14:12:

“Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

James is describing those who must live righteously under pressure, maintain good works, reject worldliness, and wait for deliverance at the Lord’s appearing.

VII. Practical Advice vs. Prophetic Instruction

There is no doubt that James contains **practical truths** applicable for believers today:

- Be swift to hear, slow to speak (James 1:19),
- Don’t respect persons (James 2:1),
- Control your tongue (James 3:5–8),
- Submit to God and resist the devil (James 4:7).

But these truths are **devotional applications**, not **doctrinal teachings** for salvation or Church Age living. James is profitable **for instruction in righteousness**—but not as a foundation for gospel doctrine.

We must remember:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable...”
(2 Timothy 3:16)

But **not all Scripture is written to the Church, or about the Church.**

VIII. Why This Matters: Avoiding Doctrinal Confusion

Failing to rightly divide James leads to:

- **Lordship salvation**, where assurance is based on performance.
- **Fear-based Christianity**, where failure equals damnation.
- **Legalism**, where sanctification turns into self-righteousness.

This misapplication robs believers of their joy, assurance, and understanding of **grace**.

When James is taught doctrinally to the Church, preachers unwittingly put believers back under bondage—chained to performance, unsure of salvation, and confused about their standing in Christ.

But when rightly divided, James becomes:

- A **powerful map** for the Tribulation remnant,
- A **devotional mirror** for the Church,
- And a **prophetic trumpet** pointing toward the Second Coming of Christ.

Conclusion: James Rightly Divided Sets the Tone

The Book of James, when interpreted through the lens of **dispensational truth**, does not contradict Paul—it completes God’s message to another audience in another time.

It is:

- **Doctrinally aimed** at the twelve tribes of Israel,
- **Prophetically aligned** with the coming Tribulation,
- **Devotionally applicable** to Church Age saints.

As we continue through this 20-part series, we’ll dig deeper into each chapter of James, uncover the same clarity in Peter’s and John’s epistles, and show how all three men—**Peter, James, and John**—speak with harmony and precision **once their words are rightly divided**.

2 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – The Trying of Your Faith: Tribulational Endurance (James 1)

Introduction: Faith on Trial in the Last Days

James 1 opens with a theme that threads through the entire epistle and prophetically weaves its way into the coming Tribulation: **the trying of your faith**.

“Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”

(James 1:3)

To the modern Christian, this verse is often paraphrased to mean, *“Hang in there during life’s tough moments.”* But when rightly divided, the weight of this verse and chapter extends far beyond life’s inconveniences—it echoes with the pressure of **persecution, suffering, and the test of faith in a world under judgment**.

This is a passage not merely for the discouraged Christian, but for the **Jewish remnant** who will soon walk through the **fires of Tribulation**, facing the **mark of the beast**, the **betrayal of brethren**, and the **wrath of the dragon**.

James 1 is not written to a secure, seated-in-heaven Church (Eph. 2:6), but to scattered, threatened, and pressured believers trying to survive until the return of their Messiah. The call is not to celebrate salvation—but to **endure**.

I. The Doctrinal Framework: Testing in the Tribulation, Not Church Sanctification

The key to unlocking James 1 is in the doctrinal placement of the book. As we established in Essay 1, James is written *“to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad”* (James 1:1). That audience is not metaphorical—it is literal Israel, scattered in judgment, and soon to be regathered in fire.

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land... two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them...”

(Zechariah 13:8–9)

James 1 is aimed squarely at that **refined remnant**—those who will face a faith that must be tested and proven in the fiercest hour of human history.

It matches Revelation 2:10:

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

And Revelation 14:12:

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

This is **faith under fire, faith with works, faith in the face of death.**

II. Patience Through Tribulation – The Hallmark of End-Time Believers

James writes:

“But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

(James 1:4)

To many today, this sounds like a call to personal growth or character building. But doctrinally, this is about **endurance leading to survival, refinement, and ultimate deliverance.**

In Revelation 3:10, Jesus promises to keep the Philadelphia church *“from the hour of temptation.”* But for those who miss that escape—those **in the Tribulation**—there is no escape but through fire. Patience becomes not optional, but **vital to salvation.**

Consider Jesus' words in Luke 21:19:

“In your patience possess ye your souls.”

That's not poetic encouragement—it's a **life-and-death command** to those under pressure in the final days.

James speaks to the same group: the scattered, persecuted, hunted people of Israel, called to endure the Antichrist's system without giving in.

III. Faith and Wisdom – Discerning the Time

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God...”

(James 1:5)

In devotional teaching, this is often applied to decision-making. But the wisdom James speaks of is not about career paths or choosing a spouse. It's about **discerning the**

season, identifying deception, and knowing **how to survive and obey** in a time of mass delusion.

“Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering...” (James 1:6)

Why such insistence? Because in the Tribulation, **doubt will be deadly**. The entire world will be under strong delusion (2 Thess. 2:11), and only those who stand firm in faith—without wavering—will resist the deception.

James warns that a double-minded man is *“unstable in all his ways”* (v. 8)—which is a fitting description of the **apostate Jews** who will vacillate between loyalty to God and pressure to worship the Beast.

IV. The Poor and the Rich – A Tribulational Dynamic

“Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low...”

(James 1:9–10)

This teaching is often applied to humility, but in Tribulation context, it is about **economic inversion**.

The faithful in the Tribulation will be:

- **Poor** (unable to buy or sell without the mark),
- **Hated** (by the world system),
- **Despised** (by false religion).

The wicked will be:

- **Rich** (aligned with the Beast),
- **Comfortable** (in Babylon’s system),
- **Elevated** (in man’s eyes).

James declares that **God’s economy reverses it all**—the poor in spirit are exalted, and the wealthy who trusted riches **fade away** like grass (James 1:11).

This aligns perfectly with Revelation 6, where the rich hide in caves, and James 5, where the rich are told to *weep and howl* for the miseries coming upon them.

V. The Crown of Life – Martyrdom Reward, Not General Encouragement

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life...”

(James 1:12)

This is not a reference to general Christian blessing. This is **the martyr’s crown**, the reward given to those who die for their faith in the time of persecution.

Compare:

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

(Revelation 2:10)

This isn’t just about resisting lust or bad habits—it’s about resisting **worship of the Beast**, enduring **tribulational testing**, and being **faithful even when it costs your life**.

VI. God Cannot Be Tempted – And He Does Not Tempt

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God...”

(James 1:13)

In the midst of severe trial, it would be easy for a suffering remnant to believe that God has turned against them. But James reminds them: **temptation to evil doesn’t come from God**. It comes from **lust, sin, and Satan**.

This passage clarifies that while **God allows testing**, He never seduces anyone to fall. That’s the work of:

- The **flesh** (*drawn away of his own lust* – James 1:14),
- The **world system** (*the fashion of this world passeth away* – 1 John 2:17),
- The **Devil**, who will lead the end-time rebellion (Rev. 12–13).

This teaching is vital for tribulational saints, who will need to **discern the source of their suffering** and not falsely accuse God when things get unbearable.

VII. Every Good Gift – Especially the Word of Truth

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above... Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth...”

(James 1:17–18)

In a world full of lies, deception, and antichrist doctrine, the **only sure foundation** will be **the word of truth**. James affirms that God's unchanging nature is the source of clarity, and His Word is what gives birth to faithful obedience.

During the Tribulation, **the Word of God will be more precious than ever**, and those who **receive it** (v. 21) will stand firm, while those who reject it will perish.

VIII. Be Swift to Hear, Slow to Speak, Slow to Wrath

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath...”

(James 1:19)

This isn't just general social advice. It's critical **spiritual survival advice** for believers living under threat.

- **Swift to hear:** The remnant must be tuned in to the Word of God and prophetic truth.
- **Slow to speak:** In a world where every word may be overheard, caution matters.
- **Slow to wrath:** Not every offense demands retaliation—vengeance belongs to the Lord.

These commands protect believers from foolish speech, impulsive action, and spiritual blindness—all of which can lead to death under Antichrist's rule.

IX. Receive the Engrafted Word – It Can Save Your Soul

“Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

(James 1:21)

This verse is doctrinally powerful. The **engrafted word**—God's truth implanted into the heart—is **essential to soul salvation** for the remnant.

This does **not** match Paul's gospel of salvation by grace through faith, apart from works (Eph. 2:8–9). Instead, it's a **faith-and-works response** to revealed truth, rooted in **endurance, obedience, and separation from the world system**.

X. Be Ye Doers, Not Hearers Only – Warning to the Tribulation Hypocrite

“Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”
(James 1:22)

James isn’t speaking to secure believers resting in the finished work of Christ. He’s warning those who might **hear the Word, profess belief, but fail to obey**—which, in the Tribulation, equals **spiritual death**.

Compare with:

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

The message is simple and sobering: **Don’t just believe—obey. Act. Separate. Endure.**

XI. Pure Religion – Tribulational Faith in Action

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows... and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”
(James 1:27)

This verse isn’t a call to social justice—it’s a **prophetic standard for the Tribulation remnant**.

In the last days:

- Widows and orphans will abound—due to martyrdom, war, and famine.
- False religion will dominate, and the world will be filthy with sin.
- Those who stay **unspotted** by Babylon’s system will prove their loyalty to God.

This kind of “religion” is not ceremony—it’s **life under pressure**, driven by purity and sacrificial love for fellow sufferers.

Conclusion: James 1 Is a Blueprint for Tribulational Endurance

When rightly divided, James 1 stands not as a devotional pep talk, but as a **prophetic roadmap** for those who must **survive the Antichrist, endure temptation, refuse the mark, and cling to the word of truth** when the world burns.

It teaches:

- That faith must be tested.

- That wisdom is required.
- That riches deceive.
- That crowns await martyrs.
- That God gives good gifts—but doesn't tempt anyone.
- That the Word must be **heard and obeyed**.
- And that religion is **not a system**, but **endurance, purity, and compassion under fire**.

The Church is not addressed in this chapter—but we can learn by **observing how God prepares others**, and by understanding the times to come. And when we rightly divide this book, we preserve the truth for those who will one day need it most.

3 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Be Ye Doers, Not Just Hearers (James 1-2)

Introduction: The Action of Faith in a Time of Testing

When James commands, “*Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only*” (James 1:22), he's not merely offering a devotional proverb or general spiritual advice. He is issuing a **doctrinal mandate** to a people under trial, persecution, and imminent judgment. To fail to act upon the truth in such a context is not merely to be spiritually stunted—it is to fall into condemnation.

This section of James is one of the most controversial and misapplied in the entire Bible. It has been used to:

- Undermine **justification by faith alone**,
- Argue for **works-based salvation**,
- And blend Church Age grace with Tribulation requirements.

But when rightly divided, we see that James is not contradicting Paul, but speaking into a **different dispensation** and **to a different audience**—namely, **the twelve tribes scattered abroad** (James 1:1), who are navigating a prophetically charged time of intense pressure: **the coming Tribulation**.

In this essay, we will unpack the practical, prophetic, and doctrinal implications of James 1:22 through the end of chapter 2, rightly dividing between **Church Age application** and **Tribulational necessity**, clarifying what it means to be a "doer" in both seasons—and what happens when one fails to act.

I. The Central Charge: Don't Just Listen—Act (James 1:22–25)

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”

(James 1:22)

James isn't talking about someone who occasionally misses a sermon or forgets a devotional thought. He's addressing those who **hear truth, acknowledge it, but fail to respond in obedient action.**

A. The Mirror Illustration

“For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass...”

(James 1:23)

The Word of God is a **mirror**—it reveals what we are. But for the Tribulation remnant, it does more than that. It shows what they **must do** in order to endure faithfully:

- Refuse the mark,
- Remain loyal to Jesus Christ,
- Endure trials and hunger,
- Maintain love for others,
- Separate from the system of the Beast.

Looking into the Word and walking away unchanged—especially in that context—is **not just unwise, it is fatal.**

II. The Blessed Doer – Action Leads to Deliverance

“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein... this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

(James 1:25)

This is a conditional blessing based on action—not on faith alone. It is clear that James places weight on **continuing** in obedience, not merely believing once.

Contrast that with Paul's declaration:

*“To him that worketh not, but believeth... his faith is counted for righteousness.”
(Romans 4:5)*

Paul emphasizes **believing**, James emphasizes **doing**. These are not contradictions when rightly divided—they are **different doctrines for different dispensations**.

The Church is saved by grace through faith, not of works (Eph. 2:8–9). But the remnant in the Tribulation must **believe and endure, believe and obey, believe and act**.

This matches Revelation 14:12:

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

It's not “faith alone.” It's **faith plus commandment-keeping**—doing the Word, not just hearing it.

III. Bridle the Tongue, Visit the Helpless, Keep Unspotted (James 1:26–27)

James closes chapter 1 by listing three characteristics of true religion:

1. **Control the tongue** – What you say reveals where your heart is. The Antichrist system will be full of blasphemy (Rev. 13:6). The remnant must be distinct.
2. **Visit the fatherless and widows** – Not a humanitarian program, but **a call to mercy in a merciless world** where many have been martyred or left behind.
3. **Remain unspotted from the world** – Babylon's system will dominate culture, commerce, and religion. Staying unspotted will be a supernatural effort requiring total commitment.

These actions define true religion in that day. Again, these are **not instructions for Church Age believers trying to earn favor**—we are already accepted in Christ (Eph. 1:6). These are **instructions for survival and faithful witness** under pressure.

IV. Warning Against Favoritism – Tribulational Justice (James 2:1–7)

James immediately turns to the sin of **respect of persons**—judging people based on outward status.

“Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”
(James 2:4)

In the Tribulation, **the rich** will be those who conform to the Beast. They will:

- Buy and sell freely (Rev. 13:17),
- Have access to luxury (Rev. 18:3),
- Persecute the poor who resist the mark.

James says:

“Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?”
(James 2:6)

This again is prophetic. The **wealthy** in the Tribulation are not neutral. They are part of the system. Showing favoritism to them is spiritual suicide.

James warns the remnant not to compromise, not to court favor, and not to believe that wealth is a sign of God’s blessing—it isn’t in this age. It may be a sign of alignment with Antichrist.

V. The Royal Law and Mercy (James 2:8–13)

“If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.”
(James 2:8)

The royal law is not Paul’s gospel of grace—it is the **great commandment**, pulled directly from Leviticus 19:18 and quoted by Jesus in the Gospels.

In the Tribulation, keeping this law **is not just moral—it is prophetic**. Those who help the remnant are blessed (Matt. 25:34–40), and those who neglect them are judged (Matt. 25:41–46).

Mercy becomes a matter of judgment:

“He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy...”
(James 2:13)

And:

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”
(Matt. 5:7)

This is not eternal security by grace. It’s **conditional mercy**, based on action.

VI. Faith Without Works Is Dead (James 2:14–26)

This is the most misused and controversial section in James—and perhaps in the New Testament.

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?”
(James 2:14)

In the Church Age, the answer is **yes**—faith can save. Paul says so:

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...”
(Acts 16:31)

But in the Tribulation, **faith alone is insufficient**. James says:

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”
(James 2:17)

This is **not a contradiction**, it’s a **dispensational distinction**.

A. Abraham and Rahab – Both Proved by Action

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?”
(James 2:21)

“Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers...”
(James 2:25)

These examples are not about the imputation of righteousness by faith (as in Romans 4), but about **visible demonstration of faith through action**—a model for the remnant.

The remnant, like Abraham, will need to **sacrifice everything**. Like Rahab, they’ll need to **hide God’s messengers**, defy the system, and risk their lives.

VII. Can That Faith Save Him? (James 2:14)

James doesn't say faith can't save—he asks what kind of faith? A **dead**, inactive, fruitless faith? No.

The remnant must have a **living faith**, proven by:

- Obedience to God's commands,
- Separation from the Beast system,
- Loyalty to Jesus Christ's testimony.

VIII. Church Age Application – Avoiding the Error

Though James is not addressed to the Church, we can draw devotional application without doctrinal confusion.

We learn:

- **Hearing the Word should lead to doing**—not to be saved, but because we are saved.
- **Works are not the root, but the fruit** of real faith.
- **Avoiding partiality, caring for the needy, and living in purity** are timeless virtues.

But we must never preach James 2 as a formula for Church Age justification. That's Paul's territory:

“Being justified freely by his grace...”

(Romans 3:24)

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God...”

(Romans 5:1)

IX. Why This Matters Prophetically

James 1–2 is a manual for **end-time believers** navigating the Tribulation:

- Be a doer—**not just in belief, but in action.**
- Show your faith—**by refusing compromise and helping the remnant.**
- Keep unspotted—**from a wicked, collapsing world system.**
- Don't trust riches—**they may mark you as a traitor to God.**

- Fear not—**but endure, love, and act.**

This message will be critical to those left behind after the rapture, especially Jews who come to see Jesus as Messiah and must **prove their faith in the face of death.**

Conclusion: Faith That Acts or Faith That Dies

James 1–2 is not an epistle of contradiction—it is one of clarification.

When we rightly divide it, we see that James is not writing to overthrow Paul, but to **complement the full scope of God’s prophetic plan.**

- Paul speaks to the **Body of Christ**—saved by grace, sealed by the Spirit, secure forever.
- James speaks to the **Remnant of Israel**—tried by fire, judged by works, and purified for the Kingdom.

Both are true. Both are necessary. But they must be kept in their **proper dispensational place**, or chaos ensues.

And so we say again:

“Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only...”

Because when the world falls, **those who only listen perish**—but those who do, **endure to the end and are saved.**

4 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Faith Without Works is Dead: Not Church Doctrine (James 2)

Introduction: The Most Misused Verse in the New Testament?

Few verses have been more misunderstood, misquoted, and misapplied in the Church Age than James 2:24:

“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”
(James 2:24)

To the casual reader—or worse, the doctrinally sloppy preacher—this verse appears to contradict Paul’s bold declaration:

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.”
(Romans 3:28)

Critics of eternal security and proponents of works-based salvation seize on James 2 to undermine the Gospel of grace. Legalists prop up their spiritual scaffolding with James’ words, while others remain confused, wondering how to reconcile this seeming contradiction.

But when the book of James is **rightly divided**, all confusion vanishes. We discover that James 2 is **not** Church Age doctrine. It does not refute Paul—it speaks to **a different group in a different dispensation under a different gospel**.

In this essay, we will:

- Examine James 2 verse by verse,
- Compare it to Pauline doctrine,
- Place it within its prophetic Tribulation context,
- And explain why “faith without works is dead” is **absolutely true**—just not for you if you're in the Body of Christ.

I. The Context Revisited: Twelve Tribes, Not the Body of Christ

We must always begin with **James 1:1**:

“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.”

The book is not addressed to the Church, which is **neither Jew nor Gentile** in Christ (Gal. 3:28). It is written to the **twelve tribes**—a clear indication that this epistle has **a Jewish audience**, not the blood-bought, Spirit-sealed Church.

These tribes are:

- **Scattered** (a prophetic term – see Daniel 12:7),
- **Anticipating judgment** (James 5:9),
- **Awaiting the Lord’s return** (James 5:8),
- And needing **patience, endurance, and action** (James 1:3–4, 5:10–11).

Their salvation is not viewed through the finished work of the cross as revealed to Paul, but through **obedience in the face of testing**—a pattern that perfectly fits the **Tribulation period**.

II. Can Faith Save Him? – A Loaded Question (James 2:14)

James begins the section with a rhetorical dagger:

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?”

The answer, in context, is **no**.

Now compare that to Paul:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith... not of works...”
(Ephesians 2:8–9)

“To him that worketh not, but believeth... his faith is counted for righteousness.”
(Romans 4:5)

Paul says yes—**faith can save**. James says no—**faith without works cannot**.

Are they at odds? Not when **rightly divided**.

Paul is writing to the Church—the Body of Christ, under grace, after the full revelation of the mystery (Eph. 3:3). James is writing to Jews in a prophetic setting, where endurance, action, and separation from the world system are all essential to salvation.

III. Dead Faith: A Tribulational Threat, Not Church Age Risk (James 2:17, 20, 26)

Three times James uses the phrase *“faith without works is dead”* (v. 17, 20, 26). He’s not saying the man lacks faith—he’s saying the faith, **by itself**, is dead.

In the Tribulation, **dead faith is worthless**. Why?

Because faith alone does not:

- Prove loyalty to Christ in the face of the Beast,
- Feed and shelter the brethren during famine (Matt. 25:35–40),
- Resist temptation when starvation sets in (Rev. 13:17),

- Obey the commandments (Rev. 14:12).

The “dead faith” of the Tribulation professor is the man who **claims allegiance**, but doesn’t act. He might say he won’t take the mark—but when hunger hits, he folds. That faith is dead—and so is he.

IV. The Devil Believes Too (James 2:19)

James delivers a blunt truth:

“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.”

