

Working Toward Pentecost Elder's Conference 2014

Ben Ambrose—May 24, 2014

Greetings brethren! It's good to see such a nice, large crowd of the people of God here. We don't get to see that very often anymore. It's really nice.

We're in the count to Pentecost, so I thought we would try to stay in season, since the season for Pentecost is coming, and go through that, so that we'll be in remembrance. We've got just two weeks and one day to count and we'll be there.

Fred has brought something out in a couple of sermons this past year. One of them was just in this past Feast season of Unleavened Bread. It's very interesting; it had never registered with me. I don't know about you; maybe you already understood it. Let's read this and see what this says. This is Jesus speaking:

John 6:44: "No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and **I will raise him up at the last day.**" That "...last day..." is talking about Pentecost, which we're moving toward, in just a couple of weeks.

Verse 45: "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.'... [the Father] ...Therefore, everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me."

- "...everyone who has heard from the Father..."—being called by the Father
- "...has learned..."—he is being taught by the Father.

That's what "...**the last day...**" is representing that we're going to be coming up to it in just a couple of weeks. This "...last day..." *represents the resurrection of the dead on Pentecost, at a future date!*

Let's see if we can see what God has been doing for the past 6,000 years and what He's been working toward—this *day* that Jesus talked about here, "...I will raise him up at **the last day.**"

We're all familiar with this story. It's where we all come from, way back there somewhere. Genesis 1:24: "And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures **after their kind...**'"

Verse 25: "And God made the beasts of the earth **after their kind...**" He has set the creation for the different families of the creatures, the animals or whatever, to be:

"...**after their kind**, and every creeping thing upon the earth after their kind. And God saw that it was good" (v 25).

Then He did something else, v 26: "And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness...'" It changed from the animals in that we have a lot of added features, but the Scriptures give these two:

1. "...in Our image..."
2. "...after Our likeness..."

Of course, we know that that was Jesus Christ and God the Father Who were the 'Us,' the two in the Godhead. We're created in the image of God and God started the process. It doesn't say it here, but we became after the humankind. We had the added features after the *likeness* and the *image* of God.

God begins to do something down through the centuries and the millennia that is going to follow in His creation. There's a place in the Bible that we can go to that will give us an overview of what God's been doing. Of course, God does a lot of things but we're going to hone in on this one process. We're going to find it in the book of Hebrews. We see that this is something that has taken place for generation after generation:

- people being born
- God doing His work in that generation
- then, it dying out
- a new generation comes

It's all listed in Heb. 11, or there is an overview of it. It's really amazing to see what God has been doing down through the ages. We are part of that, which we will come to see.

Hebrews 11:4: "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous..." Abel was called and he is referred to as *righteous* Abel. He was the first one that God dealt with, personally, for what we would say would be salvation. He's listed in here in the 'faith chapter.'

Abel died. His time came and went; he was murdered. His untimely death came and then we come down to Enoch.

Verse 5: "By faith Enoch was transported so that he would not look upon death, and was not found because God had transported him; for before his departure it was testified of him that he pleased God. Now without faith *it is* impossible to please

God..." (vs 5-6). Enoch was born sometime 400-500 years, I guess, after the beginning. He lived his life. It does not give when he died, but we know he died. He didn't go off to heaven like some believe.

A few hundred years later, we read in v 7: "By faith Noah, after being divinely instructed by God about the things *he could* not yet see..." We know what Noah did; we won't go into that. Noah was born, if I remember right, about 500 years before the Flood or about 1,000 years into the time up to the Flood, and he lived 400 years after the Flood. He lived his generation out, and God called him and dealt with him. His time came and went and he died.

Then we read, about 400 years after the Flood—somewhere in that range—in verse 8: "By faith Abraham, being called *of God* to go out into the place, which he would later receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went, not knowing where he was going. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise..." (vs 8-9). In v 11 we read about Sarah, who was the wife of Abraham, contemporary with him. We come down to v 13 and referring to Abraham, and the prior people who are listed here:

Verse 13: "All these died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them from afar, and having been persuaded of *them*, and having embraced *them*, and having confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth." So, their time came, it went and they died. God put them in the grave in His granary to await what Jesus called, "...I'll raise him up at **the last day**."

We go on down. We go past Abraham and we have:

- v 20: "By faith Isaac..."
- v 21: "By faith Jacob..."
- v 22: "By faith Joseph..."

