

The Genesis Parable – Part 3 – Sowing and Reaping

Hi everyone and welcome to “Grain of Wheat Publishing” and “Studies in Scripture.” My name is Jack Marshall and thank you for joining me today.

This is Part Three of my series, “The Genesis Parable.” Today, we will take a deeper look into “sowing and reaping.” Let’s get started.

In Part One of this series, we learned that the “Garden of Eden” in Genesis represents the **universal principle of sowing and reaping** which is described by the apostle Paul in Galatians, Chapter Six, verses seven through ten, and that all humankind was placed into this principle in the beginning. This is confirmed by the fact that the Lord said that “man,” **all-inclusive of everyone**, “shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” See Matthew Four, verse four, and Deuteronomy Eight, verse three.

Beloved, the divine principle of sowing and reaping is the **most profound** and **most important** principle that we could come to understand in regard to scripture. This principle reveals and connects many, many things in the Bible, both in the Old Testament as well as the New. And the most amazing thing about it is that it hides in plain sight. Here’s what Paul wrote in Galatians.

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; **for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap**. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh **reap** corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit **reap** everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, **for in due season we shall reap** if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, **let us do good to all**, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

As our passages show, the principle of sowing and reaping has two possible outcomes in our lives. When we sow to our flesh, we reap **corruption**, but when we sow to the Spirit, we reap **everlasting life**. As we learned in Part Two of this series, the twofold aspect of this principle is reflected by the two trees in the middle of the Garden of Eden in Genesis Two nine, the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” and the “tree of life.” This also defines the two “edges” of the “sword” of the **living** and **powerful** Word of God as described in Hebrews Four twelve and our Two Covenants which Paul wrote about in Galatians Four, verses twenty-one through thirty-one.

So let’s take a moment to consider the word “corruption.” The Strong’s Concordance defines this word as, “*Decay*, i.e. *ruin* (spontaneous or inflicted, literal or figurative). It’s taken from the root word which means, “To *pine* or *waste*; properly to *shrivel* or *wither*, i.e. to *spoil* (by any process).” To put it another way, corruption speaks of the “**temporary nature of all form**,” of those things which eventually pass away, including these human forms in which we dwell. In direct comparison, we have “everlasting life,” which speaks of that which is eternal and does not pass away. With this in mind, consider what Paul wrote in Second Corinthians, Chapter Four.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our **outward man is perishing**, yet **the inward man is being renewed day by day**. For our **light affliction**, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, **while we do not look at the things which are seen**, but **at the things which are not seen**. For **the things which are seen are temporary**, but **the things which are not seen are eternal**.

Here we have it, my friends. “The things which are seen are temporary” but “the things which are not seen are eternal.” Now, let me share this thought with you. Though the nature of all form is indeed temporary, the eternal nature of God’s Word still abides within it, for nothing on this planet ever really passes away; rather, **it simply changes form**. Consider what the wise king Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes.

For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath; man has no advantage over animals, for all *is* vanity. All go to one place: **all are from the dust, and all return to dust.**

According to Genesis Two seven, all of us are made from the dust of the earth. And, according to Solomon, we “return to dust.” So yes, we pass away, but in doing so our human forms return to the substance out of which it was fashioned. In regard to this, Solomon goes on to say, “**Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.**”

So who is the “outward man” which Paul spoke about in Second Corinthians, the one who “is perishing”? We might at first think that Paul is referring to the human form; indirectly, this might be true, however, I am inclined to believe that he is speaking of the “soul,” which would make the “inward man” our spirit. The first mention of the word “soul” in the Old Testament is found in Genesis Two seven.

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; **and man became a living soul.**

Our word “soul” in this passage is defined by Strong’s as, “A *breathing* creature,” taken from the root word which means, “To *breathe*” or “to *be breathed* upon.”

The first mention of the word “soul” in the New Testament is found in Matthew Two twenty, actually translated as “life.” Strong’s defines our word “soul” in the New Testament as “Breath,” agreeing with the Old Testament definition. Now, let’s look at Hebrews Four twelve in regard to the difference between spirit and soul.