Belief alone isn’t enough—even **Satan believes in God**. In a dispensation where **the truth is everywhere but obedience is rare**, mental assent is not the litmus test.

Tribulation faith must:

- **Act** in obedience (i.e., keeping God’s commandments),
- **Separate** from apostasy and idolatry,
- **Endure** through suffering and even martyrdom.

James is telling his readers: **If your faith is only intellectual—it’s demonic-level faith.**

V. Abraham Justified by Works – A Different Angle than Paul (James 2:21–24)

Paul presents Abraham as **justified by faith**:

“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”
(Romans 4:3)

James presents Abraham as **justified by works**:

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?”
(James 2:21)

Who’s right?

Both.

Paul speaks of **Genesis 15**—when Abraham **believed God’s promise**, and was declared righteous by faith.

James speaks of **Genesis 22**—when Abraham **offered Isaac** and his faith was proven by action.

Paul is dealing with **imputed righteousness** (before works).

James is dealing with **visible justification** (proven by works).

In the Tribulation, the remnant won't be asked to believe God for a seed—they'll be asked to **offer their lives**, to refuse the mark, to die before denying the Lamb. Like Abraham, they must act—and in doing so, **their works justify their faith**.

VI. Rahab the Harlot – Action Under Pressure (James 2:25)

James picks Rahab as another example. She was not justified because she believed in Israel's God (though she did)—she was justified because she **hid the spies and risked her life**.

Rahab had real faith—but it was only proven by **what she did**.

“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”

(James 2:24)

In the coming Tribulation, the Rahabs will be:

- Those who hide the persecuted,
- Those who feed the hungry remnant,
- Those who protect the 144,000 or the two witnesses,
- Those who **refuse to bow** to the Antichrist even when it costs everything.

That kind of faith is not passive. It **acts**, and by that action, it is justified.

VII. The Spirit and the Body – Life and Action (James 2:26)

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

This closing analogy is powerful. Faith without works is **a corpse**—present, visible, perhaps respected—but utterly lifeless.

The Church is made alive **by the Spirit** (Rom. 8:2). We are saved, sealed, and secure (Eph. 1:13). But in the Tribulation, that sealing is gone. The Holy Spirit steps aside (2 Thess. 2:7). People must **demonstrate** their faith under pressure.

Their works aren't just fruit—they're survival.

VIII. The Tribulation Gospel – Faith and Works

The gospel of the Tribulation is not “believe and be sealed.” It is:

- **Believe** in Jesus Christ,
- **Refuse the mark** of the Beast,
- **Keep the commandments** of God,
- **Endure to the end**, possibly unto death.

“He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”
(Matthew 24:13)

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”
(Revelation 14:12)

This is **James 2 in action**.

IX. Why the Church Must Not Preach James 2 as Doctrine

Preaching James 2 as gospel today leads to:

- **Confusion** – believers questioning their salvation,
- **Fear** – saints doubting if they've done enough,
- **Works-based theology** – where assurance is based on performance,
- **Contradiction** – making Paul's epistles seem untrustworthy.

This is not minor error. It's **Gospel corruption**.

Paul says:

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you... let him be accursed.”
(Galatians 1:8)

James' gospel is **true**—but it's not Paul's gospel. It's **for another time**, another people, another test.

X. Devotional Application Without Doctrinal Confusion

Can the Church find value in James 2? Absolutely—**devotionally**.

- True faith always produces fruit (Eph. 2:10).
- Faith is evidenced in our love, obedience, and service.
- Salvation by grace leads to a life of **good works**, not to earn salvation, but because we've been given it.

But this is **fruit, not root**.

Don't confuse the test of discipleship with the truth of justification.

We work because we're saved—not to be saved.

XI. The Danger of Mixing the Gospels

Modern preaching that fuses James 2 and Romans 4 is like mixing law and grace:

- One destroys assurance.
- One burdens the believer.
- One invites self-righteousness or despair.

When rightly divided, James strengthens the dispensational framework, shows God's unfolding plan, and points us prophetically to what's coming.

XII. What This Means for the Coming Remnant

When the Church is raptured and the age of grace closes, James 2 becomes **vital Scripture** for those left behind.

They will:

- Be under immense pressure,
- Face the most evil system in history,
- Be without the indwelling Holy Spirit,
- Have to live by **doing the Word**, not just hearing.

For them, **faith without works is deadly**.

James 2 will be the **handbook of survival**, the warning label on lukewarm belief, and the encouragement to those who risk everything for truth.

Conclusion: Rightly Divided, James 2 Stands in Power

James 2 is not the enemy of Paul—it is the complement to God's prophetic plan. When we rightly divide it, we see:

- It is not written to the Church.
- It does not teach salvation by works today.
- It is not in conflict with the Gospel of grace.
- It is **prophetic instruction** for enduring saints in the Tribulation.

To preach it as Church Age doctrine is to damage the Gospel.

To ignore it entirely is to rob the coming remnant of the Word they will need.

But to rightly divide it is to:

- Protect Paul's Gospel,
- Honor God's plan,
- Equip future saints,
- And marvel at the perfection of Scripture.

Faith without works is dead—but **you, Church Age believer, are alive in Christ**. And your works are the overflow of your salvation—not the foundation.

5 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Taming the Tongue and Tribulational Judgment (James 3–4)

Introduction: Words in a World Set on Fire

The Book of James continues to build toward its prophetic crescendo with chapters 3 and 4, exposing the dangers of an untamed tongue and the approaching judgment on a world ruled by lust, pride, and strife. These chapters are often taught devotionally, as moral

instruction for Christians on speech and behavior. And while they certainly provide wisdom for any believer, the doctrinal force behind James 3 and 4 is aimed at something much more urgent: **survival and spiritual clarity during the time of Jacob's trouble.**

James is not giving a general motivational speech to a Church sealed with the Holy Spirit—he is giving a **warning to the twelve tribes**, scattered, pressed, and vulnerable to deception and destruction. During the Tribulation, careless speech, prideful ambition, and worldly compromise are not just sin—they are **tools of betrayal, fuel for judgment, and evidence of alignment with the world system ruled by Antichrist.**

These chapters are not just calls to holiness—they are survival instructions for the end-time remnant.

I. Teachers Under Greater Condemnation (James 3:1)

“My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.”

James opens chapter 3 with a striking warning to “masters”—teachers or instructors. Why? Because in the coming Tribulation, those who teach will be held to **a greater standard**, and the potential for deception, heresy, and betrayal will be immense.

Compare with Jesus' warning:

“Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.”
(Matthew 24:11)

And Paul's admonition:

“In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits...”
(1 Timothy 4:1)

In a time of prophetic fulfillment, a teacher's words may be the difference between life and death, between allegiance to Christ and submission to the Beast. The Jewish remnant must beware **those who speak without discernment or divine calling.**

II. The Tongue: Small but Deadly (James 3:2–6)

“The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity...”
(James 3:6)

James doesn't mince words. He paints the tongue as:

- A fire,
- A defiler of the whole body,
- A spark that ignites the **course of nature**,
- And something **set on fire of hell**.

This isn't just poetic hyperbole. In the Tribulation, the wrong word can:

- Betray a fellow believer,
- Expose someone hiding from persecution,
- Align someone with the Antichrist through oath or confession,
- Sow discord that divides the remnant and leads to destruction.

Jesus warned in Matthew 12:36:

“Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

And in Matthew 10:21:

“The brother shall deliver up the brother to death...”

Words matter in every age—but in the Tribulation, **unguarded speech could be a death sentence**, not only for oneself but for others.

III. Untameable and Hypocritical (James 3:7–12)

James continues:

“But the tongue can no man tame...”

(James 3:8)

He emphasizes that:

- Beasts can be tamed,
- Fires can be quenched,
- Ships can be steered—

But the tongue? **It's unruly evil.**

Then James rebukes hypocrisy:

“Therewith bless we God... and therewith curse we men... My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

(James 3:9–10)

In the Tribulation, this hypocrisy will reach its peak:

- People will outwardly worship God but inwardly support Antichrist.
- Lips will confess Christ while hands betray His people.
- Some will “bless” the Lord while taking the mark in secret.

James cries out against this duplicity. He urges purity, honesty, and the consistency of a **sanctified tongue**—not as an abstract virtue, but as a necessity for **faithful remnant living**.

IV. False Wisdom and Devilish Ambition (James 3:13–18)

“This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.”

(James 3:15)

James contrasts two kinds of wisdom:

1. **Heavenly wisdom** – Pure, peaceable, gentle, full of mercy.
2. **Devilish wisdom** – Bitter, envious, self-seeking, and divisive.

In the Tribulation, **false prophets** will abound, preaching peace when there is no peace, promoting self-exaltation, encouraging compromise, and twisting the truth.

“Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”

(James 3:16)

That’s not just disorder—it’s demonic groundwork for the **false unity of Babylon**.

Only those grounded in heavenly wisdom—through the Word of God—will discern the difference. This is why James appeals to **purity, meekness, and righteousness** (v. 17–18). These are not just Christian character traits—they’re **spiritual armor in a collapsing world**.

V. Lust and War – Internal Battles with External Consequences (James 4:1–3)

“From whence come wars and fightings among you?... Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have...”

(James 4:1–2)

James now shifts focus from the tongue to the **heart**.

Why will there be fighting among the remnant? Because the pressures of Tribulation will **expose the inner desires** of even professing believers:

- Lust for safety,
- Lust for food,
- Lust for comfort,
- Lust for control.

This lust will cause division and war—not just among the lost, but among those claiming to follow God.

James says plainly: **You ask and receive not because you ask amiss**. The prayers of the selfish and the worldly will go unanswered.

In the Tribulation, survival cannot come through manipulation or self-will—it must come through **brokenness, faith, and submission**.

VI. Friendship with the World – Spiritual Adultery (James 4:4)

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?”

This is one of the strongest condemnations in the book. James labels those aligned with the world as spiritual fornicators—cheaters on God.

Why?

Because in the Tribulation, the world system will not be neutral—it will be married to the Beast. To be “friends” with the world then is to **side with the enemy**, to **prostitute oneself to Babylon**, and to **become part of the harlot system** that persecutes the saints (Rev. 17:6).

There is no spiritual fence-sitting in the Tribulation. To survive, the remnant must be **entirely separated**, loyal to Christ and **marked by their rejection of the world system**.

VII. Resist the Devil – He’s Physically Present (James 4:7)

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

This verse, often taught spiritually, gains **literal weight** in the Tribulation. Why?

Because Satan will be **cast down to earth** during this time (Rev. 12:9), and will **indwell the man of sin**.

He will:

- Empower the Antichrist (Rev. 13:2),
- Perform signs and wonders (2 Thess. 2:9),
- Persecute the remnant with fury (Rev. 12:13–17).

Resisting the devil is no longer metaphorical—it’s an act of **physical, verbal, and spiritual defiance**, potentially costing the believer their life.

But it is **commanded**—not suggested. There is no room for fear.

VIII. Draw Nigh to God – The Only Place of Refuge (James 4:8–10)

James offers hope:

“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.”

In the Tribulation, God will not be absent—but He will not be found in the world’s systems.

He will be found by:

- Those who **cleanse their hands** (separation),
- Purify their hearts (single-minded loyalty),
- Mourn and weep (repentance),
- Humble themselves (rejection of pride).

Compare with Joel 2:12–13, where God calls Israel to return with fasting, weeping, and mourning.

The remnant that draws near will be **preserved**, protected, or martyred in faith—but they will not be forsaken.

IX. Speaking Evil of Brethren – A Sin with Prophetic Fallout (James 4:11–12)

“He that speaketh evil of his brother... speaketh evil of the law...”

In a time when betrayal will be common, and trust rare, **guarding the tongue** becomes not just relational wisdom, but **prophetic obedience**.

Compare with Matthew 24:10:

“And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another...”

In that climate, slandering a fellow believer could mean:

- Turning them in,
- Fracturing the unity of the remnant,
- Violating the law of love and loyalty to God.

James says there is one Lawgiver and Judge—God Himself. Judgment belongs to Him, not the mouth of an impatient saint.

X. Planning Without God – A Fatal Mistake in the Last Days (James 4:13–17)

“Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city...”

James concludes chapter 4 by warning against presumption. Those who make plans without acknowledging the Lord are playing God with time they don't control.

In the Tribulation, the future is not promised. Life is “a vapor” (v. 14). Entire cities may be burned. Systems may collapse overnight. Babylon will fall in one hour (Rev. 18:10).

Saying, “Tomorrow I'll buy and sell...” is not just arrogant—it is **foolish and deadly** when the global system is under the wrath of God.

James issues a sobering reminder:

“To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”
(James 4:17)

The remnant must act in obedience—not hesitation. Delayed obedience may be fatal. The time is short. The days are evil.

Conclusion: Words, Wisdom, and a World on Fire

James 3 and 4 deliver some of the most urgent, piercing instruction in all of Scripture. But when rightly divided, they come alive with prophetic clarity.

These chapters teach the remnant that:

- Their **tongues can betray or bless**,
- Their **wisdom must come from above**,
- Their **hearts must remain uncorrupted**,
- And their **loyalty must be to God alone**.

There will be no neutral ground in the Tribulation. Words will matter. Actions will echo. Every prayer, every confession, every plan must be rooted in truth and trust.

While the Church today can glean these passages devotionally, **they are not written to us doctrinally**. We are sealed. We are secure. But the remnant will not be. They will live in peril, and James 3–4 will be **their survival guide** for a world spiraling toward judgment.

6 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Patient Unto the Coming of the Lord: Second Advent Hope (James 5)

Introduction: Holding On Until Heaven Breaks Open

In the closing chapter of his epistle, James shifts the focus from personal trials and behavioral holiness to the **imminent return of the Lord**. This is not the Rapture of the Church, as taught by Paul, but the **Second Coming of Jesus Christ**, the visible and physical return of the King of Kings to establish His millennial reign.

James is addressing **the twelve tribes**, as stated in James 1:1—**Israelites scattered**, awaiting deliverance in a time of fiery trial. He exhorts them to be “*patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord*” (James 5:7). That coming is not in secret, as the pre-tribulational Rapture will be, but in power and great glory (Matt. 24:30). The Church will be gone—this is the hope and anchor for the **Tribulation remnant**, the last faithful of Israel, who must endure unto the end (Matt. 24:13).

James 5 is not devotional fluff—it is **survival-level exhortation**, charged with prophetic intensity. It addresses **judgment on the wicked**, **comfort for the suffering**, and **hope for the overcomer**—all grounded in the climactic event of the Second Advent.

I. Judgment on the Rich Oppressors (James 5:1–6)

“Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.”
(James 5:1)

James begins by pronouncing prophetic judgment on **the rich**, not just in a general sense, but particularly those who have aligned themselves with the world system during the end times. These individuals are not just wealthy—they are oppressive, corrupt, and have *“heaped treasure together for the last days”* (v. 3).

A. Treasures for the Last Days

The phrase *“for the last days”* links this passage squarely to the **time of Jacob’s trouble** (Jer. 30:7) and the **Tribulation period** described in Revelation 6–19. These rich men:

- **Hoard wealth** while others starve,
- **Exploit laborers** without justice (v. 4),
- **Live in pleasure and wantonness** (v. 5),
- **Condemn and kill the just**, who do not resist (v. 6).

This matches the Babylonian system described in Revelation 18, where merchants mourn the fall of a world empire built on riches, slavery, and murder. Their judgment is not delayed—it is decreed.

B. The Cry of the Laborers

James says:

“The hire of the labourers... crieth: and the cries... are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.”
(v. 4)

The “Lord of Sabaoth” means **the Lord of Hosts**—a military title, not a pastoral one. God is preparing for war. The same Lord who will return on a white horse with armies behind Him (Rev. 19:11–14) hears the cries of injustice and prepares to repay.

This is not a promise of deliverance for the Church—it is a prophetic announcement of **vengeance upon the wicked during the last days**, particularly those who oppress the remnant.

II. Be Patient Unto the Coming of the Lord (James 5:7–8)

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.”

This is the heart of the chapter. James speaks directly to the remnant:

- **They are scattered,**
- **They are hunted,**
- **They are starving,**
- **They are suffering.**

Their only hope is the **physical return of Jesus Christ** to destroy the Antichrist, defeat his armies, and establish His Kingdom.

A. The Husbandman Waits for the Fruit

“Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it...”

(v. 7)

The “husbandman” is the Lord Himself. He is waiting for the **harvest of the earth**—a picture echoed in Revelation 14:15–20, where the earth is reaped, and grapes of wrath are cast into the winepress of God’s fury.

But here, the focus is on the **precious fruit**—the remnant, those who will be refined through tribulation and presented at the Second Coming as purified believers, ready for the Kingdom.

B. Stablish Your Hearts

“Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

(v. 8)

The Church Age believer is told to **rest in Christ**, sealed by the Spirit. But the remnant is told to **stablish their hearts**—because their trials are far from over. They must endure.

- **They are not sealed permanently.**
- **They must remain faithful.**
- **They must resist to the end.**

This is not a command to the Body of Christ—it is a **prophetic imperative to the last-days remnant**, warning them that deliverance will not come by escape, but by **endurance until the visible return of the Lord**.

III. Grudge Not – The Judge Standeth Before the Door (James 5:9)

“Grudge not one against another... behold, the judge standeth before the door.”

In the pressure cooker of persecution, even faithful brethren will be tempted to **turn on one another**. James warns against grumbling, resentment, and betrayal. Why? Because the Judge is near.

“The judge standeth before the door.”

This is not a poetic metaphor—it’s a **Second Advent alert**. The same phrase appears in Matthew 24:33:

“When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.”

The return of the Lord is **imminent from a prophetic perspective**, and it will not be gentle. He comes to **judge, burn, and reign**. The remnant must avoid the fatal mistake of division—unity will be essential to survival.

IV. Take the Prophets for an Example (James 5:10)

“Take... the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.”

James exhorts the remnant to look back at the **Old Testament prophets**:

- Elijah faced famine and persecution.
- Jeremiah was thrown into a pit.
- Daniel faced lions.
- Ezekiel spoke to dry bones and exiles.

These were men of God who **suffered for truth**, spoke boldly, and endured despite rejection. They are **models for the remnant**, who will find themselves in similar circumstances:

- Speaking truth in a world of lies,
- Rejected by their people,
- Persecuted by their leaders,

- And waiting on the Lord to vindicate them.

V. The Patience of Job – Enduring to the End (James 5:11)

“Ye have heard of the patience of Job...”

Job is the ultimate type of a Tribulation saint:

- He loses everything,
- He is attacked by Satan,
- He is falsely accused by friends,
- He cries out to God in confusion,
- And he is **vindicated in the end**.

“And have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

Job’s end was **restoration and reward**—a prophetic picture of what awaits the remnant after the Second Coming:

- Comfort for mourning,
- Joy after sorrow,
- A Kingdom after suffering.

VI. Swear Not – Let Your Yea Be Yea (James 5:12)

“But above all things, my brethren, swear not...”

This command reflects Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5:34–37 and points to a time when **oaths, allegiances, and vows** will be demanded.

During the Tribulation, many will be pressured to:

- Take **the mark**,
- Swear allegiance to the Beast,
- Renounce Christ with words.

James urges the remnant to speak with **simple truth**:

- **Yea or Nay**—no compromise.

- No false promises.
- No manipulated speech.

Their words must reflect **unwavering loyalty to God**, no matter the cost.

VII. Affliction and Prayer – Joy and Singing (James 5:13)

“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.”

This verse, while applicable at all times, is especially poignant for the Tribulation remnant. They are encouraged to:

- **Pray in affliction** – for endurance, deliverance, and mercy.
- **Sing in joy** – as a witness and as spiritual strength in hardship.

Just as Paul and Silas sang in prison (Acts 16:25), the remnant will sing **in caves, deserts, and strongholds**, waiting for the Lord’s return.

VIII. Anointing the Sick and Forgiveness (James 5:14–15)

“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders... and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil...”

This passage has often been misunderstood or misused in Church Age doctrine. While God certainly can heal, this instruction is **directed to the remnant**:

- Living under persecution,
- With limited access to care,
- Depending on God for **physical healing** and **spiritual strength**.

Notice the connection between **healing and forgiveness**:

“And if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”

This is a **conditional promise**, rooted in **obedience, humility, confession**, and **the gathered remnant’s spiritual authority**.

IX. Confess Your Faults and Pray for One Another (James 5:16)

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.”

This is more than group therapy. It’s a **strategy for unity and survival**. The remnant cannot afford division. Confession promotes healing, removes bitterness, and forges unity.

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

In the Tribulation, prayer is **not optional**. It will be the remnant’s **lifeline**—not just for healing, but for direction, protection, and endurance.

X. Elijah’s Prayer and Prophetic Power (James 5:17–18)

“Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly...”

