

CB207 The Ends of the World

Solomon wrote the “Song of Solomon,” 3,000 proverbs, and the Book of Ecclesiastes. One verse reads like this:

Ec. 1:9: *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.*

Hath been, shall be, is done, and shall be done describe one of God’s principles; the same events happen repetitiously. *Under the sun* speaks of where these events occur.

Solomon wrote about a singular event. But Paul understood that his singular “thing” represents many events. So then, “no new thing under the sun” speaks of more than one event.

Two parents can beget 7 children. Childbirth happens often, but each child is different. And our next verse shows the “principle of repetition” operating in the scriptures:

1Co. 10:11: *Now all these **things** happened unto **them** for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the **ends of the world** are come.”*

So all first “things” are new, but each repetition is old. Is there an end to these repetitions? Paul said “Yes” when he named them the “*ends of the world*.” If no end is last, the previous ends are ends. Paul didn’t say how many to expect or list the ones he found.

We know the NT does not interpret every OT doctrine. For example, “The City of Transition” teaches how to extract NT revelations from OT scriptures. And the “Doctrine of Safekeeping” teaches how to keep your faith while waiting for your answer.

In mentioning these 2 doctrines, I am not suggesting that we add words to the Bible, [De. 4:2; Re. 22:18]. But we must search the OT for NT doctrines the apostles either didn’t teach or didn’t record. Check out these scriptures concerning doctrine: [1Ti. 5:17; 2Ti. 2:15].

But I digress. The events are of old but after the Cross they became “*ends of the world*.” Concerning Jesus, He fulfilled many ends by His death and resurrection. We fulfill the same ends as we “*follow in His steps*,” [1Pe. 2:21]. We can learn more about His steps by extracting NT doctrines from their old sacrificial offerings.

For any event to become an “*end of the world*” it must begin in the world. It must happen “*under the sun*.” For example, Christ’s death and resurrection was the greatest event in human history.

The 1st event happened in Eden when God put Adam in a deep sleep, [Ge. 2:21]. This “*deep sleep*” depicts Christ’s death; his awakening depicts Christ’s resurrection. Then what Adam said about Eve and himself [Ge. 2:23] shows the two of them

as the one body of Christ, i.e., the Church.

Ge. 2:21: *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, & he slept: & he took one of his ribs, & closed up the flesh instead thereof; **22** And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman,*

The stories of Cain and Abel and the story of Seth repeat this event. Abel represents Christ before the Cross; Cain represents those guilty of Christ’s blood. Seth represents the resurrected Christ:

Ge 4:25: *And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.*

Both events are unique, yet the 2 events repeat the 1st event. All 3 tell the same story. One would need a lot of time to find and count the events that show the repetition of the Cross and Resurrection. One would also need to receive many revelations before starting this count.

Here’s another one: God told Abraham to offer Isaac as a burnt offering, [Ge. 22:2]. Isaac is a symbol of Christ. Abraham built an altar, laid the wood in order, bound Isaac, and laid him on the altar, [Ge. 22:9].

Then an angel stopped the sacrifice and told Abraham to offer a ram instead, [Ge. 22:10-13]. Hebrews 11:19 confirms this story and adds that “*Abraham accounted [believed] that God was able to raise him from the dead*.” Christ fulfilled Adam’s death and Abraham’s burnt offering. We do the same when we take up our cross and follow Jesus.

The “Cross and Resurrection” is the most popular story in the Bible; yet no two of these events are alike. But what is true for this event is true for all repetitions.

The last “*end of the world*” for Christ’s death and resurrection will occur when we mortals become immortal. This will be the First Resurrection.

The Purposes of “Ends of the World”

The “*Ends of the World*” is a doctrine. Doctrines are teachings. Some doctrines have brief histories while others span long periods of time. The doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead is one of the longer ones.

Concerning this doctrine, the number of kinds of “*ends of the world*,” is not as important as their purposes. As quoted earlier from 1Co. 10:11, God had things happen for our examples. These examples became applicable at the Cross. Paul doesn’t say this clearly, but he included his generation when he wrote “*for our admonition*” in 1Co. 10:11. There may be more, but I see 2 purposes for “*ends of the world*.”

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Before addressing these purposes, we need to consider something else. The latter lessons in Part-2 of this course relate to a group of stories that happened 3,000 years ago. Some events in these stories apply to religious and political situations in the USA now, 2020-21.

And about 600 years ago, some events in these same stories applied to a situation in the world's churches. That situation was mostly religious. But it created an "end of the world" event that parallels and thus helps to explain later "ends of the world."

Thus, each repetition of an original event sets an example for those who live after the 1st event. Ardent bible scholars in the future times can apply past events to their current situations. This enables them to know what is happening.

That is the 1st purpose of the "ends of the world." The 2nd purpose is opposite the 1st purpose. The events of each "end of the world" are "signs of the times." God has designed enough events to keep people in most generations in doubt concerning the time of Christ's return. Thus, God gives the people a sound reason to make and keep themselves ready. Thus, the 2nd purpose.

Hidden Difficulties

I use the word "story" when discussing examples. Every example is a story or part of a story. There are several ways to ensure that each application of each example is correct. Here are three:

1. Interpret each example within the boundaries of its story. Searching for the noun outside the text or story where the pronoun is one common mistake. For example, the noun for the pronoun "things" in Joh. 1:3 must appear in the story that begins with Joh. 1:1 and ends with Joh. 1:14. And the noun must appear before its pronoun.

2. Interpret each story within the boundaries of its neighboring stories. For example, Paul teaches on spiritual gifts in 1Co. 12:1-31. Verse 31 reads like this: "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."

Chapter-13 teaches this "more excellent way." Many see this as "The Love Chapter." But, read the 1st verse of Chapter-14: "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy."

Paul didn't change the subject in Chapter-13. His subject is spiritual gifts in Chapters 12, 13 and 14. Chapter-13 does not teach how to love, it teaches that "love" is better than covetousness to receive spiritual gifts.

3. You need to know the audience. For example, Jesus spoke only parables to the multitudes, [Mr. 4:34]. He extended

this rule to include Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, and Lawyers. You can use this rule in the four Gospels to know when Jesus is speaking parables or plain speech. "Without a Parable," [ML107] provides more details on this.

To recognize some "ends of the world," you must look for doctrines that intertwine with the event or events in question. Here's one passage from the Book of Luke that is often misunderstood:

Lu. 11:49: *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets & apostles, & some of them they shall slay & persecute: 50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; 51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar & the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.*

The theme is judgment on those who have killed God's prophets. But the text seems to say that God will punish the last generation of murderers for the sins of all previous generations of murderers. If you missed this, read that text again.

Now read the law in this next word-bubble. Notice that it does not allow God to punish one generation for the sins of an earlier generation:

De. 24:16: *The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.*

So to what generation does Jesus refer in Luke 11:51? To learn the answer, you discern the audience. To whom is Jesus speaking in this scripture?

Read Lu. 11:44-48. Notice that the multitude includes scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers. Jesus spoke only parables to multitudes [Mt. 13:34], and this rule includes these religious minded leaders. [Read "Without a Parable," ML107 on this website.]

So Jesus is speaking with parables. "A parable is a story designed to teach a moral or religious principle by suggesting a parallel," [Webster]. Luke 11:49-51 contains two parables. Verse 50 is one parable, and v51 is another parable.

Notice that Lu. 11:50 begins with the earliest and ends with the latest NT prophet. Then notice how Lu. 11:51 begins with the earliest and ends with the latest OT prophet. Neither parable teaches that God will judge "this generation" for the sins of an earlier generation. Both parables show "this generation" referring to an "end of the world" event.