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to **the division of soul and spirit**, and of **joints and marrow**, and is a discerner of the **thoughts and intents of the heart.**

Friends, there are but two things to consider in this passage which the living and powerful Word of God addresses; the SOUL and the SPIRIT, and as Paul goes on, he likens the soul to the “joints” and the spirit to the “marrow” and the soul to the “thoughts” and the spirit to the “intents.” I think all of us can agree that these parallels show how intimately connected our soul and spirit are. Within the human structure of the bones, the “marrow” is found *inside* the bone while the “joints” are found *outside*. Within the realm of thinking, the “thoughts” are most often expressed *outwardly*, but the “intents” are not, lying *deeper within* our being and certainly not always clear to us. But that, my friends, shows just how powerful the Word of God truly is, for it not only addresses our soul but also our spirit. For this reason the writer of Hebrews went on to say in Hebrews Four, “And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but ALL THINGS ARE NAKED AND OPEN to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”

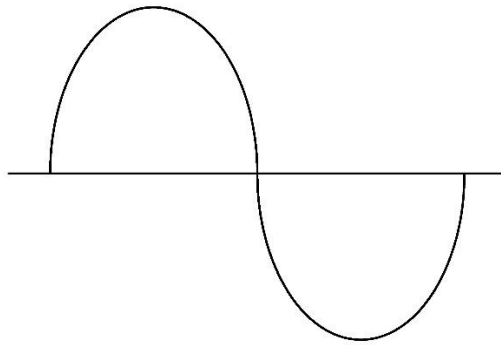
There is another way to express the difference between soul and spirit which ties into our principle of sowing and reaping. It is the idea of a “seed.” After all, each and every one of us came from a “seed” that was sown into the womb of our mother, and what is true naturally reflects what is also true spiritually. Paul made this clear in Romans One twenty in regard to our Creator that, “For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, HAVE BEEN CLEARLY PERCEIVED, EVER SINCE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD, IN THE THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE.”

So, think about a seed for a moment. In most cases, a seed contains some type of outer shell which surrounds the necessary components or life within that is needed to bring forth what it is. This “outer shell” if you will, would be indicative of our soul, while the elements within would be indicative of our spirit. Ah, but what happens to the “outer shell” of the seed once it has been planted? Paul uses this understanding in First Corinthians, Chapter Fifteen, to describe **the resurrection of the dead.**

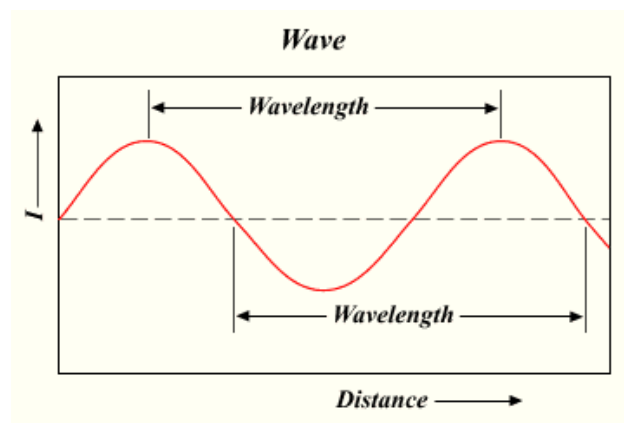
But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" How foolish! **What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be,** but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.

Here we go my friends! What is sown does not come to life unless it dies! And the seed or "body" that is planted DOES NOT RETURN the same body; rather, it returns a different body. If the seed we plant is an apple seed, what goes into the ground looks nothing like what comes out afterward. When all the conditions are met, an apple seed produces a tree, which, when fully mature, produces fruit, and finally, within the fruit, we find the seed once again which enables us to repeat the process all over again. This, beloved, is our universal principle of sowing and reaping, which is not only relevant to all that we see, but also to all that we can't see. Paul confirms this in Galatians Five twenty-two and twenty-three, telling us that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control." Are these attributes not invisible yet outwardly manifested in our lives? Now, allow me to share the following illustration with you.

Sine Wave



As shown, this is a picture of a sine wave. Wikipedia tells us, quote, "A **sine wave** or **sinusoid** is a mathematical curve that describes a smooth periodic oscillation. A sine wave is a continuous wave. It is named after the function sine, of which it is the graph. It occurs often in pure and applied mathematics, as well as physics, engineering, signal processing and many other fields," end quote.