James uses Elijah to show that **one man’s prayers can shake the heavens**. Elijah’s prayer:

- Stopped rain for 3.5 years (matching the length of the Great Tribulation),
- Was not based on his strength, but on **God’s promise**.

The remnant, likewise, must pray **in faith**, not in fear. Their prayers may:

- Secure food,
- Protect others,
- Delay danger,
- Bring divine intervention.

XI. Turning a Sinner from the Error of His Way (James 5:19–20)

“Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him...”

James ends with a solemn call to **rescue the backslider**:

- Many in the remnant will be tempted to fall away,
- Others may grow weak in faith,
- Some may be close to giving in.

James says if you **turn one back**, you **save a soul from death** and **hide a multitude of sins**.

This is not the Church Age soulwinning of Paul—this is **the last call rescue of those about to fall into eternal peril** under Antichrist’s rule.

Conclusion: Hold Fast Until the King Comes

James 5 is a trumpet blast to the remnant:

- The **rich oppressors** will soon fall,
- The **Judge stands at the door**,
- The **Lord is coming in power**,
- And only those who **endure, pray, remain loyal, and wait patiently** will stand when He appears.

This is not doctrine for the Church—we have a **blessed hope**, a **soon escape**, and a **heavenly calling**. But for the remnant who will live through the Tribulation, James 5 is a **battle plan**, a **survival manual**, and a **promise of deliverance** for those who make it to the end.

They are not looking for the Rapture—they are **patient unto the coming of the Lord**.

And when He comes... they will rejoice, for their redemption draweth nigh.

7 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Elect According to Foreknowledge: Who Is Peter Writing To? (1 Peter 1)

Introduction: The Apostle to the Circumcision Speaks Again

The Apostle Peter is one of the most well-known, beloved, and occasionally misunderstood figures in the New Testament. As one of Christ’s inner three, a preacher at Pentecost, and the man who walked on water, his legacy is unmatched in boldness and visible faith. However, when we turn to Peter’s epistles, we must remember his God-ordained role: **he was not sent to the Gentiles—but to the Jews**.

“The gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me [Paul], as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.”

(Galatians 2:7)

1 Peter, then, is not just a general epistle—it is a **Jewish-flavored, prophetically-aimed message to the elect remnant of Israel**, who will suffer for the name of Jesus Christ and ultimately prevail at His Second Coming.

When Peter says in 1 Peter 1:1 that he writes to “*strangers scattered*”, he is not merely using poetic imagery. He is addressing the **diaspora of believing Jews**, spread throughout the Roman provinces—types and forerunners of the **future Jewish remnant** who will also be scattered in the Tribulation.

In this essay, we will rightly divide 1 Peter 1—explaining:

- Who Peter is writing to,
- What “elect according to foreknowledge” means,
- The nature of their trials and future inheritance,
- And how his message harmonizes perfectly with God’s prophetic plan for Israel.

I. Peter the Apostle of the Circumcision

Peter’s epistles differ from Paul’s in both **tone** and **target**. While Paul writes with legal and theological precision to the **Body of Christ**, Peter writes with a **prophetic urgency** to a people who are **not Gentile converts**, but **Jewish believers undergoing fiery trials**.

Paul confirms their ministries were distinct:

“When they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter... they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.”

(Galatians 2:7–9)

This distinction matters. Peter’s first epistle is written to the **strangers scattered**, not the Gentile church. These are:

- Physical descendants of Abraham,
- Scattered Jews, perhaps some converted at Pentecost,
- Typologically representing the **future remnant** during the Tribulation.

We should not ignore these distinctions—**we must rightly divide them**.

II. Strangers Scattered – A Jewish Prophetic Phrase (1 Peter 1:1)

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia...”

This phrase echoes James 1:1:

“To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad...”

In both cases, we are dealing with **Jews in dispersion**, not Gentile believers.

The term “strangers” in Scripture consistently refers to:

- **Israelites exiled from their homeland** (see Hebrews 11:13),
- **Sojourners awaiting the Kingdom,**
- **People out of place in a world not their own.**

These scattered Jews are also a **type** of the final remnant who will flee from Judea (Matt. 24:16), hiding in the wilderness during the reign of Antichrist (Rev. 12:6).

Peter writes prophetically to comfort and instruct those who will one day suffer **not for being Christians per se**, but for being **faithful Jews who believe in Jesus Christ during the darkest period of Israel’s history.**

III. Elect According to Foreknowledge – Not Unconditional Calvinism (1 Peter 1:2)

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father...”

This verse has been wrongly seized upon by Calvinists to argue for unconditional election. But a rightly divided view sees:

- **The election is based on God’s foreknowledge**, not His predetermination.
- **The context is Jewish**, not universal Gentile salvation.
- **The audience must act in faith and obedience**, as the following verses show.

Peter’s use of “elect” is **corporate and covenantal**—just as Israel was called God’s “elect” in Isaiah 45:4. Their status as elect does not ensure automatic salvation—it identifies them as those **set apart for a purpose.**

That election is **not mechanical**—it is **based on God’s perfect knowledge of those who would respond** in faith under trial.

IV. Through Sanctification of the Spirit, unto Obedience (1 Peter 1:2)

“...through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ...”

This is not a Pauline formula of grace by faith alone. This is a **multi-layered, conditional process**:

1. **Sanctification of the Spirit** – a setting apart that aligns with separation from the world (Rev. 18:4).
2. **Obedience** – an essential marker of the remnant who keep God’s commandments (Rev. 14:12).
3. **Sprinkling of the blood** – a Levitical allusion familiar to Jewish readers, speaking of cleansing and covenant (Ex. 24:8; Heb. 9:19).

This is a message tailored for **faithful Jews**, not grace-age Gentile believers. It mirrors the call in Revelation for saints to hold **both the faith of Jesus and keep the commandments of God**.

V. A Living Hope Through the Resurrection (1 Peter 1:3)

“Blessed be the God and Father... which... hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

The remnant is reminded that even though they may face **persecution, famine, betrayal, and martyrdom**, their hope is not dead—it is alive, because their Messiah lives.

This “begotten again” language is akin to the “born again” phrase in John 3:3 and 1 Peter 1:23, and though similar in imagery to Pauline regeneration, here it emphasizes **covenantal rebirth into a living national hope**—the hope of the Kingdom and deliverance at Christ’s return.

VI. An Inheritance Reserved in Heaven (1 Peter 1:4–5)

“To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled... reserved in heaven for you...”

The remnant is promised:

- A **future Kingdom**, not a present one,

- An **inheritance preserved**, not yet received,
- A **deliverance revealed in the last time** (v. 5).

This matches Jesus' teachings to Israel:

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”
(Luke 12:32)

And Paul’s declaration to the Church:

“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God...”
(1 Corinthians 15:50)

The inheritance of the remnant is **earthly, national, and Millennial**—not the heavenly inheritance of the Body of Christ.

VII. Trials and Fiery Testing (1 Peter 1:6–7)

“Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations...”

The believers Peter writes to are facing **severe trials**, likened to **gold tried in fire** (v. 7). This imagery is prophetic of:

- The **Tribulation period** (Matt. 24:21),
- The **refining of Israel** (Zech. 13:9),
- The **testing of the saints** under the Beast system (Rev. 13:10).

These aren’t general hardships. They are **dispensational warnings** for the remnant who must survive the Great Tribulation.

“That the trial of your faith... might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

That “appearing” is not the Rapture—it is the **Second Advent**. The remnant looks forward to the **physical revelation of Jesus Christ**, when He comes in glory to destroy the Antichrist and rescue the faithful (Rev. 19).

VIII. Whom Having Not Seen, Ye Love (1 Peter 1:8–9)

“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom... ye rejoice with joy unspeakable...”

These believers have not physically seen Christ, but they love Him and await His return.

“Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”

This “end of your faith” language reinforces that salvation in this context is **not sealed and finished**, as it is in Paul’s epistles.

- Their salvation is **future**.
- It is based on **endurance** and **obedience**.
- It is realized at the **Second Coming**.

This is perfectly aligned with Matthew 24:13:

“He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

IX. The Prophets and the Grace That Should Come (1 Peter 1:10–12)

“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently...”

Peter explains that the Old Testament prophets foresaw this salvation, but did not fully understand **the timing** or **the sufferings and glory** of the Messiah.

“Unto whom it was revealed... not unto themselves, but unto us...”

The “us” is not the Church, but the **believing remnant of Israel**, who would live to see the fulfillment of what the prophets foretold:

- **The sufferings of Christ** (fulfilled at the Cross),
- **The glories to follow** (to be fulfilled at the Second Coming).

X. Gird Up the Loins of Your Mind (1 Peter 1:13–16)

“Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end...”

This is not Paul’s command to “rejoice in the Lord always.” This is Peter’s wartime command to **mentally prepare for suffering**. The remnant is told to:

- **Hope to the end** (v. 13),
- **Be holy** (v. 16),
- **Separate from the lusts of the world** (v. 14).

Why?

Because spiritual compromise will be the downfall of many in the Tribulation. Peter calls the remnant to **obedience, holiness, and steadfastness**, knowing that the road ahead is filled with fiery trial.

XI. The Lamb Without Blemish – A Redeemed Remnant (1 Peter 1:18–21)

“Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things... but with the precious blood of Christ...”

Peter affirms that the remnant’s redemption is not earned—it is purchased by the blood of Christ.

But this redemption:

- Must be **received by obedient faith**,
- Must be **endured until the end**,
- And culminates in **salvation at the appearing of Christ** (v. 20–21).

They are not sealed and seated as the Church is—they are walking by faith, resisting the world, and waiting for **visible redemption**.

XII. Born Again by the Word of God (1 Peter 1:22–25)

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God...”

Peter affirms that the new birth comes **through the Word**, not through works—but again, this birth is **conditional upon obedience** and **continual faithfulness**.

“The word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

This gospel is the message of:

- **The suffering Messiah**, slain for sin,
- **The risen King**, returning in glory,
- **The promised Kingdom**, awaiting the faithful.

It is not Paul's gospel of the mystery (Eph. 3:3–6), but the gospel of the Kingdom, tailored to a people who await their Messiah—not to go to heaven, but to enter the Kingdom of God on earth.

Conclusion: Rightly Dividing Peter's First Epistle

1 Peter 1 is not a contradiction of Paul—it is a **complement to God's dispensational blueprint**. When rightly divided, we see:

- Peter speaks to **the elect remnant of Israel**, not the Church.
- Their election is **corporate and prophetic**, not Calvinistic.
- Their salvation is **future**, revealed at the Second Coming.
- Their calling is to **holiness, endurance, obedience, and hope**.

We who are in the Body of Christ can learn from their faith, marvel at their courage, and be thankful that our salvation is **sealed, finished, and eternal** through Christ alone.

But we must never misapply their doctrine to our dispensation—for to do so is to blur the lines God so clearly drew.

The road ahead for the remnant is fiery—but their eyes are fixed on the Lamb. And Peter's voice still rings out: **"Be ye holy... for I am holy."**

8 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – A Royal Priesthood: Israel's Future Role (1 Peter 2)

Introduction: Identity in the Midst of Tribulation

In the second chapter of his first epistle, the Apostle Peter continues to speak directly to the Jewish remnant scattered throughout Asia Minor. This group is not merely a collection of Christian believers—they are a prophetic people with a future, called out and purified through tribulation, destined for priestly service in the coming Kingdom.

Too often, 1 Peter 2 is read as if Peter is writing to the Church in the Pauline sense. Terms like *"chosen generation," "holy nation,"* and *"royal priesthood"* are spiritualized and applied to the Body of Christ. But when **rightly divided**, this chapter reveals something more profound: **Peter is not writing to Gentiles saved by grace through faith alone**—he is

writing to **believing Jews**, who are being prepared by God for a future role in His earthly kingdom, when Israel is restored as a nation of priests.

This chapter reveals their:

- Identity,
- Calling,
- Suffering,
- And destiny.

It also offers tremendous clarity for anyone seeking to understand the distinction between the Church and Israel—and the prophetic role Israel will play in the future Kingdom of Christ.

I. Laying Aside and Growing Up (1 Peter 2:1–3)

“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings...”

(1 Peter 2:1)

Peter begins the chapter by calling his readers to personal holiness and purification. These aren't casual sins—malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking are all sins that **destroy the unity of a remnant community under pressure**.

These behaviors are not just morally wrong—they are **spiritually deadly** in a context of persecution, where the remnant must rely on each other to survive.

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”

(v. 2)

The command is not to seek status, miracles, or position—but to crave **doctrinal nourishment** from the Word of God. In the Tribulation, deception will abound. Only those grounded in Scripture will endure.

Peter appeals to **spiritual hunger**. The Word is not a luxury—it is **a necessity** for those who must navigate the most dangerous period of human history.

II. The Living Stone and the Spiritual House (1 Peter 2:4–5)

“To whom coming, as unto a living stone... chosen of God, and precious...”

(v. 4)

Jesus Christ is the **cornerstone**—the foundation on which all God’s plans are built. Peter, once called a “stone” by Jesus (Matt. 16:18), now calls all believing Jews **lively stones**, being built into a **spiritual house**.

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices...”

(v. 5)

This is not a reference to the Body of Christ as taught by Paul. This is a **national and prophetic picture** of Israel becoming what they were always meant to be:

- A **holy nation**,
- A **priestly people**,
- A **spiritual house**, built upon Christ, the rejected cornerstone.

This aligns with Exodus 19:6:

“And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”

It also anticipates the fulfillment of this promise in the **millennial reign** of Christ, when Israel will serve as **mediators to the nations**, finally fulfilling their destiny.

III. The Stone the Builders Rejected (1 Peter 2:6–8)

“Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious...”

(v. 6)

Peter quotes Isaiah 28:16, emphasizing Christ as the **foundation** of all that God is doing. But he also quotes Psalm 118:22:

“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”

Jesus was **rejected by Israel’s leaders**, but in the plan of God, He becomes the cornerstone.

“And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence...”

(v. 8)

Those who reject Christ—especially the Jews who stumble at His first coming—will fall. But those who **believe and endure** will be established in God’s plan.

In the Tribulation, many Jews will again face this choice: **follow Christ or stumble in offense.**

IV. But Ye Are a Chosen Generation (1 Peter 2:9)

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...”

This is the **defining verse of the chapter**—and perhaps the most misapplied in modern Christianity.

These titles are not given to the Church. They are quotes from **Exodus 19:5–6**, where God speaks of Israel’s destiny.

Peter is not redefining Israel—he is reaffirming their calling:

1. **A Chosen Generation** – a group of Jews chosen out of the larger nation for obedience during the last days.
2. **A Royal Priesthood** – mediators between God and the nations, under King Jesus.
3. **An Holy Nation** – purified and obedient, set apart for God’s use.
4. **A Peculiar People** – distinct from the world, belonging entirely to God.

“...that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

Their mission will be to **represent God on earth**, finally fulfilling the role they failed under the Old Covenant.

V. Which in Time Past Were Not a People (1 Peter 2:10)

“Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God...”

Some use this verse to suggest Peter is addressing Gentiles, but the language matches **Hosea 1:9–10**, where God temporarily disowns Israel, saying:

“Ye are not my people...”

But He promises to restore them.

Peter is addressing Jews who were **scattered and cut off**, but now **brought near** through Christ. They are again **called the people of God.**

This is **national restoration**, not Church inclusion.

VI. Abstain from Fleshly Lusters – Maintain Your Testimony (1 Peter 2:11–12)

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts...”

The remnant must live as **sojourners**—not building kingdoms, but awaiting one.

“Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles...”

Why? Because they are **testimonies to the nations**.

In the Kingdom, Israel will be **priests to the Gentiles** (Zech. 8:23), but during the Tribulation, they must remain separate and holy—**even while being observed and slandered**.

VII. Submit to Every Ordinance – Tribulational Submission (1 Peter 2:13–17)

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake...”

This verse has been debated, especially in the context of totalitarian governments. But Peter isn’t calling for blind allegiance to evil. He is warning the remnant to avoid **unnecessary conflict**, unless obedience to God is at stake.

- Respect leadership when possible,
- Do not bring judgment early upon yourself,
- Suffer patiently rather than rebel rashly.

In the Tribulation, wisdom will be needed to discern **when to resist** and **when to submit**.

VIII. Suffering Unjustly – A Badge of Honor (1 Peter 2:18–20)

“Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear...”

Even under abuse, Peter tells the remnant to **endure unjust suffering**, just as Christ did.

“This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief...”

They are not promised justice now—but **glory later**.

IX. Christ Our Example – The Suffering Servant (1 Peter 2:21–24)

“Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example...”

Peter now offers the **ultimate example of righteous suffering**—Jesus Himself.

- He did not retaliate,
- He committed His cause to the Father,
- He bore our sins on the cross.

This passage doesn’t describe Christ as a mere moral example—it affirms His role as **Sin-bearer**. But in context, Peter is saying: *As He suffered and was glorified, so shall you be.*

The remnant must expect:

- **Rejection** by the world,
- **Slander** by the wicked,
- **Unjust persecution**, even unto death.

But Christ’s pattern proves that **resurrection and reign follow suffering**.

X. Returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of Your Souls (1 Peter 2:25)

“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

Once again, Peter references **Isaiah 53:6**—*“All we like sheep have gone astray.”*

This is not about Gentiles being saved, but about **Israel being restored to their Shepherd**.

Jesus is their:

- **Shepherd** – the one who leads and feeds,
- **Bishop** – the overseer who protects and judges.

This verse sums up Israel’s restoration:

- Once scattered sheep,
- Now gathered and guided,
- Heading toward glory through tribulation.

Conclusion: Israel's Future as a Royal Priesthood

1 Peter 2 is a stunning, prophetic picture of **who Israel is** and **what Israel will become**. When rightly divided, the chapter shows:

- A remnant of Jews, purified by trial,
- Set apart as **lively stones** in a new Temple,
- Called to holiness, obedience, and sacrifice,
- Destined to rule as a **royal priesthood** in the Kingdom.

This is not Church Age doctrine—it is **Kingdom truth, Tribulation instruction, and Millennial preparation**.

Peter never abandons his calling to the circumcision. He does not blend the Body of Christ into national Israel. Instead, he affirms:

- The **Church is one thing**—revealed to Paul.
- **Israel is another**—foreseen by prophets and reaffirmed by Peter.

God is not done with Israel. The promises to Abraham stand. The calling to be a holy nation endures.

And when the fire has done its work, when the trials have refined the gold, **Israel will stand again**—not as a rejected stone, but as **a royal priesthood**, shining with the glory of her King.

9 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Suffering and Submission: Tribulation Saints in Focus (1 Peter 3–5)

Introduction: The Path of Glory Is Paved with Suffering

The final three chapters of 1 Peter bring into focus a doctrine too often neglected or misapplied in modern preaching: **suffering for righteousness' sake**. For the Body of Christ today, suffering is a tool for growth, a byproduct of godly living, or the refining fire of sanctification. But for the **Tribulation remnant**, suffering becomes the **essential crucible**—a proving ground of faith, loyalty, and obedience.

These chapters were not written to the comfort-seeking Christian, but to a **scattered remnant of Jewish believers**—those who had already suffered, and those who would

suffer again during **the time of Jacob's trouble**. Peter, the apostle to the circumcision, speaks directly to **a faithful minority**, calling them to submission, endurance, and spiritual vigilance.

When rightly divided, 1 Peter 3–5 reveals a doctrinal blueprint for **how the Tribulation saints will endure the darkest hour of human history**, emerging purified, faithful, and victorious at the Second Advent.

I. Be Ready to Suffer for Righteousness' Sake (1 Peter 3:13–17)

“And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye...”

(1 Peter 3:13–14)

Peter begins with a rhetorical question and a spiritual challenge. In a just world, doing right should bring reward. But in the Tribulation, the opposite will be true. Those who follow righteousness will be:

- **Hunted** by the Beast,
- **Hated** by the world,
- **Targeted** by their own families (Matt. 10:21).

Peter exhorts them: **Don't be afraid. Don't be troubled.**

Instead:

“Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer...”

(v. 15)

The remnant must be prepared to **defend their faith**, even under interrogation, and to do so with **meekness and fear**—not arrogance or violence.

Peter affirms:

“It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.”

(v. 17)

In the Tribulation, **suffering for Christ will be expected**, but it will also be **honorable and rewarded**.

II. Christ Suffered Once – The Righteous for the Unrighteous (1 Peter 3:18–22)

Peter now anchors his call to suffering in the ultimate example: **Jesus Christ**.

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust...”

(v. 18)

This is a profound theological statement. Christ’s suffering was:

- **Vicarious** (He suffered in place of the guilty),
- **Victorious** (He conquered death),
- **Complete** (Once for all).

