COGMA

Church of God Mission Academy

STUDY GUIDE 59

The Gospel Day

STUDY GUIDE 3 OF 3:

The Four Epochs and the Evening Light

An overview of the Gospel Day's changing spiritual conditions.



Equipping and empowering for effective service

2 Timothy 2:2

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE STUDENT

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Preparing a Study Plan before starting this Study Guide will assist you in completing it within a designated timeframe. It also helps in developing the discipline required for studying God's Word effectively.

Proverbs 16:3:

> *Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

My Study Guide Journal

Keep a record as you progress through your Study Guide, including the Personal Responses for each section, for future reference and goal setting.

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PREFACE

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The Gospel Day is the great New Covenant day that began at Pentecost in A.D. 31 and continues until the end of time. Within that one day, Scripture reveals changing spiritual conditions through which the Church has passed. These broad conditions can be understood as four great epochs: the Morning Light, the Dark Day, the Cloudy Day, and the Evening Light.

This Study Guide brings those four epochs together so that we can see the Gospel Day as one continuous spiritual journey. The truth of Jesus Christ does not change from one epoch to another. What changes is the condition in which that truth is received, preserved, obscured, opposed or restored.

A major part of this study is the prophetic period of 1260 days, also expressed in Revelation as forty-two months and *"a time, and times, and half a time."* This period is connected with spiritual decline, the suppression of truth and the preservation of God's people through the Dark Day. It helps us understand that even when visible religion became corrupt, Jesus Christ did not lose His Church.

The same prophetic record also shows that darkness was not the end of the Gospel Day. Light began to return. The Reformation recovered important truths, but much remained clouded by creeds, divisions and inherited traditions. Scripture then points us towards an Evening Light in which truth would again shine with greater clarity.

Zechariah wrote in **Zechariah 14:7**:

> *"But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."*

The Evening Light is therefore not a new Gospel. It is a restoration of the light already present in the Morning Time. Its purpose is not to create another religious movement, but to bring God's people back to the spiritual reality of Jesus Christ as Head, one born-again Church, one Spirit and one Gospel.

As we examine these four epochs, one principle must remain before us: the Gospel Day belongs to Jesus Christ. Through Morning Light, darkness, cloudy conditions and restored Evening Light, He has remained faithful to His people. The changing conditions of history never change the centre of the message.

It is still Jesus Christ. Greater light must always reveal Him more clearly.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why greater Gospel light must reveal the same Jesus Christ more clearly.

Personal Reflection

Do you ever treat claims of increasing light as more important than what the Bible has already revealed about Jesus Christ?

Action Step

Examine one claim of greater light and state how you will reject or correct it if it moves attention away from Jesus Christ and His Word.

INTRODUCTION: THE FOUR EPOCHS OF THE GOSPEL DAY

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The Gospel Day is one continuous New Covenant day, beginning at Pentecost in A.D. 31 and continuing until the end of time. Yet within that one day, Scripture reveals changing spiritual conditions through which the Church has passed.

These broad conditions can be grouped into four great epochs:

- The Morning Light;
- The Dark Day;
- The Cloudy Day;
- The Evening Light.

An epoch is a broad period marked by a particular spiritual condition. These four epochs do not represent four different Gospels, four different Churches or four different plans of salvation. The Gospel remains the same. Jesus Christ remains the same. The truth remains the same.

What changes is the degree to which that truth is understood, preserved, obscured or restored among God's people.

The Morning Light

The Morning Light begins with Pentecost. This was the bright beginning of the Gospel Day, when Jesus Christ came as Spirit to dwell within His people. The Church walked in the clear light of the Gospel, united under Jesus Christ as Head.

The Morning Time therefore represents apostolic truth, spiritual life, unity and the clear revelation of the New Covenant. It provides the pattern against which later conditions can be measured.

The Dark Day

As the centuries passed, compromise entered the visible Christian world. Human authority increasingly replaced the simple rule of Jesus Christ. Religious power became joined to political power, and truth was obscured beneath tradition, hierarchy and false teaching.

This long period is represented as the Dark Day. Darkness does not mean that Jesus Christ ceased to have a people. Neither does it mean that the truth disappeared from the earth.

God preserved His Church. The Word and the Spirit continued to bear witness even when truth was hidden beneath powerful religious systems.

The Cloudy Day

The Protestant Reformation brought important light back into view. Truths that had been buried beneath centuries of religious control began to be recovered. The authority of Scripture was emphasised again, and many people turned away from the corruption that had developed.

Yet the restoration was incomplete. Creeds, denominations, national churches and inherited traditions continued to divide those who professed faith in Jesus Christ.

There was light, but there were also clouds. For this reason, this period is described as the Cloudy Day.

The Evening Light

The prophetic picture does not end in darkness or cloudiness.

Zechariah wrote in **Zechariah 14:7**:

> *"But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."*

The Gospel Day would have an Evening Time in which light would again shine with greater clarity. The Evening Light is therefore a period of restoration and gathering.

Truth hidden beneath centuries of tradition begins to be seen more clearly. God's people are called away from sectarian division and back to the one body of Christ, with Jesus Christ as the only Head.

One Day, Four Spiritual Conditions

These four epochs help us see the larger movement of the Gospel Day:

- The Morning Light: the clear beginning;
- The Dark Day: truth obscured;
- The Cloudy Day: partial recovery;
- The Evening Light: restoration and increasing clarity.

But through every epoch, one truth remains unchanged: Jesus Christ never lost His Church. The spiritual conditions changed. Human systems rose and fell. Understanding became clearer or more obscured.

But the Gospel Day continued. The same Jesus Christ who was revealed in the Morning Time remains the centre of the Evening Light.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why four epochs describe changing spiritual conditions in one continuous Gospel Day.

Personal Reflection

Have changes in the visible Christian world caused you to question whether Jesus Christ or His Gospel has changed?

Action Step

When comparing two epochs, identify one truth about Christ that you will continue to trust regardless of visible religious conditions.

THE MORNING LIGHT: PENTECOST AND THE EARLY CHURCH

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The first great epoch of the Gospel Day is the Morning Light. Every natural day begins with morning, when light first breaks across the darkness. In the same way, the Gospel Day began in clear spiritual light. Pentecost in A.D. 31 marked the beginning of this great New Covenant day, when Jesus Christ returned as Spirit to dwell within His people.

The Morning Light therefore gives us the original pattern of the New Testament Church. It shows us what the Church looks like when Jesus Christ is recognised as Head, the Spirit governs His people, and believers walk together in the truth.

The Gospel Day Began at Pentecost

Luke wrote in **Acts 2:1**:

> *"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."*

Notice the condition of the disciples: *"with one accord."* Their unity was not produced by an organisation, a creed or a human system of government. They were gathered together in obedience to Jesus Christ and waiting for the fulfilment of His promise.

At Pentecost, Jesus Christ came as Spirit to dwell within His people, and the Gospel Day had begun. This is why the Morning Light cannot be separated from the indwelling life of Jesus Christ. The New Testament Church was not created by people trying to imitate Jesus from a distance. Jesus Christ Himself lived within His people by the Spirit.

The life of the Church came from Him.

One Church Under One Head

The Church of the Morning Time was one spiritual body. There were congregations in different places, but they were not separate denominations competing with one another. They belonged to the same Jesus Christ. Their identity, unity and life came from Him.

