

Reunion and Hope Restored

Last Great Day

(Sermon notes)

By Warren Zehrung 10/5/2015

The meaning of the Feast of the **Last Great Day** is found in Revelation 20. All who have ever lived will live again! They too, will have their opportunity for **salvation**.

Revelation 20:11 And I saw a **great white throne**, and Him [Jesus Christ] that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the **book of life**: and the dead were **judged** out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

My folks, who are dead, and their folks and your people will live again.

Revelation 20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were **judged** every man according to their works.

Leviticus 23:36 ... On the **eighth day** [the Last Great Day] shall be an holy convocation unto you.

John 7:37 In the **Last Day**, that **Great Day** of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

What is this Holy Day all about? It pictures that time when all who have ever lived will also have the opportunity to be in God's Kingdom. They will be raised to physical life; called by God; have God's Holy Spirit poured out upon them, and then judged as the Church of God brethren are now being judged. Today is the day of judgment for those of us in God's Church.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time is come that **judgment** must begin at the house of God.

That Scripture applies to us. But what about those who have not yet been called by God? There will be time and opportunity for all men and women, from Adam and Eve until the end of the millennium, to mature spiritually and come to salvation.

The Great White Throne Judgment is about the resurrection and judgment of **all humanity** that has ever lived from the time of Adam to the end of the Millennium. That is why the Great White Throne Judgment follows the Feast of Tabernacles. Those previously called by God, who have been called, chosen and faithful will have been judged and resurrected as spiritual beings at Christ's return.

Revelation 17:14 ... for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

They will be the Bride of Christ reigning and ruling throughout the millennium. But the Last Great Day with its Great White Throne Judgment will take place at the end of the millennial rule of Jesus Christ.

The Great White Throne Judgment resurrection and judgment is to the **Book of Life** [Revelation 20:12] meaning that most will find spiritual salvation and eternal life.

They will not have to contend with Satan as they once did in their former lives. The Bible says a lot more about the Last Great Day than most people recognize. It starts with the world physically in **darkness** where God begins His work!

Genesis 1:2 And the earth was without form, and void; and **darkness** was upon the face of the deep.

This verse also demonstrates that spiritually there was yet no knowledge of God and His way. We will see that throughout the Bible there is this consistent theme of **darkness to enlightenment**. And the Bible ends with God Himself being the **light** of all.

Revelation 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither **light** of the sun; for the Lord God gives them **light**.

This Day is about light and **enlightenment** coming to a majority of all mankind that has ever lived. And this theme of darkness to enlightenment is an integral part of the meaning of the Last Great Day.

There is a very interesting story in the New Testament. It highlights the differences between the first and second resurrection. Paul wrote about 20 years after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul back tracked a little bit with this insertion.

1 Corinthians 15:6 After that, He [Jesus] was seen of above **five hundred brethren** at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

Again, this was written more than 20 years after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:7 After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

First, seeing Jesus brutally killed was one thing – but then to personally see Him alive must have been staggering for James the brother of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:8 And last of all he was seen of me [Paul] also, as of one born out of due time.

Why were more than **500 brethren** singled out by Jesus for this special visitation? There may be a clue in Matthew 27.

Matthew 27:50 Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the breath. [Jesus died – His life came to an end].

Matthew 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

The earth opened wide – fully exposing some people who had been buried.

Matthew 27:52 And the graves were opened; and **many** bodies **of the saints** which slept arose.

Those were not regular folks - they were **holy** people of God having been set apart. Is that the same as 1 Corinthians 15:6? I don't know for sure.

Matthew 27:53 And came out of the graves **after His resurrection**, [that is three days later] and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

They looked pretty good – for having been dead! Those dead bodies were exposed – but they **remained dead** as long as Jesus was dead! Why do you suppose some were resurrected as Jesus was – three days later?

Perhaps because of Jesus personal love for them – that they might be in the **First** and **better resurrection** – like Lazarus was raised from the dead. Those in the **better resurrection** are firstfruits **with** Jesus Christ. They will be His Bride and reign and rule with Him throughout the millennium.

Hebrews 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a **better resurrection**. [Revelation 20:5 speaks of the **first** resurrection.]