Peter mentions that Christ **preached to spirits in prison**—a reference to the fallen angels of Genesis 6 (see 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6), and perhaps a shadow of coming judgment upon all spiritual rebels at the end of the age.

He then references **Noah**, drawing a typological parallel to the remnant:

- As Noah was saved through water, the remnant will be saved **through the fire of Tribulation**.
- As eight souls were preserved in an ark, so a **faithful few** will be preserved through the judgment.

III. Arm Yourselves Likewise with the Same Mind (1 Peter 4:1–2)

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind...”

Peter urges the remnant to adopt the **mindset of Christ**:

- Expect suffering,
- Embrace obedience,
- Endure patiently.

The time for living in the flesh is past (v. 2). The remnant must now live **to the will of God**—no matter what it costs.

IV. The Gentiles Walk in Sin – But Judgment Is Coming (1 Peter 4:3–6)

“The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles...”

Peter contrasts the **holy walk of the remnant** with the sinful lifestyle of the world. He lists:

- Lasciviousness,
- Lusts,
- Excess of wine,
- Revelings,
- Banquetings,
- Abominable idolatries.

These will abound in the Tribulation under Babylon's rule. The remnant will not participate—and because of this, **they will be mocked and persecuted** (v. 4).

But Peter reminds them: **judgment is coming**.

“Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.”
(v. 5)

They may be slandered now—but the tables will turn when the **Judge returns**.

V. The End of All Things Is at Hand (1 Peter 4:7–9)

“But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.”

This is a **Tribulational alarm bell**. The end isn't figurative—it is **literally at hand**.

Peter commands:

- **Sobriety** – mental and spiritual clarity,
- **Prayer** – continual communion with God,
- **Love** – fervent charity among believers,
- **Hospitality** – caring for one another without grumbling.

These are not passive virtues—they are **survival disciplines** for saints facing betrayal, famine, and fear.

VI. As Every Man Hath Received the Gift – Use It (1 Peter 4:10–11)

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another...”

Peter affirms that **God equips His people**, even in perilous times. Spiritual gifts are not suspended in the Tribulation. Whether:

- Speaking,
- Serving,
- Encouraging,
- Or providing—

Each member of the remnant must **use what God has given**, because they may be **the last light** someone sees before the darkness falls.

VII. Think It Not Strange – The Fiery Trial (1 Peter 4:12–14)

“Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial... but rejoice...”

This is not a theoretical fire. Peter is referencing:

- Literal persecution,
- Physical danger,
- And possibly **martyrdom**.

This aligns perfectly with Revelation 6:9–11, where the souls of the slain cry out beneath the altar. They suffered because of **their testimony**.

Peter says:

“If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye...”
(v. 14)

This reproach will identify them as **blessed**, not cursed.

VIII. Suffer as a Christian – Not as an Evildoer (1 Peter 4:15–16)

“Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief...”

In the pressure of the Tribulation, some may be tempted to compromise, retaliate, or act in the flesh. Peter warns: **Don’t let your suffering be for sin**.

If you suffer, let it be **for righteousness**.

“Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed...”

This term “Christian” appears only three times in the Bible. Here, it becomes a **mark of honor** for those who endure to the end.

IX. Judgment Must Begin at the House of God (1 Peter 4:17–18)

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God...”

This is **not** the Church. It is a reference to **Israel**, the “house of God” in the prophetic sense.

Before God judges the world, He **purifies His own people**.

Compare with Ezekiel 9:6:

“Begin at my sanctuary...”

The remnant must pass through **refinement, trial, and testing**, so that when the King returns, they are ready to reign with Him.

“If the righteous scarcely be saved...”

(v. 18)

This isn’t Church security—it’s Tribulation survival. Salvation is not easy in that hour. It requires:

- Endurance,
- Separation,
- And faithful witness.

X. The Elders – Feed the Flock of God (1 Peter 5:1–4)

Peter now addresses the **leaders** of the remnant community:

“The elders which are among you I exhort...”

He doesn’t elevate himself as Pope, but as a **fellow elder**, a **witness of Christ’s sufferings**, and a **partaker of the glory to come**.

His command:

- **Feed the flock** – spiritually nourish those under you.

- **Take oversight willingly** – not for gain, but for love.
- **Lead by example**, not by domination.

“When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory...”

This promise is **Second Advent-focused**. The elders who remain faithful will be rewarded **at the appearing of Jesus Christ**, not before.

XI. Submit Yourselves and Be Clothed with Humility (1 Peter 5:5–6)

“Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility...”

Pride will be a snare during the Tribulation. It leads to:

- Rash decisions,
- Divisions in the remnant,
- And compromise under pressure.

But **humility** leads to grace:

“Humble yourselves... that he may exalt you in due time.”

(v. 6)

The remnant’s exaltation is **not now**—it is **when Christ returns**.

XII. Casting All Your Care Upon Him (1 Peter 5:7)

“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

A beloved verse, but often divorced from its context. This is not about minor anxieties. It’s about **life-and-death pressure**. The remnant will:

- Hide in caves,
- Be denied food and safety,
- Watch loved ones die,
- And live daily under threat.

Peter reminds them: **God sees. God cares.**

XIII. Be Sober, Be Vigilant – Your Adversary the Devil (1 Peter 5:8–9)

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil... walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

During the Tribulation, Satan is no longer confined to spiritual warfare—he is **cast to earth** (Rev. 12:9). He indwells the Beast. He hunts the remnant.

The remnant must:

- Be **spiritually alert**,
- **Resist him steadfastly in the faith**,
- Know that their brethren are **suffering worldwide**.

XIV. The God of All Grace – After You Have Suffered a While (1 Peter 5:10–11)

“But the God of all grace... after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”

This is the **ultimate promise** for the remnant.

After the suffering...

- There will be restoration,
- There will be reward,
- There will be the Kingdom.

Peter ends with worship:

“To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

Because **after the fire** comes the **reign**.

Conclusion: The Crown Follows the Cross

1 Peter 3–5 is a masterclass in **Tribulation endurance**. When rightly divided, these chapters teach us:

- The remnant will **suffer unjustly**, but must **submit patiently**.
- They will face **fire, mockery, and betrayal**—but must endure.

- Their leaders must **serve in humility**,
- Their members must **resist the devil and cling to hope**.

The Church learns from this devotionally—but the doctrine is prophetic. These passages are **vital for the Jewish remnant** who will walk through the Tribulation, awaiting the return of their King.

Their crown comes **not now**, but when the Chief Shepherd appears.

And though the devil walks about, **they will not be devoured**, for the God of all grace shall **stablish, strengthen, and settle them**.

10 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – False Teachers and Fiery Judgment: 2 Peter 1–2

Introduction: Prophetic Warnings for the Final Days

As Peter begins his second epistle, his tone sharpens and his focus intensifies. The warm encouragement and call to holy living from 1 Peter gives way to a stark warning: **false teachers are coming**, and with them, **judgment is imminent**. His words are not gentle suggestions—they are thunderclaps of prophetic urgency. He speaks not as a theologian in comfort, but as a dying apostle pleading with a scattered remnant to **guard their minds and souls in the midst of deception**.

Peter knew his time was short (2 Pet. 1:14), and his final letter is both a **farewell message and a battle cry**. But this battle cry is not for the Body of Christ—it is aimed at a future remnant of Israel, who will face a wave of **seductive lies, damnable heresies**, and **demonic doctrines** under the shadow of the Antichrist.

When rightly divided, 2 Peter 1–2 becomes a **doctrinal survival manual** for Tribulation saints—a call to hold fast to prophecy, grow in spiritual character, and resist the deceit of satanic messengers infiltrating their ranks. It's not just a letter—it's a lifeline.

I. Peter's Purpose and His Imminent Departure (2 Peter 1:12–15)

Peter opens with urgency:

“Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance...”

(2 Peter 1:13)

He knows his death is near (v. 14), and he wants his readers to be **established in present truth** even after he’s gone. This isn’t casual discipleship—it’s **last-days preservation**. He is warning future believers—especially the Tribulation remnant—to:

- **Cling to sound doctrine,**
- **Avoid the coming apostasy,**
- **Anchor themselves in prophecy.**

II. The Precious Faith and Promises (2 Peter 1:1–4)

“To them that have obtained like precious faith...”

(v. 1)

Peter is writing to fellow Jews who have received the **same faith he has**—a faith grounded in Jesus Christ, and one that will be essential for endurance in the Tribulation.

He immediately emphasizes **grace, peace, knowledge, and divine power** (v. 2–3), and points to the **exceeding great and precious promises** that God has made.

This includes:

- The promise of **deliverance at the Second Advent,**
- The promise of **reward for faithfulness,**
- And the promise of **judgment for the wicked.**

“That by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

(v. 4)

The Tribulation will be marked by **deep corruption**, and Peter is urging the faithful to **separate themselves from it** through obedience and godliness.

III. Add to Your Faith – A Remnant’s Growth Map (2 Peter 1:5–8)

Peter gives a step-by-step progression of spiritual growth:

1. **Faith**
2. **Virtue**
3. **Knowledge**
4. **Temperance**
5. **Patience**
6. **Godliness**
7. **Brotherly kindness**
8. **Charity**

These aren't just moral aspirations. For the Tribulation saint, they are **spiritual armor**. Each one equips them to:

- Resist the lies of the Antichrist,
- Love one another in hardship,
- Remain faithful when betrayal abounds,
- Stay doctrinally grounded under pressure.

“If these things be in you... ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful...”
(v. 8)

This is critical. In a time of chaos and deception, the remnant **must be fruitful**—not just for their own survival, but to guide others in truth.

IV. Blindness and Forgetfulness – The Danger of Carnality (2 Peter 1:9)

“He that lacketh these things is blind...”

Peter warns that failing to grow spiritually leads to blindness—a dangerous condition in the Tribulation. The false teachers will blind the masses. Only the spiritually vigilant will see clearly.

“...and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”

Forgetfulness is deadly in prophecy. To forget God's Word is to become vulnerable to **the Beast's counterfeit gospel**.

V. The More Sure Word of Prophecy (2 Peter 1:16–21)

Peter now shifts from personal growth to doctrinal foundation:

“We have not followed cunningly devised fables...”

(v. 16)

He affirms the truth of Christ’s majesty—referencing the **Mount of Transfiguration** (Matt. 17), a **preview of the Second Coming**.

Then he delivers one of the most powerful statements on the authority of prophecy:

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy... until the day dawn...”

(v. 19)

The prophetic Word is **more sure than personal experience**. For the remnant, it will be:

- **A lamp in a dark place,**
- **A guide in global deception,**
- **A preview of Christ’s return.**

“No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.”

(v. 20)

Prophecy must be interpreted in context—**not spiritualized or wrested** to fit human agendas. The remnant must stick to the **plain meaning**, rightly dividing as God intended.

VI. The Rise of False Teachers (2 Peter 2:1–3)

Peter now sounds the alarm:

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you...”

This isn’t hypothetical—it’s guaranteed.

These deceivers will:

- **Bring in damnable heresies,**
- **Deny the Lord that bought them,**
- **Lead many to destruction,**
- **Make merchandise of believers.**

This matches Jesus' warning in Matthew 24:24:

"There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets... to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect."

The remnant must be alert. The deception will be:

- **Doctrinally sophisticated,**
- **Culturally appealing,**
- **Politically backed,**
- And **spiritually deadly.**

VII. Their Judgment Slumbers Not (2 Peter 2:3–10)

Peter reassures the faithful: though judgment is delayed, **it is not cancelled.**

"Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not..."

(v. 3)

He then gives a list of past judgments to prove God's consistency:

- **The angels that sinned** (Genesis 6),
- **The old world in Noah's day,**
- **Sodom and Gomorrah.**

These examples show that:

- **God knows how to deliver the godly,**
- **God knows how to reserve the unjust for judgment.**

This is especially important for Tribulation saints who may feel overwhelmed and abandoned. Peter assures them: **God is watching. Judgment is coming.**

VIII. The Character of False Teachers (2 Peter 2:10–14)

Peter now describes their character in chilling detail:

- **They walk after the flesh,**
- **They despise government,**

- **They are presumptuous and self-willed,**
- **They speak evil of dignities,**
- **They corrupt others with carnal enticement.**

“They are spots and blemishes... sporting themselves with their own deceivings...”
(v. 13)

They are not outside the camp—they are **among the believers**, pretending to be one of them, using religious language, quoting Scripture, but preaching **a false gospel of compromise**.

Their goal is not just to deceive—but to **pollute the fellowship** and **hinder obedience**.

IX. Balaam, the Greedy Prophet (2 Peter 2:15–16)

“Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam...”

Balaam is the archetype of the false teacher:

- He knew the truth,
- He spoke the truth,
- But he **sold it for gain**.

The Tribulation will be full of Balaams—men who:

- Know Jesus is Lord,
- Acknowledge the Word of God,
- But compromise with Babylon for money, safety, or power.

Peter’s point is clear: **Greed and compromise are gateways to destruction**.

X. Wells Without Water – The Emptiness of Apostasy (2 Peter 2:17–19)

“These are wells without water...”

Their ministries look deep—but are **empty**.

“Clouds that are carried with a tempest...”

They bring no refreshing rain—just storm and confusion.

“They speak great swelling words of vanity...”

They sound powerful, but they’re hollow. They offer:

- Liberty without Lordship,
- Freedom without faithfulness,
- Grace without godliness.

“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption...”
(v. 19)

Their fruit is not revival—but ruin.

XI. The Dog Returns to His Vomit (2 Peter 2:20–22)

Perhaps the strongest warning in the chapter:

“For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord... they are again entangled therein...”

This passage does **not describe a born-again Christian losing salvation**. It describes:

- A man who **knew the truth**,
- Even **escaped its effects** for a time,
- But **never truly converted**.

He returns to sin like:

- A **dog to his vomit**,
- A **washed pig to the mire**.

This applies to:

- **False prophets** who once seemed righteous,
- **Compromising Jews** who abandon the remnant,
- **Religious leaders** who align with the Beast.

The judgment on such is worse than if they’d never known the truth (v. 21).

Conclusion: Eyes Open, Lamps Burning

2 Peter 1–2 is a **battle briefing** for the last days. It is not Church doctrine—it is **Tribulation survival strategy** for the remnant who will:

- Suffer persecution,
- Endure betrayal,
- And face a tidal wave of false teaching.

Peter urges them to:

- **Grow in godliness,**
- **Anchor in prophecy,**
- **Expose false teachers,**
- **Remember God's past judgments,**
- **Cling to the Chief Shepherd.**

While we in the Church Age can apply these truths devotionally, the doctrine belongs to another time, another people, another battle.

Peter's words are timeless in truth—but targeted in application.

And as the end approaches, may all who read them be warned: **The false teachers are not coming—they're already here. And judgment is not asleep—it's marching.**

11 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – A Day as a Thousand Years: Millennial Scope (2 Peter 3)

Introduction: Prophecy's Clock and the Long View of God

The third and final chapter of Peter's second epistle is nothing short of a prophetic timepiece. It addresses not only the character of the last days, but also the **scope and patience of God** as He unfolds a millennial plan designed before the foundation of the world. Peter, writing as the apostle to the circumcision (Gal. 2:8), isn't just closing a letter—he's passing down a map for the **Jewish remnant** to follow when the world collapses into deception, mockery, and judgment.

In 2 Peter 3, we see God's timing on full display—not from a human perspective, but from a **divine one**. This is the chapter that gives us the often-misquoted line, "*a day is with the*

Lord as a thousand years,” which has been used by theologians, historians, and even scoffers. But in its context—and when rightly divided—it presents a sweeping timeline that includes the **first creation**, the **coming fire**, and the **new heavens and new earth**.

This chapter is not Church Age doctrine—it is **Kingdom Age prophecy**, aimed squarely at **Israel’s final hope**, **God’s global judgment**, and the **establishment of Christ’s thousand-year reign** on earth.

I. This Second Epistle – Stirring Up Pure Minds (2 Peter 3:1–2)

“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance...”

Peter reaffirms his pastoral and prophetic mission: to **remind the scattered remnant** of what they’ve already been taught. In the chaos of the Tribulation, **spiritual forgetfulness will be deadly**. So he calls their attention back to:

- **The words of the prophets,**
- **The commandment of the apostles,**
- And by extension, **the entire prophetic Word** of God.

This confirms again that Peter is not teaching mystery doctrine like Paul. He is reasserting **what the prophets already said**, placing Israel back into focus, and preparing them for **the Lord’s Day**.

II. Scoffers in the Last Days (2 Peter 3:3–4)

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts...”

Peter’s focus now shifts forward—**into the Tribulation period**. These scoffers are not atheists—they are **religious mockers** who reject the prophetic warnings. They will taunt:

“Where is the promise of his coming?”

Just as Noah was mocked before the flood, so the remnant will be mocked before the fire.

These scoffers will:

- Deny the **return of Christ**,

- Cling to **uniformitarianism** (“all things continue...”),
- And promote a worldview that sees no **supernatural intervention**.

They are the voice of Babylon, the children of the Whore, dressed in religion but drunk with the blood of prophets.

Peter warns the remnant: **Do not listen to them.**

III. Willfully Ignorant – The World That Then Was (2 Peter 3:5–7)

“For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old...”

Peter introduces the first of two judgments:

1. **The flood** – God judged the world with water (v. 6),
2. **The fire** – God will judge the world again, but this time with fire (v. 7).

The scoffers reject the flood, and they deny the fire. But Peter places them on the same timeline.

“The heavens and the earth... are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment...”

That “day” is not the Rapture. It is **the Day of the Lord**—a cataclysmic, global judgment that prepares the way for the **millennial reign** of Jesus Christ.

IV. A Day with the Lord – Understanding the Prophetic Pattern (2 Peter 3:8)

“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

This verse is the key to understanding **God’s millennial plan**. While Peter is not giving a strict formula, he is echoing a **biblical pattern** found throughout Scripture.

A. The 7-Day Creation Pattern

- **6 days of labor**, 1 day of rest,
- Symbolic of **6,000 years of man’s dominion**, followed by **1,000 years of God’s rest** (the Millennium),
- This aligns with God’s consistent pattern of **six-to-one ratios** (Ex. 20:9–11).

B. 2,000 Years of the Church, 1,000-Year Kingdom

- From Adam to Abraham: ~2,000 years,
- From Abraham to Christ: ~2,000 years,
- From Christ to the Rapture: ~2,000 years,
- Followed by 1,000-year reign of Christ (Rev. 20:4–6).

Peter reminds the remnant: **God is not slow**. He is unfolding a perfect **prophetic calendar**, and they are living near the end of the sixth day.

V. The Lord Is Not Slack... But Longsuffering (2 Peter 3:9)

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise... but is longsuffering to us-ward...”

This verse does not teach universalism or imply a delay in God’s plan. It is a **statement of mercy**, especially toward the remnant of Israel:

- God is giving time for the **elect to come to repentance**,
- He is holding back judgment to allow **maximum harvest**,
- He is showing **covenantal compassion** to the children of Abraham.

But time is not indefinite. **The fire is coming.**

VI. The Day of the Lord – Fire and Finality (2 Peter 3:10)

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night...”

This is the climax of Peter’s warning. The Day of the Lord is not a peaceful event—it is a **cosmic upheaval**. It will come:

- **Suddenly,**
- **Unexpectedly,**
- **Violently.**

“The heavens shall pass away with a great noise...”

“The elements shall melt with fervent heat...”

“The earth also... shall be burned up.”

This is **not the Rapture**. This is **the purging judgment** that concludes the Tribulation and prepares the world for the Millennium—and eventually, the new heavens and new earth.

Compare with:

- Isaiah 34:4 – *“The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll.”*
- Zephaniah 1:14–18 – *“The great day of the Lord is near... a day of wrath...”*
- Revelation 6:12–17 – *“The great day of his wrath is come.”*

This is the **divine reset**—where God removes the wicked, restores the earth, and enthrones His King.

VII. What Manner of Persons Ought Ye to Be? (2 Peter 3:11–13)

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved...”

Peter now exhorts the remnant to live with:

- **Holiness,**
- **Godliness,**
- **Expectation,**
- And **urgency.**

“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God...”

They are not to hide in fear, but to **look forward with faith**.

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

This is the great hope—not just survival, but **restoration**. The new heavens and new earth refer ultimately to what John describes in Revelation 21–22—but it begins with the **Millennial Kingdom**, where righteousness reigns.

VIII. Be Found of Him in Peace (2 Peter 3:14–15)

“Wherefore... be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

Peter again echoes **the priestly language** of holiness. The remnant must:

- **Remain pure,**
- **Resist deception,**
- **Be diligent in faith.**

“Even as our beloved brother Paul also... wrote unto you.”