Luke wrote in **Acts 2:47**:

> *"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*

Notice who added people to the Church: *"the Lord added."* The Church was not built by human membership systems. Those who were saved were added by the Lord. This remains an important feature of the Morning Light: the Church belonged to Jesus Christ, and He governed His people.

United in Doctrine, Purpose and Mission

The Morning-Time believers were united in three important areas: doctrine, purpose and mission. Their unity was not simply an agreement to meet together. It was a spiritual oneness produced by their common life in Jesus Christ.

Paul later encouraged believers to preserve this condition. He wrote in **Philippians 2:2**:

> *"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."*

This gives us a picture of biblical unity. To be *"of one accord"* does not mean that every believer has the same personality, background or natural ability. It means that God's people are governed by the same truth and the same indwelling Lord.

Their unity is spiritual before it is organisational. The Morning Light therefore provides an important standard for everything that follows in the Gospel Day.

Jesus Prayed for This Unity

The unity of the early Church was also connected with the prayer of Jesus before His death.

Jesus prayed in **John 17:21**:

> *"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."*

Jesus did not pray for His people to become divided into competing religious bodies. His prayer was: *"That they all may be one."* The Morning-Time Church displayed this spiritual oneness. It became a visible reality among people who had received the life of Jesus Christ.

This unity would later be damaged by compromise, human authority and religious division, but the Morning Light gives us the original pattern.

The Morning Light Was Clear Gospel Light

The Morning Time was characterised by clarity. Jesus Christ was the centre, the Church was spiritual, the Spirit governed, and the Word was the standard. Believers were called to holiness and obedience, and the Gospel was carried outward with conviction and power.

This does not mean that the New Testament contains no warnings about error or departure. The apostles repeatedly warned believers to remain faithful because conditions could change. But the foundation had been clearly established.

The Church did not need another Gospel, another Head or another Spirit. Everything necessary for salvation and spiritual life had already been given in Jesus Christ.

From Morning Light Towards Darkness

Within this Gospel Day framework, the Morning-Time period extends from Pentecost in A.D. 31 to approximately the later third century. As time passed, the spiritual condition of the visible Christian world began to change.

The unity of the Morning Time began to give way to compromise. Human authority became increasingly influential, religious systems developed, and the clear simplicity of the early Church began to be obscured.

These changes did not mean that Jesus Christ ceased to have a Church. Neither did they mean that the Gospel itself had changed. They marked a change in spiritual condition.

The light of the Morning Time gives us the standard by which that decline can be recognised. Before we examine the darkness that followed, we must therefore keep the Morning pattern clearly before us:

- Jesus Christ as Head;
- One born-again Church;
- One Spirit;
- One Gospel;
- One people united by His life within.

The Morning Light shows us where the Gospel Day began. Every true restoration must ultimately bring God's people back to the spiritual reality that was present from the beginning.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why Morning Light gives the original New Testament Church pattern.

Personal Reflection

Have you measured the Church chiefly by an organisation's history rather than by the apostolic teaching and Christ's indwelling life?

Action Step

Examine one present church practice against the Morning-Time pattern, and state the change in understanding or conduct that is needed.

THE 1260 PROPHETIC DAYS: A DAY FOR A YEAR

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One of the most important prophetic measurements connected with the Gospel Day is the period of 1260 days. Revelation expresses this same period in several ways: 1260 days, forty-two months, and *"a time, and times, and half a time."*

These expressions are not three unrelated prophecies. They describe the same symbolic period from different prophetic viewpoints. Before we identify its historical fulfilment, however, we need to understand how Scripture itself uses symbolic time.

A Prophetic Day Can Represent a Year

The Bible gives clear examples in which God deliberately uses a day to represent a year.

Moses recorded in **Numbers 14:34**:

> *"After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise."*

The spies had searched Canaan for forty days. Because of Israel's unbelief, those forty days became the pattern for forty years of wandering. The principle is stated plainly: *"each day for a year."*

The same principle appears in Ezekiel's prophetic action. God said in **Ezekiel 4:5-6**:

> *"For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year."*

Again, Scripture itself supplies the interpretation: *"I have appointed thee each day for a year."* This does not mean that every mention of a day anywhere in the Bible should automatically be changed into a year. The context must establish that we are dealing with symbolic prophetic time.

Where prophecy gives a symbolic period within a symbolic vision, these verses give us a biblical basis for recognising that days may represent years.

A Biblical Pattern, Not a Mechanical Formula

The day-for-a-year principle must be handled with the same care as every other prophetic symbol. We do not apply it mechanically to every number in Scripture.

We apply it where the verse is prophetic, symbolic and supported by the wider biblical pattern. This keeps interpretation under the authority of Scripture rather than allowing arithmetic itself to control the meaning.

The Three Expressions Describe the Same Period

Revelation uses three principal expressions for this prophetic period.

First, John speaks of forty-two months. He wrote in **Revelation 11:2**:

> *"But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."*

Second, the same chapter gives 1260 days. John wrote in **Revelation 11:3**:

> *"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."*

Third, Revelation describes the period as "a time, and times, and half a time." John wrote in **Revelation 12:14**:

> *"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."*

These expressions correspond with one another. A time represents one year, times two years, and half a time half a year. Together they make three and a half prophetic years.

Using the prophetic pattern of twelve months of thirty days, three and a half years equal forty-two months, and forty-two months equal 1260 days. The different expressions therefore point to the same prophetic span.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why 1260 days, forty-two months and time, times and half a time describe one prophetic period.

Personal Reflection

Does your interest in calculating the 1260 days cause you to overlook the spiritual oppression and preservation described in the prophecy?

Action Step

Compare the three time expressions, then explain how their shared message should strengthen your confidence in Christ's care for His people.

Daniel Gives the Same Prophetic Pattern

The same form of expression appears in Daniel.

Daniel wrote in **Daniel 7:25**:

> *"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."*

Daniel describes a period in which a false power opposes the saints and exalts itself against God. Revelation uses closely related language.

John wrote in **Revelation 13:5**:

> *"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."*

The similarity is important. Daniel gives *"a time and times and the dividing of time."* Revelation gives *"forty and two months."*

Both are connected with opposition to God's people and the rise of false religious authority. This is another example of Scripture helping us interpret Scripture.

The 1260 Period Is Connected With Darkness and Preservation

The verses do not present the 1260 period simply as a mathematical measurement. They describe spiritual conditions.

The holy city is trodden under foot, the two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, the woman is driven into the wilderness, and a false power speaks great things and blasphemies. These conditions point towards a long period of spiritual darkness and oppression.

But the prophecy contains another truth that must not be missed: God preserves His people. The woman is not destroyed in the wilderness. She is nourished. The two witnesses are not absent. They continue to prophesy.

Truth may be obscured, resisted and suppressed, but Jesus Christ does not lose His Church. The 1260-day prophecy therefore tells us both about apostasy and preservation.

The Example of Elijah

Scripture also gives us an earlier period of three and a half years associated with spiritual decline.

James wrote in **James 5:17**:

> *"Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months."*

During the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, Israel was marked by idolatry and opposition to the servants of God. The three-and-a-half-year drought therefore provides a useful biblical picture of spiritual barrenness during a period of widespread departure from truth.

We should not make every detail of Elijah's drought identical with Revelation's prophecy. But the repeated three-and-a-half-year pattern helps us recognise the biblical association between this period and conditions of judgment, opposition and spiritual drought.