Revelation 20:6 **Blessed and holy is he** that hath part in the **first** resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Revelation 14:4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the **firstfruits** unto God and to the Lamb.

Those in the first resurrection become the Bride of Christ. Many – perhaps direct family members of Jesus – will have to await their resurrection of the Last Great Day.

Leviticus 23:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the **Feasts of the LORD**, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. [Not Jews or Church – but the Lord!]

The **Last Great Day** – is a great work of God.

Leviticus 23:35 On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.
[Feast of Tabernacles]

Leviticus 23:36 Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the **eighth** day shall be an holy convocation unto you.

How will the world believe? Billions and Billions of physically resurrected people will be brought to life...and, I'll see my folks after a thousand years. What are the lessons of the last Great Day? We will see some of the lessons here.

John 7:37 In the **Last Day**, that **Great Day** of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

"If any man thirst" Jesus is speaking spiritually. The world lacks God's Holy Spirit – but it will be offered to all mankind on the Last Great Day.

John 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of His [Jesus'] belly shall flow rivers of living water.

The living water is very symbolic of the Last Great Day when God's Spirit will be poured out on all mankind that has ever lived – rivers of god's Spirit on all.

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will **pour out my spirit** upon **all flesh**; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Joel 2:29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I **pour out my spirit**.

John 7:39 (But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

All of this took place on the evening when the Last Great Day started to be observed. The events of this Feast Day carry through all the way through to John 10.

John 8:10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those your accusers? Has no man condemned thee?

John 8:11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

Jesus is not permissive of sin but asks that we "Walk in faith." Enlightenment is needed to walk in faith. We see this theme over and over again.

John 8:12 Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the **light** of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in **darkness**, but shall have the **light** of life.

The point is that the world is in darkness without Jesus who brings **enlightenment** to a dark world. Those who await the actuality of the Last Great Day will still be in **darkness** when they rise in their resurrection.

John 8:21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall **die in your sins**: whither I go, ye cannot come.

"... and shall die in your sins." The entire world has died in its sins - how will they ever live again?

We find a clarification in verse: 24.

John 8:24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye **believe not** that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

We see that the imagery implies that spiritual darkness remains.

John 9:1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was **blind** from his birth.

That man had lived his life in darkness. But the Last Great Day pictures **blindness** and **darkness being removed!**

John 9:2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born **blind**?

Jesus is doing these things on the Last Great Day.

John 9:3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

John 9:14 And it was the [high] Sabbath day [Last Great Day] when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. [Blindness healed.]

John 9:4 I must work the works of Him [God the Father] that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the **light** of the world.

Notice the continuing theme of the Last Great Day:

John 9:39 And Jesus said, For **judgment** I am come into this world, that they which see not might **see** [spiritual enlightenment]; and that they which see might be made **blind**.

Those in the world see only the physical – they are blind and unable to see the spiritual!

John 10:15 As the Father knows me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. [a continuous theme – laying down our life.]

John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are **not of this fold**: them also I must bring, and they **shall** hear my voice; and **[then]** there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

In the future they **shall** hear... On this Last Great Day I think a lot about my folks. My mother and dad are **not of this sheepfold** [which is made up of converted church brethren - but they will be in Christ's **future** sheepfold.]

My folks and yours will hear the voice of Christ. What a Great Day of conversion! We will be the first ones they will see upon their awakening on the Last Great Day. What a **Reunion and Restoration of Hope** that will be!

John 10:21 Others said, These are not the words of him that has a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

At this point in the Scripture the Biblical narrative leaves off the Last Great Day and jumps to winter. The blindness of the world, the darkness of the world, will be taken away. Again I will mention Joel 2:

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will **pour out my spirit** upon **all flesh**; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Joel 2:29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I **pour out my spirit**.

All those who have died will have learned the lesson that this life is a **hopeless** situation. "You live – but you die – therefore it is hopeless."

Ezekiel 37:11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our **hope is lost**: we are cut off for our parts.

Without Jesus Christ, it is a **hopeless** situation. That is why the title of this sermon is, "Reunion and **Hope Restored**".