Here, Peter acknowledges Paul’s writings—not to blend their ministries, but to **affirm Paul’s wisdom** and remind the Jewish remnant that **Paul’s doctrine applies in certain areas**, especially when it comes to salvation by faith.

IX. Paul’s Writings – Hard to Be Understood (2 Peter 3:16)

“As also in all his epistles... in which are some things hard to be understood...”

Peter is honest: Paul’s writings contain **deep doctrine**—especially regarding:

- The mystery of the Body of Christ,
- Justification by faith,
- The Rapture of the Church.

These truths are **different** from the prophetic program for Israel. And Peter warns:

“...which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

This is a powerful testimony. It affirms Paul’s epistles as **Scripture**, but also confirms that **they must be rightly divided** to avoid confusion.

X. Beware – Lest Ye Fall from Steadfastness (2 Peter 3:17)

“Ye therefore, beloved... beware lest ye also... fall from your own steadfastness.”

The Tribulation will be a time of:

- **Great apostasy,**
- **Spiritual compromise,**
- **False teaching,**
- **Social pressure.**

Peter urges the remnant to hold fast. Falling from steadfastness doesn't mean losing salvation in the Pauline sense—but rather **abandoning truth**, which leads to destruction (Matt. 24:10–13).

XI. Grow in Grace and in Knowledge (2 Peter 3:18)

Peter ends with a call to **spiritual maturity**:

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

This is their anchor during the storm:

- **Grace** – the undeserved favor that sustains them,
- **Knowledge** – the doctrinal depth that protects them.

And he closes with worship:

“To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

Because **when the fire ends**, and the King returns, the remnant will shine—not in their own strength, but in the glory of Christ.

Conclusion: The Thousand-Year Day and the Enduring Hope of the Remnant

2 Peter 3 reveals a breathtaking sweep of prophetic history:

- From the **first creation** to the **coming conflagration**,
- From **scoffers' mockery** to **God's fiery judgment**,
- From **earthly corruption** to the **new creation**.

And running through it all is a simple, profound truth:

“One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

When rightly divided, we see this chapter not as Church doctrine, but as a **prophetic guidebook** for the Tribulation saints, preparing them for:

- The **Day of the Lord**,
- The **Millennial reign**,
- And the **eternal Kingdom**.

For the remnant, Peter's voice still echoes:

- Be **holy**,
- Be **watchful**,
- Be **steadfast**,
- And **look for the promise** of His coming.

Because the fire will fall...

The heavens will shake...

The King will return...

And **righteousness shall dwell** on earth at last.

12 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Paul's Epistles and the Gap: Peter Acknowledges the Shift (2 Peter 3:15–16)

Introduction: A Critical Confession in the Final Words of Peter

The Apostle Peter, a rugged fisherman turned fiery preacher, ends his final epistle with a remarkable—and often overlooked—confession. In the midst of warning about the Day of the Lord, fiery judgment, and the end of the age, Peter makes a **rare, powerful statement** about another man's writings: the epistles of Paul.

“Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you...”

(2 Peter 3:15)

It is in these two verses, 2 Peter 3:15–16, that we find a **doctrinal shift acknowledged**. One of the **pillars of the Jewish apostleship** concedes the magnitude, the weight, and the **difficult depth** of Paul's writings. Peter does not rebuke them. He does not reinterpret them. He **endorses them**—as Scripture.

When rightly divided, this passage serves as a **bridge between two programs**: the prophetic program God gave to Israel through the prophets and apostles, and the **mystery program** revealed to Paul for the Body of Christ. It confirms that a **dispensational transition took place**, and that Paul's revelations are not merely add-ons, but **essential wisdom** directly from God.

This essay explores how Peter acknowledges the gap between his commission and Paul's calling, affirming the authority of Paul's doctrine and reinforcing the need for proper division of the Word of Truth.

I. Context: Peter's Final Epistle and Prophetic Setting

Peter's second epistle is written under the shadow of his own impending death:

"Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle..."

(2 Peter 1:14)

This is his **farewell message**, and unlike his first epistle (focused on enduring persecution), the second centers on:

- **False teachers (chapter 2),**
- **The Day of the Lord (chapter 3),**
- **Prophetic confirmation,** and
- **The final future of the heavens and earth.**

Peter is addressing a **Jewish audience** who will need this letter not just in his lifetime, but **during the Great Tribulation**. As he finishes, he includes a striking reference to **Paul's epistles**, not as competition, but as complementary wisdom—necessary to understand the full counsel of God.

II. The "Longsuffering" of the Lord (2 Peter 3:15)

"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation..."

This verse is crucial. Peter has just declared that the **Day of the Lord** is coming, in which the heavens shall pass away and the earth be burned with fire (v. 10). But then he says:

"The Lord is not slack... but is longsuffering..."

(v. 9)

Now in verse 15, Peter reiterates this divine **pause**—God is delaying judgment, allowing more time for **salvation**.

But this "longsuffering" introduces a problem: **Why the delay?** The Jewish program expected the Kingdom after Christ's ascension. The apostles had asked:

“Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”
(Acts 1:6)

But it didn't happen. Instead, God turned to the Gentiles with a **new man**: the Body of Christ. This period of delay is the **gap**—the **Church Age, unrevealed in prophecy**, but revealed to **Paul**.

Peter is acknowledging that this **“longsuffering” is not confusion—it's salvation**. And who explains it? Paul.

III. “As Our Beloved Brother Paul...” – A New Voice of Authority (2 Peter 3:15)

“...even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you...”

This is monumental.

Peter:

- Calls Paul **beloved**, not competitive,
- Acknowledges Paul's **unique wisdom**,
- And affirms that Paul has **already written to the same audience**.

Let's examine these three acknowledgments:

1. “Beloved Brother Paul”

Despite the public confrontation recorded in Galatians 2—where Paul rebuked Peter to the face—Peter has **no bitterness**. He understands that Paul's rebuke was not personal, but **doctrinal**, defending **the truth of the Gospel**.

Peter affirms that Paul is:

- In fellowship,
- Spirit-filled,
- And loved.

This unity was **not forced**—it was forged by truth.

2. “According to the Wisdom Given Unto Him”

Peter acknowledges that Paul's epistles carry a **special, God-given wisdom**. This is the very wisdom Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 2:

"We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery..."
(1 Cor. 2:7)

Paul's revelation includes:

- The **mystery of the Body of Christ** (Eph. 3:1–6),
- The **rapture of the Church** (1 Thess. 4:13–18),
- The **postponement of Israel's Kingdom** (Rom. 11:25),
- The **gospel of grace apart from the law** (Gal. 2:16),
- The **heavenly calling of the Church**, distinct from Israel's earthly promises.

Peter calls this **wisdom**—not tradition, not speculation, but **divine revelation**.

3. "Hath Written Unto You"

Here's where things get interesting. Peter says Paul **wrote to "you"**—referring to his own audience.

This could refer to:

- Jewish believers in the dispersion,
- The wider audience of Hebrews,
- Or even the prophetic remnant who will read Paul's writings during the Tribulation.

This affirms that Paul's epistles are:

- **Circulating widely,**
- **Recognized as Scripture,**
- **Relevant to Jewish believers** when properly applied.

But Peter does not say that Paul is writing **to the same group** for the same doctrinal purpose. Rather, Paul writes to **them**, and his writings **must be understood rightly**, or else **wrested to destruction**.

IV. Paul's Epistles Are Scripture (2 Peter 3:16)

“As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things...”

Peter affirms not just **one letter**, but **all of Paul’s epistles**—plural.

He admits that Paul speaks of:

- **The return of Christ,**
- **The judgment to come,**
- **The Day of the Lord,**
- And the **salvation available through grace.**

“...in which are some things hard to be understood...”

Here Peter confesses something rare: **Paul’s writings contain deep truths** that require study. They are **not easily grasped**—especially by those raised in the prophetic tradition of Moses and the prophets.

And that leads to the warning:

“...which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

Peter equates Paul’s letters with **Scripture**—the same category as the Torah, Psalms, and Prophets.

This is **massive**. It affirms that:

- Paul’s epistles are **inspired**,
- They are **authoritative**,
- And they are **foundational** to understanding the current dispensation.

But they must be **handled properly**, or else the result is **spiritual destruction**.

V. The Unlearned and Unstable – A Prophetic Warning

Peter says that **false teachers and carnal believers** “wrest” (twist) Paul’s epistles. This continues today in those who:

- Merge law and grace (Galatianism),
- Teach loss of salvation (misreading Hebrews or Romans),

- Mix Israel's kingdom promises with Church doctrine,
- Misapply the Sermon on the Mount as Christian ethics,
- Confuse the Rapture with the Second Coming.

In the Tribulation, this confusion will be **weaponized**:

- False prophets will twist Paul's teachings to support Antichrist,
- Apostate leaders will distort grace into lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:7–12),
- And carnal minds will misread the delay of judgment as permission to sin.

Peter's warning is timeless: **handle Paul's letters with spiritual discernment**, or perish in doctrinal error.

VI. The Gap Between Programs – Peter's Silent Affirmation

What Peter **does not say** is as important as what he does.

- He does **not correct Paul**.
- He does **not reframe Paul's gospel**.
- He does **not claim that Paul teaches the same thing he does**.

Rather, he acknowledges that **Paul received wisdom Peter did not**, and that this wisdom is **necessary**—yet **difficult**.

This indirectly confirms the **dispensational gap**:

- Peter preached **repentance and restoration of Israel** (Acts 3:19–21),
- Paul preached **the mystery of the Church**, hidden from the prophets (Rom. 16:25),
- Peter saw the **Messianic Kingdom** as imminent,
- Paul revealed a **postponement** (Rom. 11:25) and a heavenly calling.

Rather than resist, Peter acknowledges the shift.

VII. Rightly Dividing Paul and Peter – The Wisdom of Balance

The modern church errs in two ways:

1. **Blending Paul and Peter**, teaching replacement theology or denying the pre-tribulation rapture,
2. **Over-dividing**, such as hyper-dispensationalism, which wrongly rejects water baptism, the Lord's Supper, or even the value of Peter's epistles for today.

Peter offers the balance:

- **Paul's epistles are Scripture**,
- They contain **deep doctrine**,
- But they must be **read with discernment**.

For Tribulation saints reading Peter's letter in the future:

- Paul's writings will provide light,
- But must be interpreted **through the lens of dispensational truth**.

VIII. Final Thought: Peter's Humility and Prophetic Wisdom

It's worth noting Peter's **maturity and humility** here.

- Once impulsive and quick to speak,
- Once resisting the Cross (Matt. 16:22),
- Once denying the Lord (Luke 22:57),
- Once confused by Paul's rebuke (Gal. 2),

Now, at the end of his life, he **affirms Paul's calling**, honors his wisdom, and places his writings among the **sacred canon of Scripture**.

That is not weakness—it is strength.

It is also a reminder to all believers, Jewish or Gentile:

- God's truth unfolds progressively,
- We must embrace all Scripture, but **rightly divide it** (2 Tim. 2:15),
- And we must never elevate tradition over revelation.

Conclusion: Peter Confirms Paul—and the Gap Between

2 Peter 3:15–16 may be brief, but its impact is seismic. In it, Peter:

- **Affirms the longsuffering of God,**
- **Acknowledges the unique wisdom of Paul,**
- **Endorses his epistles as Scripture,**
- **And warns against misinterpreting them.**

This is not theological politeness—it is a doctrinal acknowledgment of the **shift between Israel’s program and the Church Age**, and the **importance of understanding the mystery revealed to Paul**.

To ignore this is to “wrest the Scriptures unto destruction.”

But to rightly divide it is to:

- See God’s prophetic calendar unfold,
- Recognize the Body of Christ’s distinct calling,
- Prepare the Jewish remnant for the fire to come,
- And wait patiently for the glorious return of the King.

Peter, the apostle to the circumcision, **passes the baton** to Paul—not as replacement, but as complement.

And in doing so, he offers the clearest endorsement of **rightly dividing the Word of Truth** in all of Scripture.

13 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – That Ye May Know: Eternal Life in the Epistles (1 John 1–2)

Introduction: Light, Life, and the Certainty of Fellowship

The epistles of John, particularly 1 John, have long been treasured for their warmth, clarity, and recurring themes of love, truth, and fellowship. But under the surface of their devotional appeal lies a rich doctrinal framework that, when rightly divided, reveals **not only timeless spiritual truths**, but **prophetic relevance for the Tribulation remnant**.

In 1 John 1–2, the Apostle John speaks about **light, truth**, and **eternal life**, presenting these not merely as abstract ideals but as vital necessities for those **walking through a dark and**

deceptive age. Though many interpret this book as primarily addressing the Church, a dispensational lens shows that 1 John has a **distinct Jewish flavor**, applicable doctrinally to **Israel’s remnant during the Tribulation**, while maintaining **devotional application** for the Body of Christ.

John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, had a deep understanding of divine fellowship. His Gospel emphasized believing unto life (John 20:31), but his first epistle emphasizes **continuing in fellowship**—a key distinction when we rightly divide salvation and sanctification.

This essay explores how John’s message clarifies eternal life, exposes deception, and exhorts faithfulness—particularly to **a remnant under pressure**—while reinforcing the promise that *“ye may know that ye have eternal life.”*

I. The Word of Life Manifested (1 John 1:1–3)

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes... and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.”

(1 John 1:1)

John opens by reasserting the **physical reality of Christ’s incarnation**. He emphasizes:

- What they **heard** (auditory testimony),
- What they **saw** (visual confirmation),
- What they **handled** (tangible proof).

This isn’t mystical spirituality—it’s **historical, eyewitness evidence** of the Word made flesh (John 1:14). Christ was not a spirit or vision—He was **manifested**.

“(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it...)”

(v. 2)

This “life” is **eternal life**, embodied in the person of Jesus Christ and offered as a promise to believers. For the Jewish remnant, this is especially vital: their faith is not based in temple ritual or legal tradition, but in **the risen and glorified Messiah**.

“That ye also may have fellowship with us...”

(v. 3)

John invites his readers—fellow Jews—to enter into **apostolic fellowship**, rooted in Christ. This is not yet the Pauline doctrine of being in the Body of Christ; it is **a shared walk in light and obedience**.

II. Fellowship, Not Just Relationship (1 John 1:4–7)

“These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”

(v. 4)

Joy in the Christian life does not come merely from knowing truth, but from **walking in it**. That walk is a function of **fellowship**, not simply relationship.

“God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

(v. 5)

John defines God’s character in absolute terms. No darkness means:

- No sin,
- No deception,
- No compromise.

For the Tribulation remnant, surrounded by false prophets and lawless systems, this clarity is **spiritual survival**.

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie...”

(v. 6)

This verse is often misapplied to salvation, but the context is **fellowship**, not justification. John is not teaching that believers lose salvation—but that **walking in darkness disrupts communion** with God.

“But if we walk in the light... we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ... cleanseth us from all sin.”

(v. 7)

This cleansing is **ongoing**, not positional. The blood cleanses the believer **in fellowship**, just as Levitical sacrifices maintained ceremonial purity for worship.

For the remnant in the last days, walking in the light means:

- Obedience to Christ’s words,
- Separation from the world,

- Remaining in the truth despite deception.

III. Confession and Cleansing (1 John 1:8–10)

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves...”

(v. 8)

John demolishes the lie of sinless perfection. For the remnant facing persecution, self-righteousness will be a trap. Confession is necessary for:

- **Spiritual clarity,**
- **Purity in community,**
- **Maintaining open communion with God.**

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us...”

(v. 9)

This is a **fellowship verse**, not a justification verse. Paul writes about **positional forgiveness** (Col. 2:13), but John speaks of **relational forgiveness**—ongoing purification for those already walking in the light.

This is especially vital for Jewish believers in the end times, who must:

- Keep short accounts with God,
- Avoid deception,
- Stay spiritually clean in a defiled world.

IV. Jesus Christ the Righteous – Our Advocate (1 John 2:1–2)

“And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

(1 John 2:1)

Here John introduces a role unique to his writings: **Christ as Advocate**.

An advocate is:

- A legal representative,
- One who intercedes on behalf of another,
- A defender before the Judge.

This is especially meaningful for the remnant, who may feel isolated and under attack. Christ's advocacy means:

- **He is their voice in heaven,**
- **He is their defense when accused,**
- **He is their righteousness,** not the law.

“And he is the propitiation for our sins...”

(v. 2)

Propitiation means **satisfaction of divine wrath**. Christ satisfies the justice of God—not only for Jewish believers, but **“also for the sins of the whole world.”**

This reflects the **universal offer of salvation**, even as the epistle maintains a Jewish focus.

V. Keeping His Commandments – A Distinctive Test (1 John 2:3–6)

“Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”

(v. 3)

This is a **common stumbling block** when not rightly divided. Many read this as a test of salvation, but John is emphasizing:

- **Obedience as the fruit of true knowledge,**
- **Commandment-keeping as assurance,** not the cause, of relationship.

For the remnant in the Tribulation, **obedience will be the evidence of faith**, as in Revelation 14:12:

“Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

This is a faith-plus-obedience system, distinct from the Church Age. Their endurance in obedience **marks them as true**.

VI. Love Perfected and Walking Like Christ (1 John 2:5–6)

“Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected...”

Love and obedience go hand in hand. This echoes John 14:15:

“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

The remnant's obedience will show:

- Their love for Christ,
- Their rejection of Antichrist's system,
- Their alignment with divine truth.

“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”

Walking like Christ means:

- Humility,
- Obedience to the Father,
- Rejection of the world.

In the end times, it may also mean **martyrdom**.

VII. The Old and New Commandment (1 John 2:7–11)

“I write no new commandment... but an old commandment... again, a new commandment I write...”

John echoes Jesus' teaching in John 13:34. Love is both:

- **Old**, as it is from the beginning (Lev. 19:18),
- **New**, in the way Christ demonstrated it.

For the Tribulation remnant, love will be:

- **A test of faith,**
- **A means of endurance** (Matt. 24:12),
- **A contrast to the hatred of the world.**

“He that hateth his brother is in darkness...”

Hatred among the remnant is spiritual blindness. Love marks those walking in light.

VIII. Little Children, Fathers, and Young Men (1 John 2:12–14)

John addresses three groups:

1. **Little children** – new believers, forgiven,
2. **Fathers** – mature believers who know God deeply,
3. **Young men** – spiritually strong, having overcome the wicked one.

These categories reflect the **spiritual growth stages** in the remnant community.

- Children rejoice in forgiveness,
- Fathers provide wisdom and stability,
- Young men fight spiritual battles.

The Tribulation will demand all three.

IX. Love Not the World (1 John 2:15–17)

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...”

John defines the world as:

- **The lust of the flesh,**
- **The lust of the eyes,**
- **The pride of life.**

In the Tribulation, these will be weaponized by the Beast. The mark of the Beast will likely appeal to:

- **Fleshly needs** (food, comfort),
- **Visual deception** (signs and wonders),
- **Worldly status** (acceptance, survival).

“The world passeth away... but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”

Only obedience to God—often at great cost—will endure.

X. The Antichrist Spirit (1 John 2:18–23)

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come...”

John introduces the Antichrist doctrine here. He acknowledges:

- **One great Antichrist is coming** (the Beast),
- **Many antichrists are already active.**

“They went out from us...”

(v. 19)

Some will **pretend faith**, then align with Antichrist. This mirrors 2 Thessalonians 2:3—*“a falling away first.”*

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?”

(v. 22)

This is the **mark of Antichrist theology**—denying the true identity of Jesus.

XI. The Anointing Teaches You All Things (1 John 2:24–27)

John encourages the remnant to trust the **anointing (Holy Spirit)** they have received. They don’t need new doctrines or mystical knowledge—they need to **abide in what they’ve been taught.**

This is crucial when:

- False prophets abound,
- Scriptures are twisted,
- And deception floods the earth.

XII. Abide in Him – So You’re Not Ashamed (1 John 2:28)

“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence...”

The Second Coming is in view here—not the Rapture. The remnant is exhorted to remain faithful so that:

- They will not be ashamed,
- They will be confident at His return.

This parallels Matthew 24:13—*“he that shall endure unto the end...”*

Conclusion: The Epistles of John as Light for the Last Days

1 John 1–2 is more than devotional encouragement. When rightly divided, it offers:

- **Assurance of eternal life,**
- **Guidance for spiritual fellowship,**
- **Warning against deception,**
- **Instructions for holiness,**
- **Hope for Christ’s return.**

It is aimed at a **believing remnant of Jews**, living through the **final global deception**, and preparing to meet their Messiah.

To them John says:

“That ye may know that ye have eternal life...”
(1 John 5:13)

Not guess. Not hope. Know.

And that knowledge will light the way through the deepest darkness, until **the true Light returns**.