The Prophecy Must Be Read Before the History

The day-for-a-year principle does not give us permission to choose any historical period of 1260 years and call it fulfilment. The prophetic conditions must come first.

We must ask:

- What power is being described?
- What happens to God's people?
- What happens to the Word and Spirit?
- What marks the beginning of the darkness?
- What marks its ending?

Only when those conditions are established should historical dates be considered. This keeps the same principle already established in our study: conditions before dates.

The 1260 prophetic days therefore provide an important bridge between the symbolic language of Revelation and the historical Dark Day. Under the day-for-a-year principle, 1260 prophetic days represent a long period of 1260 years.

In the next section, we will examine the spiritual conditions that identify that period and see how they correspond with the Dark Day of the Gospel Day.

The number is important, but the number alone is not the message. The prophecy shows that even through prolonged darkness, opposition and false authority, Jesus Christ preserved His people, His Word and His witness.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why the prophetic period must be read with its spiritual conditions before history is applied.

Personal Reflection

Have you accepted a prophetic calculation without first examining the conditions described in the Bible?

Action Step

Read one of the Bible verses concerning the 1260 days and identify one assumption you will reconsider in the light of its spiritual setting.

THE DARK DAY: APOSTASY AND OBSCURED LIGHT

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The Morning Light gave us the original New Testament pattern: Jesus Christ as Head, one born-again Church, one Spirit, one Gospel and a people governed by His life within. But Revelation also shows that the visible Christian world would not remain in that clear condition.

As the centuries passed, compromise increased. Human authority grew. Religious structures became more powerful, and the simplicity of the New Testament Church was increasingly obscured. This broad period is described as the Dark Day.

The Dark Day does not mean that Jesus Christ ceased to have a Church. It does not mean that the Gospel disappeared from the earth. The darkness describes the spiritual condition surrounding the truth. False authority became prominent, while the true people of God were increasingly pushed into obscurity.

The Dark Day Within the 1260-Year Framework

The prophetic period we have just examined gives the basic framework. The 1260 days, forty-two months and *"a time, and times, and half a time"* describe one extended period of spiritual oppression. Under the day-for-a-year principle, the 1260 prophetic days represent 1260 years.

Within this study, that period is understood as stretching approximately from A.D. 270 to A.D. 1530. These dates are not chosen first and then forced into the prophecy. They are historical anchors connected with the conditions Scripture describes: growing apostasy, the rise of religious-political authority, the suppression of truth, persecution of the saints and the preservation of the Church in obscurity.

The important point is not simply the mathematics. The prophecy describes a spiritual condition.

The Holy City Trodden Under Foot

John wrote in **Revelation 11:2**:

> *"But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."*

The image is one of spiritual desecration. The holy city represents the people and things belonging to God. To tread something under foot is to treat it as common, rejected or without proper honour.

During the Dark Day, the visible Christian world increasingly moved away from the simplicity of Christ's spiritual kingdom. Human traditions, religious authority and outward systems gained prominence over the direct rule of Jesus Christ through His Word and Spirit.

Yet Revelation does not say that God ceased to know those who were His. The temple is measured. God still distinguishes what belongs to Him.

Even when the visible religious world becomes confused, the Lord knows His people.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why God preserved His people while the holy city was trodden under foot.

Personal Reflection

When religion appears confused or corrupt, have you been tempted to think Jesus Christ no longer has a people?

Action Step

Identify one way you will recognise Christ's people through the new birth and the authority of His Word rather than outward prominence.

The Church in the Wilderness

Revelation chapter 12 gives another picture of the same period. John wrote in **Revelation 12:6**:

> *"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."*

Within this prophetic framework, the woman represents the Church. Notice what happens to her. She is not destroyed. She is not abandoned. She is taken into the wilderness, and God prepares a place where she is fed.

The wilderness therefore represents obscurity rather than extinction. The true Church was no longer the dominant public religious institution. Those who remained faithful to Jesus Christ could be scattered, hidden, persecuted or unknown to the great systems of religion, but they still belonged to Him.

This is an essential truth. The Dark Day is not the story of Christ losing His Church. It is the story of Christ preserving His Church while false religion gained public power.

John repeats the same condition in **Revelation 12:14**:

> *"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."*

Again, the emphasis is preservation: *"she is nourished."* Darkness surrounded her, but Jesus Christ remained faithful.

False Authority Rises

Daniel and Revelation also describe a power that exalts itself during this same prophetic period.

Daniel wrote in **Daniel 7:25**:

> *"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."*

John uses closely related language in **Revelation 13:5**:

> *"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."*

Within the established prophetic interpretation of this study, Daniel's little horn and the first beast of Revelation 13 describe the rise of the papal religious system during the Dark Day.

The central issue is authority. Jesus Christ alone is the Head of His Church. His Word is the standard. His Spirit gives life and governs His people.

When human religious authority claims the place that belongs to Christ, establishes doctrine above or beside Scripture, and uses worldly power to enforce spiritual conformity, the result is a departure from the New Testament pattern.

That is the spiritual darkness Revelation exposes.

The Saints Under Opposition

The prophecy also describes opposition against those who remain faithful.

John wrote in **Revelation 13:7**:

> *"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."*

Daniel uses similar language when he says that the opposing power would *"wear out the saints of the most High."*

Church history contains repeated examples of people being imprisoned, exiled, condemned or killed because they refused to submit their conscience to religious authority. We do not need a precise numerical estimate to establish the point.

The prophetic condition is clear: worldly religious power does not simply teach error. When joined with coercive authority, it can also persecute those who refuse to conform.

The true Church therefore existed in a very different condition from the visible religious system that claimed Christian authority. One had outward prominence. The other was often hidden. One relied increasingly upon institutional and political power. The other remained dependent upon Jesus Christ.

Darkness Was a Condition of the Visible Religious World

It is also important to understand what the expression Dark Day does not mean.

It does not mean that every person living during those centuries was spiritually dark. It does not mean that nobody understood the Gospel or lived faithfully before God. Neither does it mean that the institutional system represented every person associated with it in exactly the same way.

The prophetic picture is broader. It describes the dominant spiritual condition that developed across the visible Christian world.

This distinction protects us from confusing the Church of Jesus Christ with the institutions that claimed to represent Christianity. The true Church is composed of those who are born again. Its existence does not depend upon political recognition, public buildings, official structures or human records.

For this reason, the Church could continue even when she was not publicly prominent. Revelation's wilderness picture is therefore especially important. God did not need the true Church to possess worldly influence in order to preserve her. He preserved His people because they belonged to Him.

The Dark Day reveals the difference between outward religious power and inward spiritual life.

Truth Was Obscured, Not Destroyed

This distinction is vital. The Dark Day was dark because truth was obscured, not because truth ceased to exist.

The Gospel itself did not change. Jesus Christ did not change. The new birth did not change. The spiritual nature of the Church did not change.

What changed was the surrounding religious condition. Tradition accumulated. Human authority increased. Ceremony and institutional identity became dominant. The clear Morning-Light pattern became difficult to see beneath layers of religious development.

But the Word of God still existed. The Spirit of God still worked. People were still saved. Jesus Christ still knew those who belonged to Him.

This is why Revelation can show both darkness and preservation at the same time.

From Darkness Towards Partial Light

The Dark Day did not continue forever. By the later part of this period, pressures were developing that would weaken the dominance of the established religious system. Scripture became more accessible, voices of reform arose, and the authority of Rome began to be challenged.