The lengthy **story of Joseph** parallels the Last Great Day.

Let's review the ten chapter time line of Joseph. [Please review the details from your own Bible in your own personal Bible Study time.] Joseph's mother Rachel had already died...

Genesis 35:19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

Genesis 37:2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; ... and Joseph brought unto his father [Jacob] **their evil report**.

The brothers of Joseph were very cruel – unbelievably heartless.

Genesis 37:4 And when his brethren saw that their father [Jacob] loved him more than all his brethren, **they hated him**, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

Genesis 37:23 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him;

Joseph's brothers stript him of his coat of many colors.

Genesis 37:24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. [Judah wanted to sell Joseph.]

Genesis 37:28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Genesis 37:32 And they sent the [blood-soaked] coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or not.

Joseph prospered in Egypt and he was often in and out of prison. Joseph begins to understand that it is God who is directing his steps, bringing his dreams to pass and prospering his way.

Genesis 41 Seven years of plenty - seven years of famine.

Genesis 42 Jacob sends Joseph's brothers to Egypt for grain.

Joseph recognizes his brothers - but they do not recognize Joseph.

Genesis 43 Joseph demands that his brothers bring his little brother Benjamin. [Joseph arrests and releases his brothers.]

Genesis 43:29 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spoke unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son.

Genesis 43:30 And Joseph made haste; for [emotionally] his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and **wept** there.

Genesis 44 Joseph sets up Benjamin as the fall-guy, and Judah **repents**.

Genesis 44:1 And [Joseph] commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth.

Genesis 44:2 And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest [Benjamin], and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

Genesis 44:4 And when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?

Genesis 44:12 And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

Judah believes that God's retribution has befallen him.

Genesis 44:16 And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out **the iniquity of thy servants**: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.

Genesis 44:18 Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh.

Genesis 44:27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:

Genesis 44:28 And the one [young Joseph] went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since:

Can you imagine the many years of pain and sorrow that Jacob experienced – and Benjamin was his only consolation. Jacob would die if he lost Benjamin also.

Genesis 44:29 And if ye take this [Benjamin] also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Old man Jacob grieved to the core of his being, and feared that he might lose Benjamin too. Judah is pleading with Joseph with all of his might.

Genesis 44:30 Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad [Benjamin] be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life.

Judah is in anguish now – just anticipating what Jacob would go through. Brethren, we will reveal ourselves to our parents and loved ones as they are resurrected to their former physical existence. After the hugs and kisses we will need to reassure them that this time – their lives are not futile and hopeless. Again we visit Ezekiel:

Ezekiel 37:10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

Ezekiel 37:11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and **our hope is lost**: [What is the use?] we are cut off for our parts. [We don't want to go through misery and death all over again. They will have learned that sin leads to death.]

Without Jesus Christ it is **hopeless**. But, Jesus is the hope of salvation.

Genesis 44:31 It shall come to pass, when [Jacob] sees that the lad [Benjamin] is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

Genesis 44:32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father forever.

Judah says, "Take me." "I beg of you." Did you notice that Judah **is laying his life down** for Benjamin? That is a Godlike trait. [Compare John 10:15 above.]

Genesis 44:33 Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant [Judah] abide instead of the **lad** a [hostage] bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

Genesis 44:34 For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.

Judah poured his heart out to Joseph – begging with all his might...

Being selfless, like that results in God's will being done. That's the way God works! Service to others is Godliness. Brethren, God does not change.

Israel would grow into a nation while in captivity in Egypt.

We are reading not only the details of the preparations God was bringing about for the Children of Israel to come into existence in the first place, but also to be in a position to go into the Promised Land. We are also seeing, in advance, how God is working today to bring His people Spiritual Israel into the Kingdom of God. Once we know without a doubt that it is God who is working out all the details – we are able to step out in faith. That is a definition of faith → believing that God is working out His will, and we are a part of it.

Genesis 45:1 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, **while Joseph made himself known unto his brothers**.

Picture this reconciliation taking place – all these men are more mature now – they all love their father Israel deeply. Now we find them all alone in a private room with Joseph. Heretofore, Joseph only spoke the Egyptian language in the presence of his brothers. We are told that the brothers did not know that Joseph was able to understand what they were saying.