14 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Love, Commandments, and Overcoming the World (1 John 3–5)

Introduction: Victory in the Midst of Tribulation

The closing chapters of 1 John—chapters 3 through 5—are often read as gentle encouragements for Christians to “just love more.” But when rightly divided, these chapters thunder with doctrinal depth. John is not merely addressing churchgoers in peaceful pews—he is writing with prophetic clarity to a remnant of Jewish believers who must overcome **false teachers, worldly enticements, and the terror of Antichrist’s regime**.

John weaves together themes of love, obedience, and spiritual victory. He grounds them not in emotion, but in **truth, faith, and action**. Love is not a feeling—it’s a test. Obedience is not a lifestyle suggestion—it’s a matter of survival. Overcoming the world is not poetic—it is literal resistance against a hostile system.

This is not Pauline Church doctrine. This is **tribulational doctrine**—instruction for those who will need to hold fast when the wrath of the devil falls upon the saints (Revelation 12:17). Still, the devotional truth is profound for the Church Age believer, and the eternal principles—righteousness, love, faith—remain consistent. When we rightly divide these chapters, we uncover God's expectations for His people under fire, and a clear path to overcoming the world.

I. The Love the Father Hath Bestowed (1 John 3:1–3)

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...”

(1 John 3:1)

John opens chapter 3 by highlighting the **supernatural nature of God’s love**. That fallen, mortal men could be called "sons of God" is stunning. But this is more than positional language—it is **prophetic**.

“It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him...”

(v. 2)

This refers to the **Second Coming**, not the Rapture. John is writing to those who will **see Christ descend from heaven with judgment** and who are **looking for His appearing**—as foretold in Matthew 24 and Revelation 19.

“Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself...”

(v. 3)

For the Tribulation remnant, **holiness will be essential**. The Antichrist’s world system will entice, deceive, and defile. Hope in Christ’s return will be a refining agent, motivating:

- Obedience,
- Separation,
- Purity.

II. Sin, Righteousness, and the Children of God (1 John 3:4–10)

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law...”

(v. 4)

This verse immediately clashes with Pauline doctrine if not rightly divided. Paul teaches that we are not under the law (Romans 6:14). But John writes as if law-breaking still defines sin.

Why? Because **this epistle has a Jewish prophetic context**. During the Tribulation, the commandments of God are once again emphasized (Revelation 14:12). Those who break the law—especially under Antichrist—align with Satan.

“He that committeth sin is of the devil...”

(v. 8)

This is not a statement about momentary failure. It’s about **habitual allegiance**. The remnant will be divided from the apostate by their works.

John gives a **clear test**:

- If a man practices righteousness, he is of God.
- If he continues in sin (aligns with the Beast), he is not.

“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil...”

(v. 10)

This **visible distinction** will be necessary when no neutral ground exists. The remnant will need to discern:

- Who is true,
- Who is false,
- Who is safe to fellowship with,
- Who is to be separated from.

III. Love One Another – The Proof of Spiritual Life (1 John 3:11–18)

“We should love one another. Not as Cain...”

(v. 11–12)

Cain is the prototype of false religion—**offering works, hating the righteous, and murdering truth**. His spiritual children will flourish under the Antichrist, persecuting those who truly know God.

“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”

(v. 13)

Hatred from the world is a **mark of authenticity**. The remnant will experience this viscerally, and love for fellow believers will be their survival thread.

“Whoso hath this world’s good... and shutteth up his bowels of compassion... how dwelleth the love of God in him?”

(v. 17)

This is not abstract. In the Tribulation, **buying and selling will be restricted** to those who take the mark (Revelation 13:17). The remnant must **share, give, and risk their lives for each other**, or perish.

John calls them to **sacrificial love**, mirroring Christ’s example.

IV. Assurance in the Midst of Condemnation (1 John 3:19–24)

“If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart...”

(v. 20)

When fear, failure, and guilt threaten the remnant, this promise sustains them. God sees faith, obedience, and intent.

“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments...”

(v. 22)

Again, this is **not Pauline doctrine** of grace by faith alone. This is consistent with the conditional promise of Matthew 24:13:

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

The remnant will pray in faith, obey in fear, and walk in love—all under pressure. Their assurance rests in:

- Obedience to God’s commandments,
- Faith in Christ’s name (v. 23),
- Indwelling presence of the Spirit (v. 24).

V. Try the Spirits – Exposing the Spirit of Antichrist (1 John 4:1–6)

“Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God...”

(1 John 4:1)

Deception will define the Tribulation. Signs, wonders, and false prophets (Matt. 24:24) will abound.

The test?

“Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God...”
(v. 2)

This is not just about incarnation—it’s about **acknowledging the full truth of Jesus’ person and mission**. The Antichrist will distort Jesus’ identity.

“And every spirit that confesseth not... is that spirit of antichrist...”
(v. 3)

This verse marks a dividing line between:

- **The sealed remnant**, and
- **Those deceived by the Beast**.

“Ye are of God... and have overcome them.”
(v. 4)

The remnant will not overcome by strength—but by **truth, love, and faith**.

VI. God Is Love – Abiding in Divine Nature (1 John 4:7–21)

“Let us love one another: for love is of God...”
(v. 7)

This section is the **doctrinal core of John's theology**. But again, this is not feel-good sentiment. It is **battlefield strategy**.

Love among believers will:

- Preserve unity,
- Strengthen courage,
- Expose false converts.

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us...”
(v. 10)

Love is defined by **God's initiative**, not man’s effort. It is **sacrificial, truth-based**, and **cleansing**.

“If we love one another, God dwelleth in us...”

(v. 12)

Abiding in love is how the remnant abides in God—and avoids deception.

“There is no fear in love... perfect love casteth out fear...”

(v. 18)

This is vital. The Tribulation will be ruled by fear—**fear of death, betrayal, and the Beast**. But perfect love, grounded in God’s truth, expels that fear.

“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.”

(v. 20)

In the end times, this verse will divide:

- The faithful remnant,
- From those merely pretending.

VII. Born of God – Belief and Victory (1 John 5:1–5)

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...”

(v. 1)

This birth is **spiritual regeneration**, tied to belief in **Jesus as the Christ**—not just in name, but in identity.

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.”

(v. 2)

Love for others is validated by obedience to God’s commands. Again, commandments are central in John’s epistle—just as they are in Revelation 12:17.

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments...”

(v. 3)

Obedience is the **evidence**, not the engine, of salvation for the remnant.

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world...”

(v. 4)

This is the climax. To overcome the world in the Tribulation means:

- Rejecting the mark,
- Enduring persecution,
- Resisting deception.

“And this is the victory... even our faith.”

Faith in Jesus—not the Beast, not religion, not works—wins the war.

VIII. The Witness of God – Water, Blood, and Spirit (1 John 5:6–12)

“This is he that came by water and blood...”

(v. 6)

Christ’s humanity and sacrifice are emphasized. The witness is threefold:

1. **Spirit** – declares truth,
2. **Water** – His baptism and incarnation,
3. **Blood** – His atoning death.

“There are three that bear record in heaven...”

(v. 7)

(KJV only)

This Trinitarian verse confirms divine testimony. It’s often omitted in modern versions but remains a crucial affirmation of **Godhead unity**.

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself...”

(v. 10)

Internal assurance is the Spirit’s work. But John anchors it in **external testimony**—what God said, not just what man feels.

IX. That Ye May Know – Eternal Life Assured (1 John 5:13)

“These things have I written... that ye may know that ye have eternal life...”

John’s purpose is **certainty**. The remnant, under pressure, must not waver. Eternal life is:

- A promise,
- A possession,

- A power.

But it's tied to **belief, obedience, and overcoming**—all visibly seen in the faithful.

X. Prayer and Intercession (1 John 5:14–17)

“If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us...”

(v. 14)

Even in Tribulation, God hears. But the key is **according to His will**.

“There is a sin unto death...”

(v. 16)

This mysterious verse refers to willful rebellion—possibly taking the mark of the Beast or rejecting Christ in full knowledge. John says not to pray for those who **cross the line**.

This highlights:

- The **seriousness of apostasy**,
- The **discernment required for prayer**.

XI. Final Confidence and Exhortation (1 John 5:18–21)

“We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not...”

(v. 18)

Again, this is not sinless perfection—but a **lifestyle and allegiance**. The one born of God does not:

- Continue in rebellion,
- Join the Beast,
- Deny the Son.

“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”

(v. 19)

This is the contrast:

- The remnant in God,
- The world in the Beast.

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”

(v. 21)

A fitting close. Idolatry will be literal in the Tribulation—the image of the Beast (Rev. 13:14–15). John warns:

- Don’t bow,
- Don’t submit,
- Don’t compromise.

Conclusion: Love, Obedience, and Victory

1 John 3–5 brings the believer to the peak of Christian life—**faith that obeys, love that endures, and truth that overcomes.**

When rightly divided:

- It reveals **prophetic instructions** for the Tribulation remnant,
- Affirms the **doctrinal clarity** of obedience and love,
- Shows the **power of faith to overcome a hostile world.**

But even now, for the Body of Christ, the devotional richness remains:

- Walk in love,
- Abide in truth,
- Overcome through faith.

Because whether it’s persecution in the last days, or trials in our present time, the call remains the same:

“He that is born of God overcometh the world.”

15 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – The Sin Unto Death: Physical, Doctrinal, or Prophetic?

Introduction: A Verse That Startles, A Truth That Divides

Few verses in the New Testament have provoked more speculation, doctrinal debate, and confusion than this one:

“There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.”
(1 John 5:16)

In a book overflowing with assurance, love, light, and victory, this verse jolts the reader. What is this “sin unto death”? Why does John single it out? And more provocatively—**why does he tell believers not to pray for the person committing it?**

Throughout history, scholars and pastors have proposed three primary interpretations:

- **Physical** – the premature death of a believer due to persistent sin,
- **Doctrinal** – an unpardonable rejection of core truth,
- **Prophetic** – a Tribulation-specific act of apostasy (e.g., worship of the Beast).

When rightly divided—according to **dispensational truth, context, and audience**—the third view emerges with force: this passage is not primarily about the Church Age at all. It is written to the **Jewish remnant in the last days**, and the “sin unto death” represents a **prophetic, final rejection of Christ and alignment with the Antichrist**—a sin that seals one’s fate.

In this essay, we’ll unpack all three views, then rightly divide the passage to uncover its doctrinal weight for the end times, while still drawing **devotional insight for Church Age believers**.

I. The Physical Interpretation: God Takes His Children Home Early

This is the most common interpretation in mainstream evangelical circles, and for good reason—it draws on several clear New Testament examples:

“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”
(1 Corinthians 11:30)

Here, Paul refers to believers in Corinth who had abused the Lord’s Supper—taking it in an unworthy manner, with division, gluttony, and irreverence. As a result, God allowed **physical judgment**—sickness and premature death.

Similarly, Acts 5 recounts how **Ananias and Sapphira** lied to the Holy Ghost, and both were struck dead. They were likely believers, but their deception brought immediate judgment.

These examples support the idea that when believers **persist in sin, resist correction, and discredit God's holiness**, He may choose to end their earthly lives—not as punishment in hell, but as **chastening** (Hebrews 12:6).

Pros of this interpretation:

- Fits the context of sin, brotherhood, and intercessory prayer (1 John 5:16),
- Recognizes the **temporal consequences** of sin,
- Aligns with other New Testament judgment scenarios.

However, this interpretation **doesn't explain the command not to pray** for such a person. Paul prayed for backslidden saints (Gal. 4:19), and even for his enemies (2 Tim. 4:16). Why would John forbid it here?

This tension points to something **beyond simple discipline**.

II. The Doctrinal Interpretation: Apostasy and the Rejection of Truth

Some interpret the “sin unto death” as a **spiritual rejection of truth**—what is often called apostasy. They link this to:

“For it is impossible... if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance...”
(Hebrews 6:4–6)

Or:

“If we sin willfully after... the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins...”
(Hebrews 10:26)

This view argues that the sin unto death is not simply moral failure, but **knowingly and finally rejecting the gospel** after having received knowledge of it.

This interpretation is often used by Arminians to support **loss of salvation**, and by Calvinists to argue that such a person was **never truly saved**.

But both camps miss the **dispensational point**: these warnings are found in **Hebrews and 1 John**—books written to **Jews**, not the Church.

In fact, if the “sin unto death” is **doctrinal apostasy**, and it results in **permanent separation from God**, then we are no longer in the realm of eternal security.

That's where the **prophetic interpretation** becomes essential.

III. The Prophetic Interpretation: The Mark, the Beast, and the Final Apostasy

To rightly divide 1 John 5:16, we must consider:

- **The author** – John, apostle to the circumcision,
- **The audience** – Jewish believers under persecution (1 John 2:18–19),
- **The context** – end-times deception, false prophets, Antichrist,
- **The parallel passages** – Revelation, Hebrews, Matthew 24.

In that light, the “sin unto death” is most clearly understood as:

A prophetic sin committed during the Tribulation by professing believers who align with Antichrist—taking the mark, denying Christ, and sealing their fate.

Let’s explore the evidence.

IV. Tribulation Language in 1 John

The epistle repeatedly references the **last time**, **Antichrist**, and the **dividing line between true believers and apostates**:

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come...”
(1 John 2:18)

“They went out from us, but they were not of us...”
(v. 19)

These statements are **not typical Church Age language**. Paul rarely mentions Antichrist, and never encourages believers to fear a coming Beast. But John **frames his entire epistle** around the division that comes at the end.

Compare with Revelation 14:9–11:

“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark... the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God... and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone...”

There is **no grace, no second chance, no forgiveness**. Taking the mark is a **sin unto death—eternal death**.

That’s why John says:

“I do not say that he shall pray for it.”

(1 John 5:16)

This isn't callousness—it's doctrinal reality. Those who commit the ultimate betrayal—**worshipping the Beast and denying Christ**—cannot be restored.

This confirms:

- The “death” is **eternal**, not merely physical,
- The sin is **prophetic**, not general,
- The setting is **Tribulational**, not Church Age.

V. Sin Not Unto Death – Hope, Intercession, and Restoration

John contrasts this grave warning with a word of encouragement:

“If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life...”

(1 John 5:16)

Most sins are **not unto death**. In those cases:

- **Prayer can restore,**
- **Intercession can save** (in a physical and spiritual sense),
- **The sinner can be rescued.**

This aligns with James 5:19–20:

“He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death...”

Even in the Tribulation, the faithful can pray for one another—so long as the line has not been crossed.

VI. Historical Previews: Judas, Ananias, Esau, and the Beast System

To grasp the weight of the sin unto death, consider the prototypes:

1. Judas Iscariot

He had fellowship, knowledge, and calling—but he **willfully betrayed** Christ.

“It had been good for that man if he had not been born.”
(Matt. 26:24)

He represents the **final apostate**—one who knows truth but chooses darkness.

2. Ananias and Sapphira

They lied to the Holy Ghost—not denying Christ, but showing the danger of hypocrisy. They are **an example of physical death**, not eternal damnation.

3. Esau

“When he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected...”
(Heb. 12:17)

Esau’s story reflects **the sorrow of those who sell their birthright**, then seek it back in vain.

4. The Worshipers of the Beast

“They that worship the beast and his image... shall have no rest day nor night...”
(Rev. 14:11)

They are beyond recovery. This is the **final sin unto death**, foretold by John.

VII. Church Age Application: Devotion Without Confusion

Although the sin unto death is a **doctrinally prophetic** warning for the Tribulation, there are **devotional applications** for believers today.

1. Sin Has Consequences

While we are eternally secure in Christ (Rom. 8:38–39), sin can:

- Grieve the Spirit (Eph. 4:30),
- Quench joy (1 Thess. 5:19),
- Destroy testimony (1 Cor. 9:27),
- Invite discipline—even death (1 Cor. 11:30).

God takes sin seriously—not as a judge condemning us to hell, but as a **Father chastening His children**.

2. We Must Pray for the Fallen

John encourages intercession for those who fall—but who have not committed the sin unto death. This reminds us:

- **Prayer is powerful,**
- **Restoration is possible,**
- **Love should guide our response to failure.**

3. Don't Be a Scoffer

Today, some scoff at the idea of divine judgment, or claim that everyone gets another chance. But John warns: **there is a line.**

Even in the age of grace, God will one day shut the door (Luke 13:25).

VIII. Future Warning: Tribulation Saints, Hold Fast

For those who read John's epistle during the Tribulation—likely Jews scattered and hunted—this verse will be vital.

They will:

- See family members compromise,
- Watch friends take the mark,
- Be tempted to fold under pressure.

John warns them: **some sins are final.** Once the mark is taken, once allegiance is pledged to the Beast, **there is no going back.**

So the message is:

- Endure (Matt. 24:13),
- Obey (Rev. 14:12),
- Love the truth (2 Thess. 2:10–12),
- Do not be deceived.

Conclusion: Rightly Dividing the Death Sentence

1 John 5:16–17, when rightly divided, is not a confusing riddle—it’s a **doctrinal warning** written with prophetic precision.

- **Physically**, sin can bring death (true in all dispensations),
- **Doctrinally**, sin corrupts truth (as in apostasy),
- **Prophetically**, there is a final sin that seals one’s doom—the **worship of the Antichrist**.

This “sin unto death” is not for the Church to fear in terms of eternal loss—but it is for all to **respect** as a reminder of God’s holiness and the finality of rebellion in the last days.

To the Tribulation saint, it is a **line not to cross**.

To the Church Age believer, it is a **sobering call to purity and prayer**.

And to the world, it is proof that **God is not mocked**—grace has a boundary.

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”

(1 John 5:21)

16 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Warning Against Antichrists: Future and Present Application (2 John)

Introduction: The Spirit of Antichrist – Already Working, Soon Revealed

The word “antichrist” has long stirred unease, debate, and fascination. It conjures images of global leaders, digital currencies, religious deception, and even supernatural power. But its origin in Scripture is sobering and specific—and it comes from the pen of the Apostle John. Of all the Bible’s writers, **only John uses the term “antichrist,”** and he does so in **his letters to Jewish believers**, especially in 1 John and 2 John.

In 2 John, the theme is deceptively simple: **walk in truth, love one another, and reject deceivers**. But layered within this short epistle is a **prophetic warning** about the rise of a spiritual system that will **culminate in a literal Antichrist**, but which is **already at work in the world**.

This epistle is not written to the Church, the Body of Christ, in the Pauline sense. It is written to **a Jewish audience**, addressed cryptically to “the elect lady and her children.” When rightly divided, this reveals an **urgent end-times letter**—warning the faithful remnant to separate from those who **deny Jesus Christ**, who twist doctrine, and who prepare the world for the coming Man of Sin.

In this essay, we will examine 2 John in detail—verse by verse—unpacking its **physical, doctrinal, and prophetic meanings**, and exploring how the **spirit of Antichrist** applies to both **our present age** and the **Tribulation to come**.

I. The Author and Audience: John to the Elect Lady (2 John 1–2)

“The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth...”

(2 John 1:1)

John, calling himself “the elder,” writes not to a church or a man, but to **“the elect lady and her children.”** This phrase has caused much speculation:

- Is the elect lady an actual woman?
- A symbolic figure representing a local church?
- A prophetic figure representing **Israel or the faithful remnant?**

When rightly divided, we understand that “elect” is a term **often used for Israel** (Isa. 45:4, Matt. 24:22), and the metaphor of a **woman and her children** is also used of **Zion and her people** (Isa. 66:7–9, Gal. 4:26). Therefore, doctrinally, this lady likely represents **faithful Israel**, or more specifically, the **Tribulation remnant**, scattered and under pressure, yet striving to walk in truth and love.

John opens with affection: *“whom I love in the truth.”* This echoes his repeated themes from 1 John—**truth and love are inseparable**, and both are the only means by which the faithful can stand against deception.

“...and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; for the truth’s sake...”

(v. 1–2)

Here, the spiritual unity of believers is not based in institution or ritual, but **truth**. This sets the tone: **truth is the dividing line**, and those who leave it—**deceivers and antichrists**—must be exposed.

II. Grace, Mercy, and Peace—But Only in Truth (2 John 3)

“Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ... in truth and love.”

(v. 3)

Unlike Paul, who extends grace and peace unconditionally, John **ties these blessings to truth and love.**

- **Grace** – not license to sin, but divine empowerment.
- **Mercy** – not universal forgiveness, but covenantal compassion.
- **Peace** – not worldly comfort, but inner assurance amid tribulation.

These blessings are not promised to **those outside of truth.** This is critical. The world preaches false unity; John preaches **separation based on doctrine.**

III. Walking in Truth and Obedience (2 John 4–6)

“I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth...”

(v. 4)

John’s joy is not based in numbers, influence, or emotion. It’s based on **faithful obedience.** This verse implies:

- Some of the elect lady’s “children” remain in the truth,
- Others may have wandered or fallen under deception.