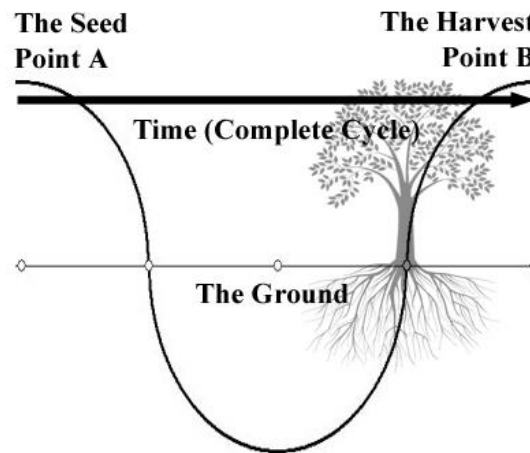
Simple English Wikipedia also gives us the following illustration of a sine wave and states the following; quote, "A sine wave is a curve with this shape... all waves can be made by adding up sine waves. The sine wave has a pattern that repeats. The length of this repeating piece of the sine wave is called the wavelength. The wavelength can be found by measuring the length or distance between one peak of a sine wave and the next peak. The wavelength can be found in many other ways too. Waves are found everywhere in the natural world.

Examples of waves (are) sound, light, water waves, (and) earthquake waves. All of these waves are sums of signals,” end quote.

Don't let this little bit of science throw you, because I want you to see how this relates to our principle of sowing and reaping. Go with me now to the following passage from John Twelve twenty-four. Here's what Jesus said.

Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.**

Look closely at our illustration of the sine wave and where the wavelength begins and ends, starting with the peak of the sine wave and ending with the peak of the next sine wave. This being the case, we could easily change our sine wave to reflect the following.



As we see in this illustration, we begin with the peak of the sine wave. This would correlate with the seed before it falls into the ground. When it does, we see our sine wave dropping below the horizontal line, representing the planting of the seed in the earth. Finally, and in agreement with Paul's discourse in First Corinthians Fifteen, the seed returns the "body" or *tree* which eventually matures to produce fruit. Now, let's go to Mark, Chapter Four, verses twenty-six through twenty-nine.

And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should **sleep by night and rise by day**, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first **the blade**, then **the head**, after that **the full grain in the head**. But **when the grain ripens**, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

First of all, notice the phrase "sleep by night and rise by day." As indicated, "sleep" equates to "night" while "rise" corresponds to "day." This being true, consider what Paul wrote in First Thessalonians, Chapter Five.

You are all **sons of light** and **sons of the day**. We are not of the **night** nor of **darkness**. **Therefore let us not sleep, as others do**, but let us watch and be sober. For **those who sleep, sleep at night**, and **those who get drunk are drunk at night**. But **let us who are of the day be sober**, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

Do you see it my friends? In regard to the kingdom of God, we have "night and day," "sleep" and "rise," and within the scope of our divine principle of sowing and reaping, we have those who are "sons of light and sons of the day" as opposed to those "who sleep," who are "of the night" and "darkness." Since the kingdom of God is

within us, this typifies the internal workings of our own heart and mind. So it is that Paul wrote the following in Romans Thirteen.

Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to **wake from sleep**. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. **The night is far gone; the day is at hand**. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly **as in the daytime**, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

If you will, let me share another illustration with you in regard to Mark, Chapter Four. Before I do, let's look at these passages once more.

And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should **sleep by night and rise by day**, and the **seed** (1) should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: **first the blade** (2), **then the head** (3), **after that the full grain in the head** (4). But **when the grain ripens** (5), immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

Note how I have numbered the different stages of sowing and reaping in Mark, Chapter Four; the seed, the blade, the head, the full grain in the head, and when the grain ripens; **five stages**. Let me share with you the spiritual meaning of the number *five* from *The Biblical Meaning of Numbers from One to Forty* by Stephen Jones. Five is represented by the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, pronounced "hey."

Quote, "**Hey** at the beginning of a Hebrew word means "the" or "behold." In the middle of a word it signifies inspiration or revelation. At the end of the word it signifies "what comes from."

Five is the number of grace, or favor. The number is found 318 times in the Bible. The number 318 is significant, because it is the number of armed servants in Abram's house who rescued Lot (Genesis 14:14). It is grace that rescues us and sets the captives free.

There were five sacrifices portrayed in Genesis 15:9 by which the promise to Abraham was secured: a heifer, a goat, a ram, a dove, and a pigeon. These typified Christ's sacrifice on the cross to secure the promises for mankind. To bring grace in the Old Testament there were five offerings (Leviticus 1-3): Burnt Offering, Sin Offering, Meal Offering, Trespass Offering, and Peace Offering, each representing a different aspect of Christ's sacrifice of Himself in the New Testament.

The fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet is **hey**, which is spoken by breathing. **When placed in the middle of a word, it indicates inspiration, something that is God-breathed.** God put the **hey** in Abram's name to make him Abraham. He put the **hey** at the end of Sarai to make her Sarah. God also did this with Joshua, changing his name to Jehoshua (Numbers 13:16)," end quote.

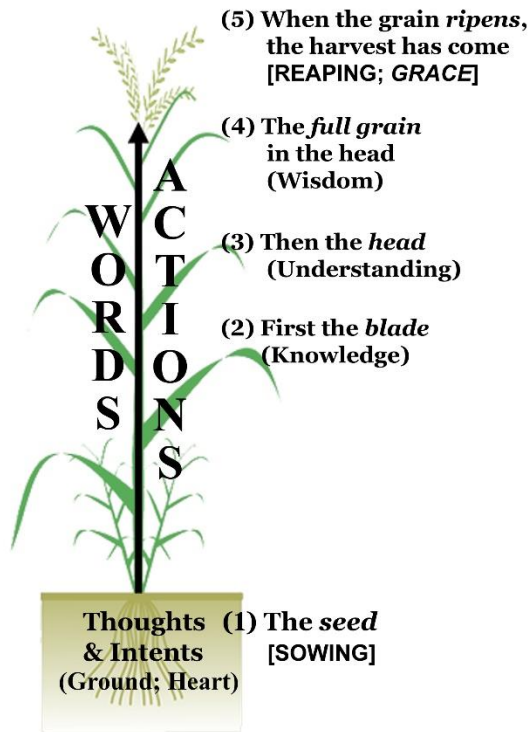
Of particular note, consider what Stephen Jones said, that, "The fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet is **hey**, which is spoken by breathing. **When placed in the middle of a word, it indicates inspiration, something that is God-breathed.**" Now, look at Genesis Two seven once again.

And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life**; and man became **a living soul**.

Do you see it? First, God formed us of "the dust of the ground." Then, He "breathed" into us "the breath of life" and we "became a living soul." No wonder our word "soul" is defined as "breath." Now, what's amazing about this is that, when we speak, breath goes out of our mouth. Is this coincidental, or, as I like to believe, does it not

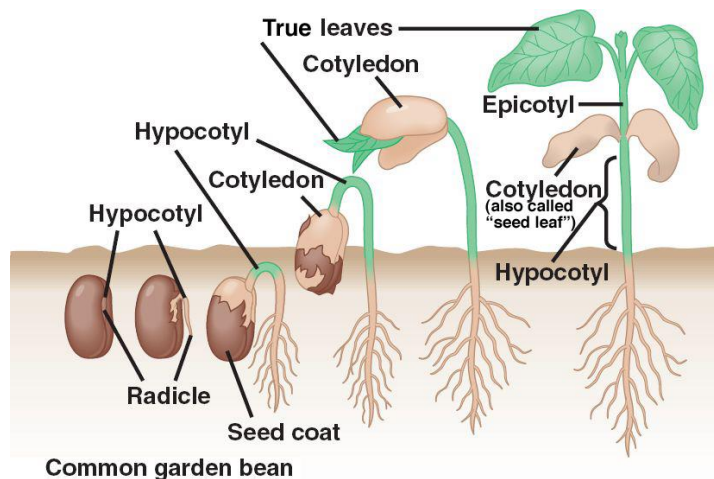
suggest that words or knowledge are the very foundation of our existence? This being true, would this not explain to us why our beginning as pictured in Genesis, starts with the “tree of the KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL”? Now, let me share my next illustration which shows the five stages which Jesus mentioned in our brief parable from Mark, Chapter Four.

Mark 4:26-29



As we see, the first stage begins with the “seed,” which Jesus defined as “the Word of God” in Luke Eight eleven. According to the Parable of the Sower, this “seed” is sown into the “heart.” In keeping with this understanding, the New Covenant Promise in Hebrews Eight ten states, “I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts.”

What’s important to realize in this is that the work of the seed begins in “darkness,” just like a natural seed once it falls or is planted in the ground. Now, if you will, let me share the following illustration which shows our progression of growth a little better.