Around A.D. 1530, the Gospel Day entered another broad spiritual condition. The darkness had not disappeared, but light was beginning to break through.

This transition would become the Cloudy Day.

The importance of the Dark Day, therefore, is not simply that false religion gained power. Its deeper lesson is that Jesus Christ remained faithful when outward conditions were at their worst.

His Church survived without the approval of powerful institutions. His truth survived without the support of governments. His Spirit continued to work when human systems claimed religious authority.

The Dark Day reminds us that the Church belongs to Jesus Christ alone. Human systems may rise. Truth may be obscured. The saints may be opposed. But the gates of hell cannot destroy what Jesus Christ Himself has built.

The light may be hidden for a season. It is never extinguished.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why Dark Day conditions obscured but did not extinguish Gospel light.

Personal Reflection

Have you spoken of the Dark Day as though the Gospel vanished, or have you recognised Christ's faithfulness through it?

Action Step

Correct one statement you have made about spiritual darkness so that it also acknowledges how Christ preserved His people and His Word.

THE TWO WITNESSES: THE WORD AND THE SPIRIT

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Revelation chapter 11 gives another important picture of God's faithfulness during the Dark Day. While the holy city is shown being trodden under foot, God also reveals two witnesses who continue to testify throughout the same prophetic period.

These witnesses are understood within this prophetic framework as the Word of God and the Spirit of God. They show us that although truth became obscured and false religious authority gained public prominence, God never left Himself without a witness.

The Two Witnesses Prophesy

John wrote in **Revelation 11:3-4**:

> *"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."*

The prophetic period is again 1260 days. This is the same 1260-year period already connected with the Dark Day.

But notice that the witnesses are still active: *"they shall prophesy."* Truth has not disappeared. God's testimony continues.

The condition, however, is very different from the clear Morning Light. The witnesses are described as being *"clothed in sackcloth."* Sackcloth in Scripture is associated with mourning, sorrow and humiliation. Within this prophecy, it pictures the Word and Spirit bearing witness under conditions of oppression and obscurity.

Their witness continues, but it does not enjoy the open prominence seen in the Morning Time.

The Word and Spirit Belong Together

The image of the two olive trees connects Revelation 11 with Zechariah chapter 4. Zechariah saw a candlestick supplied with oil through olive trees. When he asked what the vision meant, the answer brought the emphasis back to the Spirit of God.

Zechariah wrote in **Zechariah 4:6**:

> *"Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."*

Notice the relationship between the Word of the LORD and *"my spirit."* God's Word and God's Spirit work in harmony.

The Spirit does not lead contrary to the Word. The Word is not rightly understood apart from the Spirit who gave it.

This is why these two witnesses provide such an important picture throughout the Gospel Day. Human religious systems may develop creeds, traditions and structures, but God's true testimony remains His Word and His Spirit.

The Witness Continued Through the Dark Day

During the 1260-year period, the testimony of the Word and Spirit was restricted and obscured, but it was never extinguished.

This condition included:

- Spiritual oppression;
- Obscurity;
- Suppression through religious tradition;
- Resistance from man-controlled systems.

This agrees with the wider prophetic picture. The woman is in the wilderness. The witnesses are in sackcloth. The holy city is trodden under foot. These are different images describing related spiritual conditions.

The visible religious system may dominate outwardly, but God continues to preserve His truth and His people.

This is why we must never interpret the Dark Day as though there were no saved people during those centuries. Jesus Christ still had a Church. The Word still testified. The Spirit still worked.

But the surrounding religious condition made that witness difficult to see.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why the Word and Spirit continued witnessing during the Dark Day.

Personal Reflection

Have you separated the Word and Spirit in your understanding, or assumed that an obscured witness is an absent witness?

Action Step

Examine Revelation 11 and describe one change in the way you will rely on Christ's Word and Spirit together.

The Witnesses Are Symbolically Killed

Revelation then describes another change.

John wrote in **Revelation 11:7-8**:

> *"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."*

This is symbolic language. The Word of God did not literally cease to exist, and the Spirit of God did not cease to exist.

The prophecy describes a condition in which the effective authority and influence of the Word and Spirit were treated as though dead.

This condition is connected particularly with the period following the close of the 1260 years, when Protestant systems multiplied. The Bible became increasingly available, but human creeds, denominational identities and religious structures continued to divide God's people.

The outward form changed, but full restoration had not yet come.

Three Days and a Half

Revelation says that the witnesses remain in this condition for three days and a half.

John wrote in **Revelation 11:11**:

> *"And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them."*

Following the 1,260 days during which the two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth, Revelation describes another spiritual condition. The witnesses are symbolically killed, and their bodies remain exposed for three and a half days. This does not mean that God's Word or Spirit ceased to exist. It represents a period in which their rightful authority was rejected or obscured by human religious systems.

Within the established prophetic understanding of the Gospel Day, these three and a half days correspond with the approximately 350 years between A.D. 1530 and A.D. 1880. This period saw the multiplication of Protestant denominations, the development of human creeds and the continued scattering of God's people. Although important biblical truths were recovered, the full authority of the Word and Spirit had not yet been restored among the visible Christian world.

The Bible does not expressly define these three and a half days as 350 years. Their historical application must therefore be examined through the spiritual conditions described in the prophecy rather than through an assumed universal rule that one prophetic day equals one century.

The essential truth is that the witnesses did not remain dead. The Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet. This points towards the restoration of the Word and Spirit to their rightful authority among God's people, bringing them back to the truth, unity and spiritual life found in Jesus Christ.

The Spirit of Life Entered Into Them

The prophecy does not end with the witnesses lying dead. John says: *"the Spirit of life from God entered into them."* They stood upon their feet.

This points towards restoration. The Word would again be given its rightful authority. The Spirit would again be recognised as the One who governs and gives life. The people of God would be called away from human systems and back to the spiritual simplicity of Jesus Christ.

The two witnesses therefore carry us across a major transition in the Gospel Day. They testify in sackcloth through the Dark Day. Their influence is symbolically killed during the period of religious division that follows. Then they stand again as the Evening Light approaches.

Through every stage, one truth remains: God never lost His witness.

The Word endured. The Spirit endured. Jesus Christ continued to preserve His Church.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why the Spirit of life revives visible witness without creating a new Gospel.

Personal Reflection

Have you thought restored Gospel light required a new revelation beyond the teaching already given in the Bible?

Action Step

Select one recovered truth and explain how you will test it against the Bible rather than accepting it because a movement teaches it.

THE CLOUDY DAY: PARTIAL LIGHT RETURNS

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The Dark Day did not continue unchanged. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, important changes were taking place within the visible Christian world. The authority of the papal system was being challenged, Scripture was becoming more widely available, and voices were calling people back towards truths that had long been obscured.

Light was beginning to break through, but it was not yet the clear light of the Morning Time. For this reason, the third great epoch of the Gospel Day is described as the Cloudy Day. There was light, but there were still clouds. Truth was being recovered, but God's people remained scattered.

The Reformation Brought Real Light

The Protestant Reformation represented an important change in spiritual conditions. Reformers challenged the authority of Rome and called attention again to the Scriptures. Truths that had been buried beneath centuries of religious tradition were brought back into public view.

The Bible became increasingly accessible to ordinary people. Men and women could read the Scriptures for themselves rather than depending entirely upon an established religious hierarchy. This was genuine progress, and the Reformation should not therefore be dismissed as though nothing important occurred.