They all lived their lives. God:

- called them
- dealt with them
- prepared promises and things for us through Abraham and through them

They died; their generation passed and God did His work in them.

Then we come down to v 23 and Moses came along a couple of hundred years later. He was born and we know the story of his birth and so forth. Here comes Moses:

- God calls him
- deals with him
- he brings the children of Israel out of Egypt
- he was faithful to God unto the end

- he was called and chosen to do that job as we are in what God has called us to do

He was *called, chosen and faithful* to the end. He died; God took his life and he was put away to await the day that Jesus said, "...I'll raise him up at **the last day**."

Then we come to v 30: "By faith the walls of Jericho fell..." We know who that was; that was Joshua. It doesn't call his name, but that was Joshua, Caleb and that generation. They lived out their lives and they were faithful to God. God dealt with them, He worked with them and they came to their end.

Another generation comes. It's generalized here in v 32: "...For time would fail me... [as Paul says] ...to relate *the accounts* of Gideon... [during the days when Israel was in the land] ...Barak also, and Samson and Jephthah, David also, and Samuel, and the prophets." All of these:

- were born
- they lived
- God called them
- they were chosen for His specific purposes
- they were faithful to the end

They'll be waiting for what Jesus said, "...I'll raise him up at **the last day**."

Then it becomes more generalized in v 33: "Who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut *the* mouths of lions... [I guess that was Daniel; it may have been some others, but we know specifically, Daniel] ...quenched *the* fury of fire, escaped *the* edge of *the* sword..." (vs 33-34).

Verse 35: "Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured... [Here we come to a key part in this scenario of what God is doing from generation to generation. It gives us a little insight.] ...**not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a superior resurrection**." Here it is revealed that there's going to be a resurrection. Of course, that's the day that Jesus was talking about in John 6:44.

I want to reiterate John 6:45: "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.'.... [the Father] ...Therefore, everyone who has heard from the Father... [they've been called and chosen] ...and has learned." God is teaching, through His Spirit, those He has called and those that are faithful; they are being taught and prepared.

Heb. 11 goes on through some more people, generations and things that happened to them. Then we come to v 39: "But these all, *though* they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise." The "...raise him up at **the last day**"

hadn't happened, yet.' The promises were made, but they died in their generation.

Then we come to a key verse to us, v 40: "**Because God had determined in advance...** [as Paul writes] **...to provide something superior for us so that without us they would not be made perfect.**"

John 17 is very significant because we're roughly 2000 years down from what is said in Heb. 11:40. What did Jesus say? *Jesus tied us in with it when He was praying* His last prayer before He was taken to be crucified. He's praying to the Father and He says:

John 17:20 "I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word." *That's us!* It's been ever since that time that generations were being born down through the past 2000 years. God has been:

- calling us
- choosing us
- dealing with us
- teaching us
- instructing us

How is it going to end with God and what He's been doing for the past 6000 years?

Ephesians 1:13: "In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession...**" (vs 13-14).

He's talking about the resurrection and talking about that we are the begotten children of God. We have that down payment of the Holy Spirit that God has given to us. This applies all the way back to righteous Abel, as God dealt with the generations coming down to the: "I will raise him up at **the last day**," as Jesus said.

We are going to see what the end process is going to produce. It tells us a story—in the end—of what Jesus meant when He said, "...I will raise him up at **the last day**."

2-Peter 1:3: "According as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which **He has given to us the greatest and most precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of the Divine nature...** [*This is where we're headed in the end, "...at the last day*"] ...having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust" (vs 3-4).

We'll finish with a very encouraging Scripture, 1-John 3:1: "**Behold! What glorious love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!...**" That goes back to, as I understand it, a great word that means God's *very own* children. Not step-children or that sort of thing, but His *very own children!*

"...For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. **Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know...**" (vs 1-2). This is for us in this time in the level that we're at as human beings.

"...**that when He is manifested...** [when Christ returns] **...we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is**" (v 2). We're going to be His brothers and sisters.

Brethren, we started out in Genesis and we've come down to *the last day*, that Jesus spoke of. ***We're going to become, at that time, after the God kind!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 6:44-45
- 2) Genesis 1:24-26
- 3) Hebrews 11:4-9, 11, 13, 20-22, 30, 32-35
- 4) John 6:45
- 5) Hebrews 11:39-40
- 6) John 17:20
- 7) Ephesians 1:13-14
- 8) 2-Peter 1:3-4
- 9) 1-John 3:1-2

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Transcribed: 06-24-14
Proofed: 6-25-14

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