The standard is **“as we have received a commandment from the Father.”** John is grounding truth not in philosophy or personal conviction, but in **the revealed Word of God.**

“And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment...”

(v. 5)

This “commandment” is love—**not a sentimental emotion,** but a **commanded action** rooted in truth.

“And this is love, that we walk after his commandments.”

(v. 6)

Here, John **destroys the false dichotomy** between love and obedience. In today’s world, love is often used to excuse disobedience. But John says:

“Love = walking in truth.”

In the Tribulation, this will be vital. As the world unites under a false “love” and a global religion, the remnant must:

- Hold fast to truth,

- Practice biblical love,
- Obey the commandments (Revelation 12:17, 14:12).

IV. Many Deceivers Are Entered into the World (2 John 7)

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.”

This verse ties directly into 1 John 4:3:

“Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God...”

John identifies the **doctrine of Antichrist** as a denial of **Jesus Christ’s incarnation**. This has layers of meaning:

- **Historically**, Gnostics denied that Jesus had a physical body.
- **Doctrinally**, modern cults deny the deity or humanity of Christ.
- **Prophetically**, the Antichrist will promote a **false Christ**, and deny the true Jesus (Revelation 13:11–14).

“This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”

This matches Paul’s warning:

“Another Jesus, another spirit, another gospel...”
(2 Cor. 11:4)

And Jesus’ own words:

“For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”
(Matt. 24:5)

John is not dealing with minor doctrinal disagreements. He is dealing with:

- **Counterfeit Christianity,**
- **Doctrines of devils** (1 Tim. 4:1),
- **The spiritual advance team of the Antichrist.**

V. Look to Yourselves – That Ye Lose Not (2 John 8)

“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.”

This is one of the strongest warnings in the New Testament. John implies:

- **Salvation and reward are not guaranteed** if one falls into deception,
- **Something can be lost** through doctrinal compromise,
- The stakes are **eternal**, not just temporal.

Rightly divided, this is not a Church Age warning about loss of salvation. Paul assures us that the Body of Christ is **sealed and secure** (Eph. 1:13). But for the **Tribulation remnant**, holding fast is essential.

Compare with:

“Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”
(Rev. 3:11)

And:

“He that endureth to the end shall be saved.”
(Matt. 24:13)

The warning is to **remain in truth**, because deception is deadly.

VI. Transgresseth and Abideth Not – No God (2 John 9)

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.”

Here’s the sharp sword of division. John says that **if you do not abide in Christ’s doctrine—you do not have God**. Period.

This contradicts:

- Ecumenical unity,
- Interfaith tolerance,
- Emotion-based Christianity.

“...he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”

In the Tribulation, the dividing line will be clear:

- **Abide in the doctrine of Christ**, and be preserved,

- **Depart from it**, and align with Antichrist.

There will be **no gray area**. That's why this warning is urgent.

VII. Receive Him Not Into Your House (2 John 10–11)

“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed...”

This is a **command for separation**, not hospitality. John is not being unkind—he is being **protective**.

Why?

- False teachers **corrupt households** (2 Tim. 3:6),
- They **entice the unstable**,
- They **spread spiritual disease**.

“For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

This is sobering. If you support, promote, or even bless a false teacher, **you share in his sin**.

Today, many Christians:

- Platform false teachers for the sake of unity,
- Promote deceivers because they “do some good,”
- Call wolves “misguided brothers.”

But John says: **Do not welcome them. Do not bless them. Do not aid them.**

Why?

Because in the last days, **truth is life, and error is death**.

VIII. I Have Many Things to Write... Face to Face (2 John 12–13)

John closes with warmth:

“Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink...”

Even in the midst of warning, John values **personal connection**. In the Tribulation, scattered believers may cling to letters, hidden Scriptures, or brief encounters with other faithful. John's epistle reflects the **urgency and intimacy** of these interactions.

“The children of thy elect sister greet thee.”

This closing remark strengthens the interpretation that “the elect lady” represents a **faithful community**, possibly even a remnant assembly of Jews enduring the fires of the last days.

Conclusion: Antichrists Then and Now—But the Final One is Coming

2 John is short, sharp, and potent. It may be one of the most concentrated end-time warnings in the New Testament. When rightly divided, it becomes a doctrinal survival letter for the remnant who will:

- **Face spiritual deception,**
- **Need to separate from false teachers,**
- **Be tempted by counterfeit love and false unity,**
- **And must hold fast to the doctrine of Christ.**

For the Church Age believer, there is **devotional and practical wisdom** here:

- **Stand on truth**, not emotion,
- **Test every spirit** by the Word,
- **Love the brethren**, but never at the expense of doctrine,
- **Do not enable false teaching** under the banner of kindness.

But for the remnant in the Tribulation, the stakes are even higher.

Antichrists are already here.

But the final one is coming.

Let all who read this letter—now or in the future—heed its call:

“Abide in the doctrine of Christ.”

Because in the end... that will be the line between life and death.

17 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Diotrephes vs. Demetrius: Church vs. Remnant Leadership (3 John)

Introduction: Two Men, Two Models, Two Ministries

The shortest book in the Bible by word count is 3 John, but don't let its brevity fool you—it packs a powerful punch. In just 14 verses, the Apostle John reveals a tension that mirrors the tension across dispensations: **self-serving leadership vs. servant-hearted faithfulness, Church-centered authority vs. Tribulation-enduring remnancy.**

This letter, addressed to Gaius, introduces two contrasting figures—**Diotrephes**, who loves to have the preeminence, and **Demetrius**, who has a good report of all. These two men symbolize two kinds of leadership, not only in John's day but in the future Tribulation, where leadership will once again be a life-or-death matter.

When rightly divided, 3 John serves as more than a personal encouragement. It's a prophetic and doctrinal warning: in the last days, leadership will either reflect the **spirit of Christ** or the **spirit of Antichrist**. This short epistle becomes a window into the contrast between **Church Age patterns of oversight** and **Remnant survival-based leadership**, and it shows how the spirit of Diotrephes will likely thrive in apostate systems while the spirit of Demetrius will be persecuted and preserved for glory.

I. The Elder Unto the Wellbeloved Gaius (3 John 1)

“The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.”

John opens with pastoral tenderness and clarity. He does not call himself an apostle—he calls himself an elder. This term suggests maturity, experience, and spiritual oversight. While Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus emphasize pastoral qualifications for the Church, John's use here is more **personal and relational**.

Gaius is “wellbeloved” and “loved in the truth.” That phrase—*in the truth*—reminds us again that **love without truth is counterfeit**, and **truth without love is sterile**. John unites both.

This opening tells us:

- Leadership must be grounded in **truth**, not personality.
- Relationships must be built on **spiritual integrity**, not hierarchy.

- John is mentoring Gaius as an example of **future remnant leadership**: relational, humble, doctrinally sound.

II. A Prayer for Prosperity—Of the Soul First (3 John 2)

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

This verse is often hijacked by prosperity preachers, but John is not teaching the health-and-wealth gospel. He’s drawing a parallel between **external well-being** and **internal prosperity**.

- Gaius is spiritually rich.
- John simply prays his **bodily condition matches his soul’s condition**.

This is relevant to the Tribulation remnant, who may suffer physically, emotionally, and materially, but still **flourish spiritually**. In an age of deprivation and persecution, the soul’s health will be the mark of a true leader.

III. Walking in Truth—The Joy of Spiritual Integrity (3 John 3–4)

“I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee...”

Gaius’ testimony is confirmed by **others**, not self-promotion. Real leadership doesn’t promote itself—it is confirmed by **fruit** and **reputation among the brethren**.

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

This verse reveals John’s spiritual fatherhood. Gaius is a spiritual son, and John’s joy is seeing truth **not just believed**, but **lived**.

This principle applies to both Church Age elders and Tribulation remnant guides:

- Sound leaders walk in truth,
- Prioritize obedience over influence,
- And disciple others through example, not ego.

IV. Gaius’s Hospitality and Faithfulness (3 John 5–6)

“Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers...”

Hospitality in the early church and especially in **persecuted Jewish communities** was not just nice—it was **critical**. Traveling preachers, prophets, and teachers depended on the kindness of faithful believers.

“Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church...”

The word “church” here refers more broadly to a gathered assembly—likely of **Jewish believers**. This epistle, like 2 John, is not Pauline in tone or structure. It fits within John’s ministry to the **circumcision**, reinforcing its **doctrinal relevance to the Tribulation remnant**.

In the future, hospitality will be a matter of life and death:

“I was a stranger, and ye took me in...”

(Matthew 25:35)

“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

(Hebrews 13:2)

Gaius’ love and charity mark him as **a prototype of the faithful remnant leader**, who provides for God’s messengers when the world cuts them off.

V. Fellowhelpers to the Truth (3 John 7–8)

“Because that for his name’s sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.”

True ministers serve for **Christ’s name**, not for **financial gain**. The false teachers of the last days, like Balaam, will run greedily after reward. But John affirms that **authentic ministry walks by faith**.

“We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.”

In the Church Age, this means supporting missionaries and pastors in sound doctrine.

In the Tribulation, this means:

- Sheltering the persecuted,
- Providing for the 144,000 (Rev. 7:4),
- Aiding the witnesses (Rev. 11:3),

- And standing with those who preach the everlasting gospel (Rev. 14:6).

Gaius is not a preacher, but a **fellowhelper**—and his role is equally vital. The remnant will depend on such men and women.

VI. Diotrephes – The Self-Exalting Antitype (3 John 9–10)

“I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.”

Now enters the villain.

Diotrephes is:

- Power-hungry (“loveth to have the preeminence”),
- Rebellious (“receiveth us not”),
- Accusatory (“prating against us with malicious words”),
- Authoritarian (“casteth [the brethren] out of the church”).

This man embodies **apostate leadership**. He is the early shadow of what will become **the final religious system—Mystery Babylon, the harlot who rides the Beast** (Revelation 17).

Diotrephes is the **Jezebel of church government**—demanding loyalty, silencing dissent, and **excluding the faithful**.

Let’s break down his characteristics:

1. Preeminence

This spirit is diametrically opposed to Christ:

“Let this mind be in you... who made himself of no reputation...”
(Phil. 2:5–7)

Diotrephes exalts himself. The remnant must flee such leaders, for the Antichrist himself will exalt and magnify himself above all (2 Thess. 2:4).

2. Rejection of Apostolic Authority

Diotrephes does not “receive us”—that is, he rejects the very authority of John. This matches what Paul says in 2 Tim. 4:3:

“They shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.”

3. Malicious Speech

“Prating against us with malicious words...”

He isn't silent—he's slanderous. The final apostate system will slander the saints (Rev. 13:6) and blaspheme heaven.

4. Excommunicating the Faithful

“...casteth them out of the church.”

This is chilling. The faithful remnant will be **kicked out** of organized religion. Today, this happens subtly. In the Tribulation, it will be **public and deadly**.

VII. John's Warning and Apostolic Confrontation (3 John 10)

“Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds...”

John is ready to confront Diotrephes—not with speculation, but with **bold rebuke**. This shows:

- Apostolic leadership **confronts false leadership**,
- Sound doctrine must be defended with clarity,
- Remnant leaders must be willing to stand against false brethren.

This is critical for the Tribulation remnant: **False leadership will be one of their greatest threats**. They must **reject Diotrephes** and follow faithful shepherds like Gaius and Demetrius.

VIII. Follow Not That Which Is Evil (3 John 11)

“Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good.”

The principle here is spiritual discernment:

- Don't follow power—follow fruit.
- Don't follow numbers—follow truth.
- Don't follow titles—follow Christlikeness.

“He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.”

In the Church Age, salvation is by grace through faith. But in the Tribulation, faith is **proven through obedience** (Revelation 14:12). The one who “doeth evil” in rebellion and alliance with Antichrist is not of God.

This verse echoes John’s other writings:

- *“He that committeth sin is of the devil.”* (1 John 3:8)
- *“He that loveth not knoweth not God.”* (1 John 4:8)

IX. Demetrius – The Model of Godly Leadership (3 John 12)

“Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself...”

Demetrius is the anti-Diotrephes.

He is:

- Approved by others,
- Approved by the Word,
- Approved by apostolic witness.

“...yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true.”

This is more than personality—it’s **proven testimony**.

Demetrius represents:

- **Humble leadership,**
- **Visible integrity,**
- **Faithfulness under fire.**

In the Tribulation, these leaders will be rare, but essential. The remnant must seek them, support them, and imitate them.

X. Conclusion: Diotrephes and Demetrius – A Prophetic Portrait

3 John presents two men, but they represent two systems:

Diotrephes	Demetrius
Self-promoting	God-honoring
Rejects apostolic authority	Welcomes the truth
Uses malicious speech	Has a good report
Casts out the faithful	Welcomes the brethren
Mirrors the spirit of Antichrist	Mirrors the spirit of Christ
Will thrive in the apostate church	Will thrive among the remnant

In every generation, and especially in the last days, these two models appear. One leads to **control, deception, and destruction**. The other leads to **life, love, and truth**.

To the Church, the lesson is clear:

- **Support leaders who love the truth,**
- **Call out Diotrephes-like behavior,**
- **Walk in humility and discernment.**

To the Tribulation remnant, the stakes are higher:

- **Reject the false shepherds,** even at risk of death,
- **Cling to the faithful witnesses,**
- **Fellowship in truth, even if scattered and hidden.**

John ends with a warm touch:

“But I trust I shall shortly see thee...”

(v. 14)

The faithful remnant will one day be gathered—either in secret, in small gatherings during persecution, or ultimately at **the return of the King**.

Until then, they must choose:

Diotrephes or Demetrius. Church corruption or remnant purity. False preeminence or faithful perseverance.

18 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – The Spirit, the Water, and the Blood: Deep Typology Unveiled

Introduction: Three That Bear Witness – One Profound Truth

Among the most cryptic and deeply symbolic verses in the entire New Testament is found in John's first epistle:

“For there are three that bear record in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.”

(1 John 5:8)

This verse—nestled in a passage about believing in the Son of God, eternal life, and overcoming the world—has puzzled and inspired Bible students for centuries. Why these three? What is their connection? And more importantly, what **doctrinal, devotional, and prophetic truths** are concealed within them?

When rightly divided, this triad becomes more than poetry—it reveals a **timeline of redemptive typology**, a **warning for the Tribulation remnant**, and a **treasure trove of revelation** for the Body of Christ. The Spirit, the water, and the blood together testify to the full work of God through **regeneration, cleansing, and atonement**.

This essay explores the typological, doctrinal, and prophetic significance of these three witnesses. As we will see, they not only point back to the ministry of Jesus Christ but also forward to the ministry of the Holy Ghost during the Tribulation and the eternal testimony of God's truth.

I. Context: The Doctrinal Foundation in 1 John 5

1 John 5 is built around **three interwoven themes**:

1. **Belief in Jesus Christ** as the Son of God (v. 1),
2. **Victory over the world** through faith (v. 4–5),
3. **God's witness** that authenticates Jesus' divine mission (v. 6–10).

John declares that belief in Christ is not subjective—it's **testified and proven**:

“This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.”

(1 John 5:6)

John is not simply making a theological point—he’s **refuting heresy**, namely the Gnostic idea that Jesus was not fully man, or that “the Christ” came upon him at baptism and left him before the cross. John declares that Christ’s ministry was marked by **three validating witnesses**:

- **Water** – His baptism,
- **Blood** – His crucifixion,
- **Spirit** – The Holy Ghost’s ongoing testimony.

Verse 8 affirms these three “bear record in earth,” while verse 7 (preserved in the KJV) reveals the **Trinitarian witness in heaven**.

But we must go deeper. Let us examine each element individually and then as a unified whole.

II. The Water – Cleansing, Baptism, and the Word

1. Jesus’ Baptism: The Beginning of His Earthly Ministry

Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist—not because He needed cleansing, but to **fulfill all righteousness** (Matt. 3:15). This marked:

- The **inauguration of His public ministry**,
- The **identification with repentant Israel**,
- The **approval of the Father** and the **coming of the Spirit** (Matt. 3:16–17).

In typology, **water** represents:

- **Cleansing** (Lev. 14:8),
- **The Word of God** (Eph. 5:26),
- **Spiritual washing** (Titus 3:5),
- **Obedience and submission** (2 Kings 5:14, Naaman).

In Christ’s ministry, the water bore witness that He was:

- The **obedient Servant**,
- The **true Israelite**,
- The **fulfiller of all law and prophecy**.

2. Water and the Word

Water also represents the **Word of God**:

“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.”
(Eph. 5:26)

For the Tribulation remnant, the water becomes a symbol of:

- **Cleansing through the Word** during great deception,
- **Refusing the polluted waters** of Babylon (Rev. 17:1, the whore sits on many waters),
- **Being sanctified by prophetic Scripture.**

3. Prophetic Fulfillment

Water will bear witness in the end times through:

- **Righteous Gentiles and Jews refusing the spiritual defilement** of the Beast system,
- **Purification rituals** possibly reappearing in the Millennial Temple (Ezek. 36:25–27),
- **Testimony of the Word of God** overcoming the lies of the Antichrist.

III. The Blood – Atonement, Sacrifice, and Prophetic Warning

1. Christ’s Blood: The Ultimate Testimony

The blood of Jesus is **not just a symbol—it’s the substance** of redemption:

“Without shedding of blood is no remission.”
(Heb. 9:22)

At His crucifixion, Jesus’ blood confirmed:

- His **innocence**,
- His **identity as the Lamb of God**,
- The **fulfillment of all Old Testament types.**

2. Blood in the Tabernacle and Temple

The entire Levitical system was a **shadow** of what Jesus fulfilled:

- The blood of bulls and goats covered sin temporarily (Lev. 16:14–15),
- Jesus’ blood removes sin permanently (Heb. 10:4, 10:12).

Thus, the **blood bears witness** in earth through:

- **Historical typology,**
- **Christ’s crucifixion,**
- **The ongoing spiritual warfare over the blood** (modern Bible versions removing “through his blood” – Col. 1:14).

3. Blood in the Tribulation and Millennium

Blood reemerges in **two future contexts**:

- **Tribulation martyrs**, whose blood cries out from under the altar (Rev. 6:10),
- **Millennial offerings**, which include sin offerings (Ezek. 45:17–20).

These are **not salvific** but **memorial**—bearing witness to the **eternal necessity** of Christ’s blood and God’s holiness.

For the remnant, the blood is a **warning**: salvation is not by works, but by **testimony of the Lamb** (Rev. 12:11).

IV. The Spirit – The Comforter, the Teacher, the Witness

1. The Spirit at Jesus’ Baptism and Ministry

At Jesus’ baptism, the Spirit descended like a dove, identifying Christ as **the Anointed One** (Luke 3:22). The Spirit:

- Led Him into the wilderness (Luke 4:1),
- Empowered His miracles (Matt. 12:28),
- Raised Him from the dead (Rom. 8:11).

Thus, the Spirit bears witness **through Christ** and **to Christ**.

2. The Spirit in the Church Age

Paul teaches that:

- We are **sealed by the Spirit** (Eph. 1:13),

- The Spirit **bears witness** with our spirit (Rom. 8:16),
- He is the **earnest** of our inheritance (Eph. 1:14).

In the Church Age, the Spirit:

- **Indwells the believer** permanently,
- **Illuminates the Word**,
- **Produces fruit** (Gal. 5:22–23).

3. The Spirit in the Tribulation

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”
(Rev. 2–3)

But after Revelation 3, the **Church is gone**, and the Spirit’s role shifts:

- **No longer indwelling all believers**, but **empowering specific witnesses** (Rev. 11:3),
- **Bringing conviction**, yet **allowing mass deception** (2 Thess. 2:7–11),
- Preparing Israel to **mourn for the pierced One** (Zech. 12:10).

The Spirit remains active, but His **function returns to a more Old Testament role**—selective, prophetic, and powerful.

V. Typological Summary: Three That Bear Record in Earth

Each of these witnesses—Spirit, water, and blood—bear record **in a timeline**:

Witness	Beginning	Middle	End/Tribulation
Water	Baptism of Christ	Cleansing through the Word	Remnant purification
Blood	Crucifixion	Atonement through faith	Martyrs and Millennial ritual
Spirit	Descends like a dove	Church Age sealing, teaching	Remnant conviction & witnesses

And all three converge at the **cross**—the **eternal pivot point** of human history:

- Water flowed from Jesus’ side (John 19:34),

- Blood was shed for sin,
- The Spirit commended His soul (Luke 23:46).

VI. The Heavenly Record and the Earthly Agreement

“There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

(1 John 5:7 – KJV)

This verse, omitted in many modern Bibles, is **the strongest Trinitarian verse in Scripture**. The heavenly record is **eternal, perfect, and unified**.