Light had returned, but the restoration was incomplete.

A Break With Rome Was Not Yet Full Restoration

Around A.D. 1530, the Augsburg Confession gave formal expression to the beliefs of the Lutheran reformers. Within the Gospel Day framework, this period provides an important transition.

The authority of Rome was being rejected, but many inherited teachings, ceremonies and religious structures remained. The visible Christian world did not simply return to the pattern of Pentecost. Instead, new religious organisations developed, national churches appeared, creeds defined membership and doctrine, and different reform movements followed different leaders and developed different systems.

The result was not a return to the visible unity of the Morning Light. It was a multiplication of religious bodies.

The Cloudy Day Was a Time of Scattering

Ezekiel gives language that helps us understand this spiritual condition.

Ezekiel wrote in **Ezekiel 34:11-12**:

> *"For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day."*

Notice the condition of the sheep: *"scattered."* This is a central characteristic of the Cloudy Day. God still had sheep, and they still belonged to Him, but they were scattered among different religious systems.

The problem was therefore not that God had no people. The problem was division. Those who belonged to the one body of Christ were scattered among competing sects, denominations and organisations.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why the Cloudy Day recovered light while God's people remained scattered.

Personal Reflection

Have you confused the recovery of particular truths during the Reformation with the complete restoration of spiritual unity?

Action Step

Identify one valuable recovered teaching and one remaining division, then state how you will keep Christ's one body above denominational loyalty.

Partial Truth Was Not the Same as Full Light

Different groups recovered important truths. Some emphasised justification by faith, while others stressed repentance, holiness, evangelism, missionary work or particular teachings they believed had been neglected. Much of this contributed to the recovery of biblical understanding.

But partial recovery could also become another source of division when a particular truth became the identity of a separate religious body. Instead of all believers being gathered under Jesus Christ alone, people became identified by denominational names, creeds and traditions.

The light was increasing, but the clouds remained.

The Second Beast Pictures Another Religious Condition

Revelation 13 introduces another symbolic power after the first beast.

John wrote in **Revelation 13:11**:

> *"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."*

Within the prophetic interpretation preserved in this study, this second beast represents fallen Protestantism, particularly where Protestant religion became joined with civil authority.

Its appearance is significant. It has horns *"like a lamb."* It appears Christian and presents itself differently from the earlier papal system. Yet John says: *"he spake as a dragon."*

The outward form changed, but the same problem of human religious authority could remain. A movement could reject Rome while still reproducing religious control, creeds, hierarchy, political involvement and persecution. Breaking from one system did not automatically restore the spiritual simplicity of the New Testament Church.

The Word Was Available, Yet Its Authority Was Still Restricted

This helps us understand the symbolic death of the two witnesses discussed previously. The Bible was increasingly available, and the Spirit of God continued to work. Yet the clear authority of the Word and Spirit was often limited by human systems.

People could read Scripture, but denominational creeds told them how their group interpreted it. People could speak of the Spirit, while religious structures remained governed by inherited traditions. The witnesses existed, but their full influence was not yet restored.

This is why the period can contain both light and darkness at the same time.

The Three and a Half Days

Within this prophetic framework, the three days and a half of Revelation 11 have been associated with the period of approximately 350 years, from around A.D. 1530 to A.D. 1880. During this period, Protestant groups multiplied.

The exact prophetic calculation remains subject to the same principle we have already established: conditions before dates. What matters most here is the spiritual condition described. The Dark Day had ended, but Morning-Light unity had not yet been restored.

God Promised to Gather His Sheep

Ezekiel's prophecy does not end with scattering. God says: *"I will both search my sheep, and seek them out."* The scattered condition was not permanent. The Shepherd Himself would gather His people.

Zechariah also described the movement from unclear light towards something greater. He wrote in **Zechariah 14:6-7**:

> *"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."*

The words describe the Cloudy Day well: *"not day, nor night."* It was no longer the deep darkness of the previous epoch, but neither was it the clear Morning Light. Something more was coming.

At evening time, *"it shall be light."*

The Cloudy Day therefore represents an important stage in restoration. Truth was returning, Scripture was being recovered, and religious darkness was being challenged. But God's people were still scattered.

The next great movement of the Gospel Day would not simply recover another isolated doctrine. It would call God's people back towards one body, one Spirit, one Word and one Head: Jesus Christ.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why God's promise to gather His sheep points beyond isolated recovered doctrines.

Personal Reflection

Are you satisfied with only the teaching emphasised by your own group, while neglecting the unity of all who are born again?

Action Step

Consider one genuine believer outside your usual fellowship and explain how you will recognise and encourage your shared life in Christ.

BABEL, SCATTERING AND RELIGIOUS DIVISION

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The account of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11 gives us a useful picture of several spiritual conditions found within the Gospel Day. The event itself was literal history, but its themes of unity, departure, human building, confusion and scattering provide a pattern that helps us understand the movement from the Morning Light through darkness and into the Cloudy Day.

We should not force every detail of Babel into a prophetic meaning. But the broad pattern is striking: there is unity, there is departure, there is a human attempt to build, there is confusion, and there is scattering. Later, within the Gospel Day, God promises to gather His scattered sheep again.

One Language: A Picture of Unity

Genesis begins the account with a simple statement.

Moses wrote in **Genesis 11:1**:

> *"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech."*

The people were united in language. Within the Gospel Day framework, this provides a picture of the spiritual unity seen in the Morning Time.

At Pentecost, God's people were not divided into competing denominations, creeds and religious identities. They were united under Jesus Christ. Their unity was not produced by human organisation. It came from one Spirit, one Gospel and one Lord.

The Morning Light therefore gives us the original spiritual pattern: God's people united in truth under Jesus Christ.

The Movement Away From the Original Position

Genesis then records that the people moved and settled in the plain of Shinar.

Moses wrote in **Genesis 11:2**:

> *"And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there."*

Within the Gospel Day framework, this movement is used as a picture of departure from the original light. The important spiritual principle is clear: apostasy begins with movement away from the truth already received.

The New Testament Church did not need a better foundation than Jesus Christ. It did not need a more powerful Head. It did not need human systems to improve what the Spirit had established. But as the Morning Light gave way to the Dark Day, the visible Christian world increasingly moved away from the simplicity of Christ's rule.

Brick Instead of Stone

The builders at Babel then chose their own building material.

Moses wrote in **Genesis 11:3**:

> *"And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for morter."*

The contrast between brick and stone is significant within this picture. Brick is made by man. Stone is provided by God.

Within this typological picture, brick represents human doctrines, traditions and religious constructions replacing the foundation God has already given.

The New Testament points us to the true Stone. Peter said concerning Jesus Christ in **Acts 4:11**:

> *"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."*

Jesus Christ is not one building material among many. He is the foundation and Head. Whenever human ideas, traditions or religious systems are given authority equal to or greater than His Word, brick begins to replace Stone.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why Babel pictures the danger of replacing living stones with human construction.

Personal Reflection

Have you placed confidence in man-made religious structures instead of Jesus Christ as the Church's foundation and Head?

Action Step

Choose one religious expectation you have accepted and test whether it strengthens dependence on Christ or on human authority; respond accordingly.

"Let Us Make Us a Name"

The builders also revealed their purpose.

Moses wrote in **Genesis 11:4**:

> *"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."*

Notice the words: *"let us make us a name."* This is the opposite of the spiritual simplicity of the New Testament Church.