Genesis 42:23 And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spoke unto them by an **interpreter**.

Alone in the room with his brothers, Joseph completely lost it – he broke down and wept – **sobbing** profusely and uncontrollably.

Genesis 45:2 And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard him.

He sobbed forcefully. Joseph was weeping so loudly that the sound could not be contained – what a flood of emotion and love bursting forth and being released! It was too much too fast for the brothers to be able to assimilate everything that was going on. They were in a quandary. Awestruck, they are standing there in fear and trepidation, already fearful of Joseph. And Joseph, who knew what was going on, could not contain himself.

What a perfect picture of the Last Great Day! The brother's dismay was a shadow of what will happen when our loved ones **first encounter us** on the Last Great Day.

Joseph begins to speak to his brothers in their native Hebrew language – and they were mesmerized and speechless.

Genesis 45:3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled [alarmed and terrified] at his presence. [They cringed in dread.]

Joseph had the heads-up on his brothers who were in the dark. It will be the same for us on the Last Great Day – we will have the heads-up on those who are raised up then.

All in an instant - they had to integrate the fact that they were no longer in **peril** – with the reality that Joseph was not only **alive**, but the most powerful **ruler** of Egypt – with their minds flashing back to the last time they saw Joseph as a **slave** sold to a Midianite camel train – and how they had deceived their father Jacob. It was all too much for the brothers.

Overwhelming is not the word! It was more than mind boggling. Think about this – to our parents and loved ones we will be God. They will worship at our feet. Human emotions cannot describe the scene. Jesus tells us:

Revelation 3:9 Behold, I will make them ...to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved you.

Genesis 45:4 And Joseph said unto his brothers, Come near to me, I beg of you. And they came near. And [again] he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

To the brothers, it was as if Joseph had come back from the **grave**. Realizing how difficult the present situation is for the brothers, Joseph comforts them. He says to them, "Don't beat yourselves up."

Genesis 45:5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. [and to establish all Israel]

Genesis 45:7 And **God** [Joseph gives God the credit] sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a **great deliverance**. [Not only deliverance from the **famine**, but to prepare the people of Israel to enter into the **Promised Land** – a greater deliverance.]

Joseph credits God with the entire turn of events in his entire life. Notice:

Genesis 45:8 So now it **was not you** that sent me hither, **but God**: and He hath made me a **father to Pharaoh**, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

God directs our steps! Each and every one of us – that is our Faith. Brethren, do we realize that God is working equally with **each** of us - that is what this Last Great Day pictures – salvation will come to all the earth on the Last Great Day! And God has given us a role like Joseph's in His Plan.

Genesis 45:9 Haste ye, and go up to my father [Jacob], and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

Can you imagine just how incredible that was for Jacob to believe? He's been thinking that Joseph was dead for all those many years.

Genesis 45:10 And thou shall dwell in the land of Goshen, [Egypt] and thou shall be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

Genesis 45:11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

The brothers still cannot believe that it is Joseph!

Genesis 45:12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaks unto you.

On the Last Great Day we will be almost unrecognizably glorious resurrected beings – how hard will it be for our loved ones to believe who we are?

Genesis 45:13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

Genesis 45:14 And [Joseph] fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

Brethren, that's me and my Dad! What a glorious day! And you, and your loved ones as well. That is what today pictures!

Genesis 45:15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him. [While still shaking in their boots.]

Genesis 45:16 And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brothers are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

Genesis 46:29 And **Joseph** made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel [Jacob] his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he **fell on [Jacob's] neck, and wept on his neck a good while.**

That's me and my Dad – what a glorious day this day pictures! That's you and all your loved ones as well.

Genesis 46:30 And Israel [Jacob] said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

Finally, this is the culmination of **Reunion and Hope Restored.**

Genesis 46:31 And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me.

Our reunion on the Last Great Day will be a witness to billions of others of the reconciliation, unity and completion of God gathering His people.

All who have ever lived will see and experience the Plan of God being fulfilled.

All will have their hearts and minds opened through God's Holy Spirit.

End: Reunion and Hope Restored