But the **earthly record**—Spirit, water, blood—is God’s **historical and prophetic verification** of that divine truth.

Together, they form:

- A **heavenly testimony of identity**, and
- An **earthly testimony of mission**.

John is assuring the remnant that they can believe in Jesus because the **witness is established in both heaven and earth**.

VII. Prophetic Application – A Warning for the Remnant

In the Tribulation, the remnant will face:

- A **false prophet who mimics the Spirit** (Rev. 13:13),
- A **counterfeit baptism** into a new world order (Rev. 17:1),
- A **blasphemous blood ritual system** (Rev. 16:6).

The Antichrist’s regime will **counterfeit** all three witnesses:

True Witness	Counterfeit in Tribulation
Spirit	False prophet with lying wonders
Water	False purification through unity & submission

True Witness	Counterfeit in Tribulation
Blood	Blood of martyrs spilled in persecution

Thus, the **remnant must cling to the true witnesses**, not counterfeit experiences or apostate religion.

VIII. Devotional Application – What the Three Witnesses Mean for Us Today

For the Body of Christ, these three still bear record:

- The **Spirit** indwells and teaches us,
- The **water** cleanses us through the Word,
- The **blood** justifies and sanctifies us eternally.

Every believer should:

- Trust the **blood** alone for salvation (Rom. 5:9),
- Walk in the **Spirit**, not the flesh (Gal. 5:16),
- Wash in the **water of the Word** daily (Ps. 119:9, Eph. 5:26).

These witnesses guide us into **truth**, away from error, and prepare us for the **coming of Christ**.

IX. The Danger of Removing the Witnesses

In our modern era, all three of these witnesses are under attack:

1. **The Spirit** – misrepresented by emotionalism and false signs.
2. **The Water** – watered down in corrupt Bible versions.
3. **The Blood** – denied, redefined, or removed entirely in doctrine and translations.

Churches today are silencing the very witnesses that validate truth.

To remove these is to **deny the testimony of God**, and to set the stage for the **deception of Antichrist**.

Conclusion: These Three Agree in One

“And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.”

(1 John 5:8)

They agree in one purpose, one voice, one testimony: **Jesus Christ is the Son of God**, the Savior of the world, the Lamb of God, the soon-coming King.

- The **Spirit** says, “Believe Him.”
- The **Water** says, “Be cleansed by Him.”
- The **Blood** says, “He died for you.”

To the Tribulation remnant, this verse is a **lifeline of doctrine**, a **beacon of discernment**, and a **call to faithfulness**.

To the Church today, it is a **reminder to abide in truth**, walk in the Spirit, cleanse with the Word, and never forsake the blood.

In heaven and in earth, the record is settled.

19 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Contending for the Faith: A Remnant’s Final Stand (Jude 1–11)

Introduction: Jude’s Urgent Call to Arms

The book of Jude is one of the most sobering epistles in the New Testament. Though brief, it unleashes a torrent of warnings, historical examples, and prophetic insights. Jude begins with the intent to write about the “common salvation,” but is divinely compelled to pivot:

“It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith...”

(Jude 1:3)

This shift is no accident. It reflects a **spiritual emergency**. Apostasy is rising. Deceivers are creeping in unnoticed. And the faith—the body of doctrine once delivered to the saints—is under assault. Jude’s letter is not just for first-century believers, but prophetically aimed at a **future remnant** who will be surrounded by compromise, deception, and judgment.

When rightly divided, Jude’s epistle becomes a **field manual for spiritual war**. It equips the Tribulation remnant to stand strong in a collapsing world, and exhorts today’s Church to **guard the truth and warn others**.

This essay explores Jude 1–11, exposing the tactics of apostasy, the prophetic parallels to the last days, and the righteous resolve required to **contend for the faith**.

I. The Servant of Jesus Christ – Jude’s Humble Authority (Jude 1:1)

“Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James...”

Jude does not flaunt his biological connection to Jesus (as a half-brother), but rather appeals to **spiritual authority**—a servant of Christ.

This opening echoes Paul and Peter, who also referred to themselves as **servants (doulos)**, emphasizing:

- Humility,
- Submission,
- Total allegiance.

“...to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.”

This threefold description is beautiful:

1. **Sanctified** – Set apart by the Father,
2. **Preserved** – Protected in Jesus Christ,
3. **Called** – Invited and assigned a mission.

For the Church, these truths affirm eternal security. But for the Tribulation remnant, they become the **source of courage**—God’s sovereign work surrounds their efforts to contend.

II. Mercy, Peace, and Love – Multiplied in Crisis (Jude 1:2)

Jude’s greeting offers three spiritual gifts:

- **Mercy** – For those surrounded by judgment.
- **Peace** – Amid spiritual confusion.
- **Love** – To strengthen unity and faithfulness.

Notice Jude prays these be “**multiplied.**” Why? Because the remnant will need them in **supernatural measures.**

In the Tribulation:

- Mercy will sustain them through persecution,
- Peace will anchor them amid chaos,
- Love will hold the faithful together.

III. Contend for the Faith – A Final Stand for Truth (Jude 1:3)

“...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

This is the heartbeat of Jude’s epistle.

1. What is “the faith”?

It is:

- **The entire body of revealed truth**—not just belief, but doctrine,
- **Scripture rightly divided,**
- **The gospel of grace,** the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the blood atonement, the second coming.

2. “Once delivered” – Complete and Unchanging

The faith has been delivered **once**—it does not evolve.

- No new revelations,
- No shifting doctrines,
- No postmodern updates.

This stands in contrast to:

- **False prophets** who claim new truth,
- **Cults** that add extra books,
- **Modern scholars** who revise or dilute.

3. “Earnestly contend” – Spiritual Warfare

The Greek word *epagonizomai* means to **agonize for**—to wrestle, to fight earnestly.

This is not passive apologetics. It's **combat against creeping apostasy**.

For the Tribulation remnant, contending is not academic—it's survival.

IV. Certain Men Crept In – The Rise of Apostasy (Jude 1:4)

“For there are certain men crept in unawares...”

This phrase echoes Paul's warnings in Acts 20:29–30 and Galatians 2:4. Apostasy never knocks on the front door. It sneaks in.

These men are:

- **Ungodly,**
- **Turning grace into lasciviousness,**
- **Denying the only Lord God.**

1. They Abuse Grace

They turn the doctrine of grace into license for sin:

- *“God loves me as I am...”*
- *“We're not under law...”*
- *“Doctrine divides; love unites.”*

But they use grace to justify rebellion, immorality, and compromise.

2. They Deny the Lordship of Christ

This is not necessarily atheism—it's **deceitful redefinition**:

- Making Jesus a mere prophet,
- Making Him a social revolutionary,
- Stripping Him of His deity and authority.

This parallels **modern ecumenical movements**, preparing the world to receive a **false Christ**.

V. Apostasy's Past Patterns – Judgment as a Warning (Jude 1:5–7)

Jude now unleashes three Old Testament judgments to warn of **what happens to apostasy**.

1. Israel's Unbelief (v. 5)

"The Lord... saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."

Despite miracles and deliverance, the wilderness generation perished because of **unbelief**.

Apostasy is not always outright rebellion—it's often **faithlessness** disguised as spirituality.

2. Fallen Angels (v. 6)

"The angels which kept not their first estate... he hath reserved in everlasting chains..."

These are likely the **sons of God from Genesis 6**, who cohabited with human women.

Their sin was:

- **Rebellion** against created order,
- **Perverting flesh** and spiritual boundaries,
- **Interfering with God's redemptive line.**

This connects directly to **end-times hybridization**, **Nephilim theories**, and **demonic deception**—a major element in the Tribulation.

3. Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 7)

"Giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh..."

Sodom's sins were:

- Sexual immorality,
- Perversion,
- Hostility toward the righteous.

Modern society mirrors this—legitimizing every sin and demonizing biblical morality.

These three examples show that God judges:

- **Unbelief** (Israel),
- **Spiritual rebellion** (angels),

- **Moral perversion** (Sodom).

VI. Apostate Characteristics – Six Marks of the Damned (Jude 1:8–11)

Jude now turns to describe the nature of apostates—both in his day and in the future Tribulation.

1. Filthy Dreamers (v. 8)

“Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh...”

They live in fantasy—moral and doctrinal delusion:

- Visions and dreams that contradict Scripture,
- Prosperity gospels,
- “New revelations” divorced from truth.

2. Despise Dominion

They reject **biblical authority**—pastors, the Word of God, and Christ Himself.

The Antichrist will embody this spirit—exalting himself above all (2 Thess. 2:4).

3. Speak Evil of Dignities

They blaspheme angels, pastors, and even God. They mock what they don’t understand and **exalt self as final authority**.

Compare this with Michael the archangel (v. 9), who wouldn’t even rail against Satan without invoking the Lord’s rebuke.

This contrast teaches the remnant to **speak with restraint, stay humble**, and let God fight the battle.

4. Brute Beasts (v. 10)

“What they know naturally... they corrupt themselves.”

They are instinct-driven, not Spirit-led.

Their morality is animalistic—if it feels good, do it. They’re governed by flesh, not faith.

5. The Way of Cain (v. 11)

Cain represents:

- **Self-made religion,**
- **Jealousy and murder,**
- **Rejection of God’s prescribed way** (a blood offering).

Modern apostates follow Cain when they:

- Trust works over faith,
- Envy true believers,
- Silently “murder” sound doctrine with their influence.

6. The Error of Balaam

Balaam was a prophet for hire.

- He sold out truth for money,
- Used spiritual gifts for personal gain,
- Led Israel into compromise (Rev. 2:14).

Today’s Balaams fill pulpits and platforms:

- Preaching self-help over Scripture,
- Refusing to preach repentance,
- Leading people into mixture with the world.

7. The Gainsaying of Core (Korah)

Korah led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron in Numbers 16.

He resented:

- **God-ordained authority,**
- **The structure God gave His people.**

God opened the earth to swallow Korah and his followers.

The remnant will need to **separate from Korah’s crowd**, even when they claim to speak for God.

VII. Prophetic Parallels – Tribulation and the Apostate Church

Each of these traits and judgments will reappear in the last days:

Apostate Characteristic	Tribulation Fulfillment
Cain – false religion	False prophet and one-world worship
Balaam – greedy prophet	Religious leaders supporting Antichrist
Korah – rebellion	Apostate Israel rejecting the remnant

Revelation 17's "Mystery Babylon" will embody all these sins:

- A harlot religion,
- Drunk with the blood of saints,
- Aligned with political power.

Jude's letter warns the remnant: **these patterns are not new**, but they are rising again.

Conclusion: Contending is Not Optional – It's Survival

Jude opens with grace and ends with warfare.

For the Church today:

- Contending means guarding doctrine,
- Refusing false unity,
- Standing alone if necessary.

For the Tribulation remnant:

- Contending means staying pure under persecution,
- Resisting the mark and deception,
- Trusting God's promises even unto death.

Jude's epistle is a final cry before judgment—a call to:

- **Remember the past** (v. 5–7),
- **Discern the present** (v. 8–11),
- **Fight for the future** (v. 3).

As apostasy rises and deception floods the earth, we must remember:

“The faith... was once delivered.”

It does not evolve. It does not bend. It does not fail.

The remnant must stand.

The Church must awaken.

The Lord is coming.

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling...”

(Jude 1:24)

20 of 20: Peter, James, and John – Rightly Divided – Enoch’s Prophecy, Apostasy, and the Lord’s Return (Jude 12–25)

Introduction: From Enoch to Eternity – Jude’s Final Cry

In the opening of his brief yet explosive epistle, Jude warned the faithful to “earnestly contend for the faith.” By the end, he unveils the ultimate reason why: **the Lord is coming to judge all ungodliness.**

“Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.”

(Jude 14)

Jude’s epistle is both a retrospective look at apostasy throughout history and a prophetic revelation of what will escalate in the final days. The letter concludes by revisiting the sins of false teachers and apostates, revealing the words of the ancient prophet Enoch, and giving comfort and instruction to the remnant.

These final verses (Jude 12–25) are a **doctrinal handbook, a devotional treasure, and a prophetic roadmap.** They affirm that despite the rising darkness, **God will preserve a remnant,** He will judge the ungodly, and **He will return to establish righteousness.**

This essay explores Jude’s powerful closing, rightly dividing it according to its **Church Age insights** and **Tribulation application,** and showing how it equips both believers today and the remnant tomorrow.

I. The Character of Apostates – Hidden Dangers and Public Wreckage (Jude 12–13)

Jude begins this section by using vivid metaphors to describe false teachers:

“These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear...”

1. Spots in Your Feasts

In the early church, believers gathered for “love feasts” (agape feasts) followed by the Lord’s Supper. Apostates crept into these gatherings, bringing:

- Doctrinal corruption,
- Moral impurity,
- Spiritual pollution.

They are **blemishes**, marring the purity of Christian fellowship. In the Tribulation, similar figures will infiltrate the underground remnant gatherings.

2. Feeding Themselves Without Fear

They are **self-serving**, showing no reverence for God or regard for the flock. Paul warned of these in Acts 20:29–30—wolves among the sheep.

3. Cloud Metaphors: Emptiness and Unreliability

“Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds...”

Clouds without water are **promises without fulfillment**. Winds represent **doctrinal instability** (Eph. 4:14). These men talk a lot, but bring no refreshing truth.

“Trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots...”

They may have once seemed fruitful, but they are now **spiritually dead**, disconnected from life. “Twice dead” may imply **physical and spiritual death**, or **death in this age and the next**.

4. Raging Waves and Wandering Stars

“Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.”

These are not just sinners—they are **spiritual hurricanes**, **moral tsunamis**, and **wandering stars**, perhaps symbolizing **fallen angels** (Job 38:7, Rev. 12:4).

Their destiny is terrifying: **eternal darkness**.

II. Enoch's Prophecy – Judgment at the Second Coming (Jude 14–15)

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these...”

Jude references an ancient prophecy from Enoch—a man who walked with God and was translated (Gen. 5:24), a type of the **Church being raptured** before judgment.

Jude quotes Enoch's prophecy directly:

“Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints...”

This is a Second Coming verse, not the Rapture. Christ returns with His saints to **execute judgment**. This judgment is:

- **Public** – “to convince all,”
- **Comprehensive** – “all that are ungodly,”
- **Specific** – “their ungodly deeds... hard speeches...”

The Lord's return is not gentle for apostates. It is a **storm of righteous vengeance**.

1. The Church Returns with Him

Compare Revelation 19:14:

“And the armies which were in heaven followed him... clothed in fine linen...”

These “ten thousands of saints” include the raptured Church.

2. The Remnant Is Preserved on Earth

While the Lord returns with His saints, the **Jewish remnant is preserved** through the Tribulation and witnesses His descent (Zech. 12:10; Rev. 1:7).

Enoch's prophecy is **ancient**, but it speaks to **future events**, affirming the Bible's supernatural authorship.

III. More Marks of Apostates – Speech and Selfishness (Jude 16)

“These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts...”

Their mouths reveal their hearts:

- **Murmuring** – like Israel in the wilderness (Num. 14),
- **Complaining** – against God's ways, Word, or providence,

- **Lust-driven** – not Spirit-led.

“Their mouth speaketh great swelling words...”

Like the Antichrist (Dan. 7:8), they use **impressive speech** to deceive.

“...having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.”

They **flatter** to manipulate—especially for power, influence, or survival.

In the Tribulation, such leaders will likely align with the Beast to preserve their position, betraying the faithful.

IV. The Remnant’s Reminder – Remember What Was Spoken (Jude 17–19)

“But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before...”

The antidote to apostasy is **memory of the Word**.

“There should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.”

This quote references 2 Peter 3:3. The apostles warned that **mockers would arise**, denying:

- Christ’s return,
- Divine judgment,
- Scriptural authority.

“These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.”

Apostates are **sensual**, i.e., dominated by senses and feelings, not the Spirit.

They cause division—not true Spirit-filled believers, but those who **reject doctrine**.

V. The Remnant’s Response – Build, Pray, Keep, Look (Jude 20–21)

Now Jude turns pastoral, offering four commands:

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith...”

1. Build

Spiritual strength doesn’t come from osmosis. The remnant must **build** on sound doctrine.

- This implies study, meditation, memorization.

- “Most holy faith” refers to the **complete body of truth**.

“Praying in the Holy Ghost...”

2. Pray

The remnant must pray **in the Spirit**, i.e., according to God’s will, led and empowered by Him.

In times of isolation or danger, **Spirit-directed prayer** becomes vital.

“Keep yourselves in the love of God...”

3. Keep

Though God keeps the believer eternally (v. 1, 24), Jude also says **we must keep ourselves** in the **awareness of God’s love**, walking in fellowship.

“Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

4. Look

The remnant must maintain **hope in Christ’s return**. The mercy they look for is not escape from difficulty, but the **eternal deliverance at His coming**.

This also applies to Church Age believers—our “blessed hope” is the Rapture (Titus 2:13).

VI. Ministry in the Midst of Apostasy – Compassion and Courage (Jude 22–23)

“And of some have compassion, making a difference...”

Jude calls for spiritual discernment in evangelism.

There are **two types of apostates**:

1. The Confused – Compassion Needed

These are deceived but reachable. Show **compassion**, patience, and clarity.

2. The Corrupted – Courage Required

“Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire...”

These are in grave danger—perhaps on the brink of full apostasy or judgment. They must be **snatched urgently**, sometimes forcefully.

“...hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”

Even while rescuing others, the remnant must **remain untainted** by sin.

This passage balances **truth and love, courage and caution**.

VII. Jude's Benediction – Kept by God, Presented in Glory (Jude 24–25)

Jude ends with one of the most powerful doxologies in Scripture:

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling...”

Though apostasy abounds, God is able to:

- **Keep** you from falling into deception,
- **Present** you faultless,
- **Rejoice** over you with exceeding joy (Zeph. 3:17).

“To the only wise God our Saviour...”

Jude attributes everything to:

- **God's wisdom,**
- **God's salvation,**
- **God's glory.**

“...be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

This closes Jude's cry with **hope, worship, and confidence**.

VIII. Prophetic and Practical Application: Church and Tribulation

1. To the Church Today

- Beware modern apostasy—masked in relevance, unity, and tolerance.
- Contend for truth, even when alone.
- Build, pray, keep, and look.
- Evangelize with compassion and courage.
- Trust God to keep you and present you.

2. To the Tribulation Remnant

- Stay grounded in prophetic warnings and apostolic truth.
- Watch for Enoch’s prophecy unfolding—judgment is coming.
- Endure amidst deception, betrayal, and persecution.
- Remember the Lord will come, with ten thousands of His saints.
- He will vindicate, avenge, and glorify His faithful.

Conclusion: Jude’s Final Word – Victory is the Lord’s

From the opening command to contend, to the final praise of God’s keeping power, Jude equips believers to stand in the darkest of times.

- Apostates may abound,
- Judgment may be delayed,
- But **the Lord cometh**.

His remnant may be outnumbered, outcast, and outlawed—but they will not be overcome.

Jude’s benediction is their anthem.

His warnings are their defense.

His prophecy is their hope.

So we contend.

We build.

We look up.

And we wait—for Him who is able.

Conclusion: Watchmen on the Edge – The Final Echo of the Apostles

As we close this 20-part journey through the rightly divided writings of Peter, James, John—and Jude—we are left with a sobering clarity: **God’s Word is perfectly ordered, prophetically layered, and divinely timed.** These epistles are not random moral essays. They are the Spirit’s final watchtower cries before the dawn of judgment.

Peter strengthens the scattered remnant, urging them to endure suffering and stay vigilant against false teachers.

James exhorts the twelve tribes to live out faith with action, trusting the Lord’s return.

John declares the truth of Christ with uncompromising love and discernment, drawing

battle lines between light and darkness.

And Jude, like a thunderclap at the edge of Revelation, calls the faithful to **contend**, to **remember**, and to **rescue others with fear**, all while proclaiming the Lord's imminent return with His saints in judgment.

Together, these apostles write not from confusion or contradiction with Paul, but from a **prophetic position**—focused on **Israel's future**, the **time of Jacob's trouble**, and the **final purging fire of the Tribulation**. When rightly divided, their messages pierce through the fog of doctrinal error and reveal God's seamless plan across the dispensations.

For the Church, these books serve as **devotional gold**—refining our character, convicting our conscience, and deepening our discernment. For the Tribulation remnant, they will become **lifelines of instruction**, rallying cries of hope, and maps for navigating a world overtaken by Antichrist and apostasy.

The apostles have spoken. Their voices still echo. And their final word is this:

“Unto him that is able to keep you from falling...”

(Jude 1:24)

That is the anchor of the remnant. That is the hope of the Body. That is the glory of our returning King.