The Church belongs to Jesus Christ. Its identity is found in Him. Its authority comes from Him. Its life comes from Him.

Babel represents the human desire to build something identifiable, powerful and lasting around ourselves. Within religious history, this tendency appears whenever people gather around human names, systems, creeds or organisations rather than remaining under the Headship of Jesus Christ.

Confusion Produces Scattering

The attempt to preserve human unity eventually produced the opposite result.

Moses wrote in **Genesis 11:7-8**:

> *"Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city."*

The people who had once spoken one language became divided. Their language was confused, and they were scattered.

This provides a powerful picture of what developed during the Cloudy Day. The Reformation recovered important truths, but it did not restore the full visible unity of the Morning Time. Instead, religious bodies multiplied, and different groups developed their own doctrines, creeds, names and systems of government.

Each may have possessed elements of truth, but the result was continued fragmentation. One group emphasised one teaching, another emphasised something different, and another formed around a particular leader or confession.

The Christian world became increasingly divided.

Babel Means Confusion

Genesis explains the name.

Moses wrote in **Genesis 11:9**:

> *"Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."*

Within this spiritual framework, Babel becomes a fitting picture of religious confusion. When believers who profess the same Bible and the same Jesus Christ are divided into competing bodies, speaking conflicting doctrinal languages, the result is confusion.

But division is not the original condition of the Church. Jesus Christ has one body. The born-again are one people. The Spirit does not create competing Churches.

Scattering Is Not the End

The most important part of this picture is that the Gospel Day does not end with Babel. God promises to gather His people.

Ezekiel wrote in **Ezekiel 34:12**:

> *"As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day."*

The scattering describes the condition. The gathering reveals God's answer.

The Evening Light therefore moves in the opposite direction from Babel. Babel scatters, while Jesus Christ gathers. Human systems divide, while Jesus Christ calls His sheep back to one body under one Head.

The purpose of restoration is not to create one more religious organisation among many. It is to recover the spiritual reality that was present in the Morning Light:

one Lord, one Spirit, one Gospel and one born-again Church under Jesus Christ.

The story of Babel therefore helps us understand both the tragedy of religious division and the purpose of the Evening Light.

God does not leave His sheep scattered. He calls them back to Jesus Christ.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why the scattering pictured by Babel need not be the end of God's people.

Personal Reflection

Have you come to accept denominational separation as normal even though Jesus Christ has one born-again body?

Action Step

Name one attitude towards believers in other organisations that needs to change, and identify how you will express fellowship grounded in Christ.

THE EVENING LIGHT: GATHERING AND RESTORATION

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The fourth great epoch of the Gospel Day is the Evening Light. The Gospel Day began in clear Morning Light at Pentecost. That light became obscured through the Dark Day, and during the Cloudy Day important truths returned while God's people remained scattered among religious systems.

But prophecy does not leave the Gospel Day in darkness or confusion. It points towards restoration.

Zechariah wrote in **Zechariah 14:6-7**:

> *"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."*

The movement is clear. There is a period in which the light is *"not clear, nor dark."* Then comes the promise: *"at evening time it shall be light."*

The Evening Light therefore describes the fourth and final broad epoch of the Gospel Day: a time of gathering, restoration and increasing clarity.

The Shepherd Gathers His Scattered Sheep

The Cloudy Day was characterised by scattering. God's people existed among many denominations, creeds and religious organisations. They belonged to Jesus Christ, but outwardly they were divided by systems that had developed through centuries of religious history.

Ezekiel had described this condition and God's answer to it. Ezekiel wrote in **Ezekiel 34:12**:

> *"As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day."*

Notice that God does not say the sheep belong to the places in which they have been scattered. They are still His sheep. The Shepherd seeks them, delivers them and gathers them.

The Evening Light calls God's scattered people back towards the spiritual unity already seen in the Morning Time.

A Movement of Restoration Around A.D. 1880

Within the established Gospel Day framework, the period around A.D. 1880 marks an important historical transition into the Evening Light. A restoration movement associated especially with Daniel S. Warner and other ministers began calling believers away from sectarian identity and towards the biblical truth of one Church under Jesus Christ as Head.

The emphasis was not intended to be the formation of another denomination. The message called people back to the authority of Scripture, the leading of the Spirit, holiness of life and the unity of all who are truly saved. The early movement rejected the idea that the Church should be defined by a human creed, a denominational name or an earthly membership system.

Luke wrote in **Acts 2:47**:

> *"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*

Notice again: *"the Lord added to the church."* That principle is essential. The Church is not created by people enrolling themselves in a human organisation. Jesus Christ builds His Church, and those who are born again belong to Him.

The Evening Light therefore called believers away from sectarian identity and back to Jesus Christ as Head.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why Evening Light calls believers from sectarian identity back to Christ as Head.

Personal Reflection

Where has loyalty to a religious label affected your willingness to recognise another born-again believer as part of Christ's body?

Action Step

Take one respectful step towards fellowship based upon the new birth and shared obedience to Christ, not organisational identity.

Come Out of Religious Confusion

Revelation gives another important call connected with the gathering of God's people.

John wrote in **Revelation 18:4**:

> *"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."*

Notice the words: *"my people."* God has people within conditions of religious confusion, but He calls them out so that they may stand in the truth and unity of Jesus Christ.

The call therefore is not: Come out and create another sect. It is: Come back to Jesus Christ.

Come back to His Word. Come back to the spiritual Church He built. Come back to the unity produced by His Spirit.

The Evening Light Is a Return, Not a New Gospel

This distinction is important. The Evening Light does not introduce a new plan of salvation. It does not add another Gospel to the one preached by the apostles. It does not improve upon Jesus Christ.

It is a movement of restoration towards what was already present in the Morning Light. The original pattern remains:

- Jesus Christ as Head;
- One born-again Church;
- One Spirit;
- One Gospel;
- The Word of God as the standard;
- Holiness flowing from the indwelling life of Jesus Christ.

The Second Harvest

Revelation chapter 14 gives another prophetic picture associated with the Evening Light.

John wrote in **Revelation 14:14-15**:

> *"And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe."*

Within this Gospel Day framework, the harvest pictures Christ gathering His people. The first great gathering occurred at Pentecost in the Morning Light. The Evening Light presents another gathering after centuries of darkness and scattering.

It is not another salvation or another Church. It is the gathering of those who belong to Jesus Christ.

The emphasis is upon Christ doing the gathering. He knows His sheep. He calls them. He separates them from religious confusion and brings them under His Headship.

Restoration of the Word and Spirit

This also connects with the two witnesses of Revelation 11. For centuries the Word and Spirit had testified in sackcloth. During the Cloudy Day, Scripture became more available, yet its authority was still often limited by creeds, traditions and denominational systems.

The Evening Light represents a renewed recognition that God's Word and Spirit must govern His people. The Word cannot be replaced by a creed. The Spirit cannot be replaced by a hierarchy. Jesus Christ cannot be replaced by an institution.

Those involved in the Evening Light did not immediately understand every truth perfectly. They came out of existing systems carrying inherited ideas and practices, so restoration continued to require greater light.

That is important because the Evening Light contains both the sixth and seventh periods of the Gospel Day. Restoration begins, but understanding continues to increase.