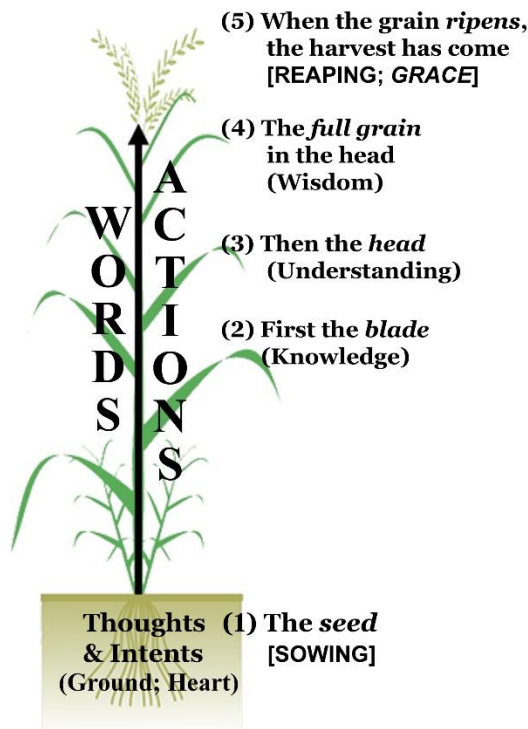


In this illustration, we have the “common garden bean.” Now, look closely at the “seed coat” and how it begins to *disappear* or *dissolve* during its growth. This perfectly illustrates what happens to the “outward man” of our soul. And what is the purpose of this? The “outward man” of the soul is destroyed so that the “inward man” of the spirit may “rise” from our being. Jesus taught this very thing in the following from Matthew Sixteen.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires **to save his life will lose it**, but whoever **loses his life** for My sake will find it.

Notice how the Lord puts this. “Whoever desires to save his life WILL LOSE IT, but whoever LOSES HIS LIFE for my sake will find it.” Our word “life” in these passages is actually our word “soul.” Now, do you see that, whether we seek to save our life or lose our life for His sake, it’s lost either way? Again, this is illustrated by the dissipation of the seed coat as pictured in our “garden bean.”

Mark 4:26-29



Returning to our former illustration, we see that the “seed” is the knowledge that is sown into our heart where our “thoughts and intents” arise. Since a seed can only return what it is, what springs up first is the “blade” of knowledge, which then becomes the “head” of understanding, which when brought together and experienced in our lives, becomes the wisdom out of which we operate. Once our wisdom has reached its fullest potential or has “ripened,” it is ready for harvest or “reaping.” This completes the entire cycle of growth; however, once mature, we find that there is much more “seed” found in the ripened grain, which when harvested, can be used to start the cycle all over again.

So let’s bring this to our present reality. For all of us, knowledge is the core of our existence; it is that which defines our path in life. For this reason, when we are first born into this world, we are like a sponge, absorbing the knowledge of the world around us on a continual basis, intuitively seeking understanding of this world into which we were birthed. As we grow older, this quest for knowledge continues, and our knowledge base expands, sown into us by our caretakers and by the culture and society into which we are born. This knowledge soon becomes understanding, which then becomes wisdom once we gain experience of that knowledge in our

lives. But here lies the difference, my friends. There are two sources of knowledge from which we draw, the knowledge or “wisdom of this world” and the knowledge or “wisdom from God.” Paul describes this in the following.

And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. **And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.**

Do you see in these passages the difference between the “wisdom of this world” as opposed to the “wisdom of God”? Now, if you will, let me finish this presentation with something to provoke you to thought. Notice how Paul mentions “the wisdom of this age” and the “rulers of this age.” In regard to the wisdom of God, note how he states, “Which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” Think carefully about what Paul meant when he wrote this. If I understand it, he is speaking of the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day, those who embraced the law and were responsible for delivering the Lord to death, calling them “the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.” Does this not suggest that “this age” in which we’re still in is ruled by those who are “under the law”? See Romans 3:19. As for our phrase “coming to nothing,” does this not suggest the age which is coming? Compare this thought with what the writer of Hebrews wrote following his comparison of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant in Hebrews, Chapter Eight.

In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. **And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.**

Beloved, whether we realize it or not, God’s divine purpose through Christ has been advancing in the earth since our beginning in Genesis so long ago. Though it may be difficult for us to truly perceive it, rest assured that His living and powerful Word which sprang forth on the first day of Creation, has been fulfilling His purpose since time began; and, it will end as He has determined, with man “in His image.” Let me end today’s presentation with the following passage from the book of James.

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

That’s it for today’s study, my friends. If you like what you hear, I would encourage you to subscribe to my channel. I sincerely hope you’ve been enlightened by this presentation and please, feel free to leave your comments and questions below. Be sure to visit my Facebook page at Grain of Wheat Publishing or my website at www.grainofwheatpublishing.org where you will find all of my studies available for free. Thank you so much for joining me today and may God bless you in your walk with Christ.