Unity Is Spiritual, Not Organisational

The goal of the Evening Light is not to gather every Christian organisation into one larger organisation. That would simply create another human system. Biblical unity begins with the new birth, and those who are born again are already members of the one body of Christ.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 4:4-6**:

> *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."*

There is one body because there is one spiritual life. There is one Spirit because the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ. There is one baptism, the baptism of the Spirit received in the new birth, by which the believer is brought into the body of Christ.

The Evening Light calls God's people to live according to that spiritual reality: one body, one Spirit, one Lord and one faith. The unity is not manufactured from the outside. It flows from the life of Jesus Christ within His people.

Greater Light Must Reveal Jesus More Clearly

The Evening Light carries a continuing spiritual purpose. Every restoration must bring Jesus Christ into clearer view.

If a movement that began by rejecting sectarianism becomes centred upon its own history, organisation, leaders or traditions, it begins to obscure the very truth it was raised to proclaim. The Evening Light must therefore continue moving towards greater clarity.

Human additions must fall away. Inherited errors must be tested by Scripture. Tradition must remain subordinate to the Word. Every increase of light must make Jesus Christ more, not less, central.

The Evening Light is the opposite movement from Babel. Babel moved from unity to confusion and scattering. The Evening Light moves from scattering towards gathering and spiritual unity.

It does not gather people around a new name. It gathers them around the Person.

Jesus Christ is the Head. Jesus Christ is the foundation. Jesus Christ is the life of His Church.

The promise of Evening Light is therefore ultimately a promise of restored clarity concerning Him. God gathers His sheep, restores the authority of His Word, and calls His people back to the spiritual reality that was present from the beginning.

The Morning Light began with Jesus Christ. The Evening Light must reveal Him again with increasing clarity.

As the Gospel Day moves through its final period, the message must become clearer still:

All Jesus.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why greater Evening Light must make Jesus clearer rather than promote a movement.

Personal Reflection

Do you speak more proudly of a restoration movement than of Jesus Christ, who alone is the Head of His Church?

Action Step

Revise one explanation of the Evening Light so that it honours Christ's work rather than promoting an organisation or a minister.

THE SEVENTH PERIOD: GREATER LIGHT AND ALL JESUS

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The Evening Light includes the final periods of the Gospel Day. Within that framework, the seventh period is especially important because it points towards greater clarity, healing and restored understanding.

The purpose of greater light is not to introduce new doctrine outside Scripture. It is to reveal more clearly the truth already given in the Word of God and to bring Jesus Christ more fully into view.

Isaiah wrote in **Isaiah 30:26**:

> *"Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."*

The picture is one of sevenfold light. Truth that had been obscured through centuries of darkness, tradition and division would be seen with increasing clarity.

Greater Light Must Reveal Jesus Christ

Sevenfold light cannot mean receiving another Gospel. The Gospel was already complete in Jesus Christ. The New Covenant had already been established. The Church had already been born.

The Spirit had already been given. What needed restoration was understanding. The final period must therefore take God's people back towards the full light of the Morning Time.

The clearer the light becomes, the more clearly it must reveal Jesus Christ. The centre of the seventh-period message is not a date, a movement, an organisation or a historical minister.

It is All Jesus.

Inherited Ideas Must Be Tested

The Evening Light restoration recovered important truths concerning holiness, the one Church, freedom from sectarianism and Jesus Christ as Head. But those who came out of earlier Protestant systems naturally carried some inherited teachings and practices with them.

These residual influences included:

- The doctrine of inherited sin;
- The idea of entire sanctification as a second definite work of grace;
- The broader two-works-of-grace framework;
- Certain inherited leadership structures;
- Various outward religious traditions and ordinances.

Greater light means that these inherited ideas must not be protected simply because sincere believers once held them. Everything must return to the Word of God. Truth is not established by age, tradition or loyalty to former reformers.

Jesus Christ remains the plumb line.

Complete in Jesus Christ

The final light of the Gospel Day must show the believer's completeness in Jesus Christ. The new birth is not the beginning of an incomplete salvation that requires a later spiritual experience before the believer possesses the Holy Spirit.

At the new birth, Jesus Christ comes to dwell within the believer as Spirit. The believer receives His life and becomes part of His body. The Christian life then flows from the indwelling Christ rather than from an attempt to reproduce His life through human effort.

Greater light therefore does not add something to Jesus. It reveals more clearly what the believer already has in Him.

The believer is complete in Jesus Christ.

All Scripture Finds Its Fulfilment in Jesus Christ

The phrase All Jesus also describes how we understand Scripture. Types point to Him. Shadows find their reality in Him. The promises converge in Him.

The Church belongs to Him. The kingdom is His. The Spirit who indwells the believer is His Spirit.

Even outward ordinances and ceremonies must be understood through their fulfilment in Jesus Christ rather than treated as additions needed to complete the believer. The greater the light becomes, the less room there is for Jesus plus something else. The direction is always towards the sufficiency of His Person.

Caution Concerning A.D. 1930

Some within the Church of God tradition identified A.D. 1930 as the beginning of the seventh, or Laodicean, period. The exact date should be treated with caution.

The seventh period is not rejected, but A.D. 1930 should not be treated as definitively established unless the prophetic conditions clearly confirm it. The same rule continues to apply: conditions before dates.

A traditional date does not become authoritative simply because it has been repeated for many years. Scripture remains the authority.

A Return to Morning Truth

The seventh period is therefore a movement towards the clarity of the Morning Light. This is not a movement backwards historically, but a return to the same spiritual reality:

- One born-again Church;
- One Spirit;
- One Gospel;
- Jesus Christ as Head;
- The Word of God as the final authority;
- The indwelling Christ as the believer's life.

The purpose of sevenfold light is not to make God's people more conscious of a movement. It is to make them more conscious of Jesus Christ.

The final message of the Gospel Day must therefore become simpler, clearer and more complete:

- Jesus Christ is the centre.
- Jesus Christ is the fulfilment.
- Jesus Christ is the life.
- Jesus Christ is enough.

The greater the light becomes, the more clearly the message must be:

All Jesus.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why the seventh period calls for a return to Morning truth with greater light.

Personal Reflection

Have you treated greater light as permission to add a new Gospel or spiritual experience beyond what Christ has already given?

Action Step

Test one inherited teaching against the new birth and **Colossians 2:10***, and state what you will believe or teach differently.*

CONCLUSION: FROM MORNING LIGHT TO EVENING LIGHT

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The four epochs of the Gospel Day reveal one continuous spiritual journey. The Gospel Day began in Morning Light at Pentecost in A.D. 31. Jesus Christ came as Spirit to dwell within His people, and the Church stood in unity, truth and spiritual life under one Head.

As the centuries passed, that clear condition became obscured. The Dark Day brought compromise, false authority and increasing religious control. Yet Jesus Christ did not lose His Church. The woman remained in the wilderness, and the Word and Spirit continued to witness in sackcloth.

Truth was hidden and opposed, but it was never destroyed.

The Cloudy Day brought partial recovery. Scripture became more accessible, important truths were restored, and the authority of Rome was challenged. Yet the people of God remained scattered among creeds, denominations and competing religious systems.

Then came the Evening Light.

God began gathering His scattered sheep and calling believers back towards the spiritual reality already present in the Morning Time: one body, one Spirit, one Gospel and Jesus Christ as Head. This movement was a return from sectarian division towards the authority of the Word and Spirit.

The movement of the Gospel Day can therefore be seen clearly:

- Morning Light: unity and clear truth;
- Dark Day: truth obscured;
- Cloudy Day: partial light and continued scattering;
- Evening Light: gathering and restoration.

But the changing conditions never changed Jesus Christ. He remained the Head of His Church. He preserved His people through darkness. He continued to speak through His Word and Spirit.

When greater light returned, its purpose was not to create something beyond the Gospel already given. It was to reveal Jesus Christ more clearly.

This is especially important as we consider the final period of the Gospel Day. Sevenfold light must not lead us into new religious systems, new traditions or greater confidence in human movements. It must lead us back to the Person.

The Gospel Day began with Jesus Christ. The Church belongs to Jesus Christ. The Spirit within the believer is the Spirit of Christ.

The truth finds its fulfilment in Jesus Christ. The restoration of the Evening Light must finally remove whatever has obscured Him.

From Morning Light to Evening Light, the message remains the same:

- Jesus Christ is the centre;
- Jesus Christ is the life of His Church;
- Jesus Christ is enough.

The four epochs therefore tell not simply the story of changing Church history, but the story of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to His people throughout the entire Gospel Day.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why the four epochs show Christ's faithfulness through changing Church conditions.

Personal Reflection

When considering centuries of apostasy and division, has your confidence in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ weakened?

Action Step

Describe how Christ preserved His Word and His people across the four epochs, and explain how that truth will shape your response to present discouragement.

MODULE CONCLUSION: THE GOSPEL DAY

BACK TO CONTENTS

Throughout this module, we have followed the Gospel Day from its beginning at Pentecost in A.D. 31 through the changing spiritual conditions revealed in prophecy and Church history.

The Gospel Day is the great New Covenant day in which we now live. It began when Jesus Christ returned as Spirit to dwell within His people, and it continues until the end of time.

It is one day. There is not another Gospel age still waiting to begin. There is not another earthly kingdom that must replace the spiritual kingdom already established through Jesus Christ.

The Gospel Day is the final dispensation.

Jesus Christ Is the Centre of the Gospel Day

From beginning to end, the Gospel Day belongs to Jesus Christ.

Revelation is not primarily a book about beasts, dates, political kingdoms or prophetic charts. It is *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ."*

The prophetic symbols, periods and historical conditions are valuable because they help us understand the journey of His Church. But they must never become greater than the Person they reveal.

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. Jesus Christ is the foundation. Jesus Christ is the life within the believer. Jesus Christ is the fulfilment towards which Scripture points.

One Gospel Day Through Changing Conditions

The four great epochs help us see how spiritual conditions changed while the Gospel itself remained unchanged.

The Morning Light began at Pentecost with clear Gospel truth, spiritual unity and the indwelling life of Jesus Christ. The Dark Day followed as compromise, false authority and religious systems increasingly obscured the simplicity of the New Testament Church.

The Cloudy Day brought partial recovery. Important truths returned, Scripture became more accessible, and the authority of Rome was challenged, yet division and inherited traditions continued.

The Evening Light brought a renewed call to gathering, restoration and spiritual unity under Jesus Christ.

Through every epoch, Jesus Christ remained faithful. The light could be obscured. The people of God could be scattered. The Word and Spirit could testify under difficult conditions. But Christ never lost His Church.

Scripture Remains the Plumb Line

We have also established an important principle for understanding prophecy: conditions before dates.

Prophetic interpretation must begin with Scripture. The Word tells us what conditions to look for. History may help us recognise fulfilment, but history must never control the meaning of the prophecy.

This is especially important when considering exact historical boundaries. Where the evidence is clear, we may speak clearly. Where a date remains uncertain, we must remain careful.

The prophetic chart must always remain beneath the authority of the Word of God.

Greater Light Means a Clearer Revelation of Jesus

The Gospel Day moves towards greater light.

Isaiah wrote in **Isaiah 30:26**:

> *"Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."*

Sevenfold light does not mean another revelation outside Scripture. It means that truth already contained in the Word of God is seen with greater clarity.

Greater clarity must always reveal Jesus Christ more fully. Inherited teachings must be tested. Human traditions must be tested. Religious systems must be tested.

Everything must return to the Word.

From Scattering to Gathering

The Gospel Day also reveals a movement from unity to scattering and then towards gathering again.

Human religion divides. Jesus Christ gathers. Human systems produce competing identities. Jesus Christ has one body.

The Church is not created by denominational membership, organisational structure or human authority. The Church is the spiritual body of those who are born again and indwelt by Jesus Christ as Spirit.

This is the reality towards which restoration must always move.

The Message of the Gospel Day

The Gospel Day began with Jesus Christ. It continues under Jesus Christ. Its increasing light must bring us more clearly to Jesus Christ.

The message is not:

- Jesus plus tradition;
- Jesus plus ceremony;
- Jesus plus another spiritual experience;
- Jesus plus a religious organisation.

The message becomes simpler as the light becomes clearer.

Jesus Christ is enough.

He is the Head of His Church. He is the believer's life. He is the fulfilment of the shadows. He is the centre of the Word. He is the great reality towards which the whole Gospel Day points.

From Morning Light to Evening Light, through darkness, scattering, recovery and restoration, the final message remains:

All Jesus.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Explain why the Gospel Day's message across all four epochs is all Jesus.

Personal Reflection

When you describe the Gospel Day, are the periods, movements and dates more memorable than Jesus Christ Himself?

Action Step

Prepare an explanation of the four epochs this week that ends with your personal response to the sufficiency of Jesus Christ within His people.

SUBMISSION TO COGMA FOR APPRAISAL

Instructions

Complete this section after you have finished the Study Guide. It must be completed online.

The link is located at the bottom of the online Study Guide — https://cogma.com.au/study-guides/

Your answers should reflect your understanding, your personal response, and how you intend to live by the truth you have studied. Answer honestly and be specific.

1. Main Truth

How do the Morning, Dark, Cloudy, and Evening epochs describe changing conditions within one Gospel Day? Explain why Christ's gospel remains the same through them all.

2. Understanding

How did human authority obscure the Morning Light during the Dark Day? Explain why the Word and Spirit still bore witness, and how the seventh period's greater light calls believers to 'all Jesus'.

3. Personal Reflection

What has comparing Morning Light with the Dark Day shown you about trusting human religious authority? Explain the personal belief or attitude this teaching calls you to correct.

4. Response to Truth

Where has denominational identity or partial understanding affected the way you recognise God's people? Explain how Christ's one born-again body should change your response.

5. Action Step

Choose one church practice or inherited belief to examine by the Bible this week. Which verses will you use, what change are you prepared to make if it conflicts with Christ's teaching, and when will you begin?

6. Early Response

Have you examined the practice or belief identified in Question 5? If so, explain what the Bible confirmed or corrected and how you have responded. If not, explain what hindered you and your next step.

7. Ongoing Practice

How will you continue to keep the Word and Spirit together when you face religious division? Explain what practice will help you seek unity in Christ without accepting error.

8. Doctrinal Clarity

How do the 1260 prophetic days and the two witnesses help explain the Dark Day? Explain why a simply literal timespan or a claim that the Word and Spirit vanished would miss the teaching.

9. Living the Truth

If a religious label pulls you away from fellowship in Christ, how should the Evening Light's call to 'all Jesus' guide your choice? Explain how you would seek truth and unity together.

10. Final Response

Bring together the Morning Light, Dark Day, two witnesses, Cloudy Day, and Evening restoration. What has this account corrected in your understanding, and how will you live in the one Gospel Day centred on Christ?