

Introduction to Jude and Revelation Episode 3

Toolbox 1: The Code: Key Language Elements

In the last episode, I promised that these next 2 podcasts will provide the tools or the keys to gain a proper understanding and application of prophecy related not just to the **End Times**, but all throughout the biblical narrative.

Jude and *Revelation* utilizes a unique **Code** that is communicated through colors, numbers, symbols, and images, all of which portray a deeper or alternate meaning than what we might otherwise conclude. For example, gold is a color which speaks of divinity; white speaks of righteousness and purity; the sea speaks of the tumultuous churning amongst the nations of humanity; and birds often depict demonic spirits of wickedness.

The **Codex** that we will use to break the **Code** (or the key to understand the **Code**) is found largely in the Old Testament as it provides the prophetic framework for understanding both *Jude* and *Revelation*. But there are also some significant portions of the New Testament that also provide insight. Therefore, to properly understand *Jude* and *Revelation*, we need to be aptly versed in the entire Bible or else we risk missing the meaning underlying these codes.

Now, except for certain historical matters which must be obtained from external sources, it is vital to let the Bible interpret the Bible. It is the original source and contains the best integrated contextual content where one passage explains another.

Accordingly, we will use the **Codex** as thoroughly as possible and derive understanding from within and simply let the Bible speak for itself. When it comes to the issue of the **End Times**, there is a big temptation to insert our own modern day understanding of things and thereby overwrite, so-to-speak, the **Codex** because we do not stick to the **Code** as our guide. This has led to fiction upon fiction upon fiction which the masses have swallowed as truth.

At the beginning of *Revelation*, we will address **Toolbox 2: Key Idioms**, which contains the meaning of the **Code** ascribed to the various colors, numbers, symbols, and images. But in **Toolbox 1**, we will focus on the exacting use of language.

The Language

In the same way that Jesus said the smallest letter or stroke of the law was divinely inspired and would not pass away, every little detail in these New Testament books, including the way the Greek language was used, was deliberately put there by the Spirit of God working through human authors. With God, nothing is random or arbitrary, but all is intentional.¹ And since **Yahweh** is the same yesterday, today, and forever, we can be confident that this truth regarding the text of the Old Testament applies also to the text of the New Testament.²

Therefore, understanding the use of the language is critical to understanding what the Spirit is saying to the churches. The Spirit has used language in such a way that it reveals patterns and distinguishing characteristics that provide shocking revelation (pun intended) to those who have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Much of this is not picked up in our English translations due to the translation legacy/traditions that are deemed acceptable, and which few dares to challenge. In addition, we do not tend to read English in such an exacting and precise manner as Greek was intended to be read and understood.

FICTION ALERT

The Importance of Language Distinctions

By way of example, it seems that everyone is waiting for the day when the False Prophet will insist on marking everyone with 666—the mark of the Beast,³ inserting some type of chip or other indicator on their hand or forehead—at least that is how the *fiction* goes. It makes for great sci-fi material and scary movies; and quite frankly the tech is there to chip all of humanity.

However, to our total shock and amazement, the language of this passage states that even **NOW** a demon causes people to be marked, as “causes” is rendered in the *present* tense and not

¹ **2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21.** See Also **Matthew 5:18** where Jesus affirms that the smallest letter or stroke of the Law was divinely inspired.

² **Hebrews 13:8**

³ **Revelation 13:16**

the *future* tense. And being in the *indicative* mood, we know this is a statement of fact.

This changes the entire understanding of this passage, for clearly it must refer to a spiritual mark and not a physical mark, since the use of the *present* tense indicates that every moment of every now, since the time John first received the revelation, this demon causes people to be marked with the mark of the Beast. And then just to reinforce this point, we find an angel now saying, with a loud voice that if anyone **now** worships (*present* tense) the Beast and its image, and **now** receives the mark (*present* tense) in his forehead or his hand, he will drink (*future* tense) of the wrath of God.⁴

We will get into the implications of this passage when we get to **Revelation 13** and **14**, but we can begin to see how a proper understanding of this **Code** is vital, since it seems that most everyone is looking forward to something in the future that is happening even now. The effect is that many have already been marked but are too deceived by the lie (the deluding influence that convinces them of their own goodness) to know or understand what has happened. Thus, the **Code**, deciphered by the precise, careful, and detailed use of language, is critical to our understanding of both **Jude** and **Revelation**.

The Bible Speaks for Itself

When one studies the **End Times**, one quickly becomes aware of the positional bias to which people hold. Some declare themselves to be Historicists, Preterists, Amillennialists, or “whateveralists” (ha). But as soon as a person takes a firm position, they will be forced at some point to violate the **Code** as they twist and turn or even omit scriptures to fit their position. Sometimes this violation is subtle and other times obnoxiously obvious. Thus, it is best not to take a position, but to let the Bible speak for itself even when it does not make sense to our natural minds or how we have been trained and educated in our religious institutions.

POSITIONAL BIAS = CODE VIOLATION

Now, the key language features, that are important to understand, are related to the use of

⁴ **Revelation 14:9**

Greek verbs.⁵ The three critical facets we need to know are the *tense*, the *voice*, and the *mood* of a verb. Understanding the tense, voice, and mood, we can better understand what the Spirit is saying to the churches. **However, to discount or ignore these language features in any instance, one will never understand, but will distort, what the Spirit is saying to the churches.** Thus, even when the rendering does not make sense to our minds, we must avoid the temptation to make the text fit our minds and not the other way around.

The Tense

The tense of a verb describes how an action does or does not fit into time. This is particularly important to follow not just in **Revelation**, but all throughout the **Codex** for it places an act or a statement within the context of time and therefore gives us a plumbline for understanding its application to us now, to those in the past, or to those in the future. There are 6 tenses that are important to our study: the present, the future, the aorist, the imperfect, the perfect, and the pluperfect.

- The *present* tense happens in the now.
- The *future* tense clearly happens in the future. Surprisingly, this tense is used sparingly throughout **Revelation** and therefore is notable when it is used.
- The *aorist* tense provides us a reference to “time” that is undefined, it speaks more to the occurrence of an action, the fact of an action, and not the timing or duration of the action. For example, I walked. *The aorist* can be understood to be something happening, something that will happen, or has happened, and it is the most used tense in the book of **Revelation**.
 - For instance, if the *aorist* is used with the *indicative* mood, we know that something has happened in the past. However, whether it happened over a period-of-time or in an instant cannot be determined. It does, however, address a more discreet action, and is the most common used tense to describe

⁵ Note, both **Jude** and **Revelation** were originally written in Greek

past events.

- The *imperfect* tense indicates an action in the past that was *ongoing* or *used to take place* over a period-of-time. Think of it as a bit of video of an action from the past. Therefore, the imperfect is usually translated as *was/were*, *used to*, or *kept*. The *Imperfect* is used if an author wants to draw attention to the duration of a past event. For instance, I was walking, or I used to walk.
- The *perfect* tense is used in the present time to describe a completed action, something done in the past but with a continuing affect. For example, Jesus' declaration of: "it is finished". The action has been completed in the past, but it still has a lasting impact in the now and applies to our lives in the present. The work that He did to remove our sin is done and yet is still in effect covering the sins we did even today.
- The *pluperfect* tense is used to describe a completed action in the past that was done, completed, and that is the end of it.

Most of the verb references in **Revelation** utilize the *aorist* tense. Thus, sudden shifts in the **Code** to the *present*, the *future*, or the *imperfect* are meaningful and must be considered to properly understand a passage, as in the case of the demon who *even now* causes people to be marked. Those who do not look to the **Code** to be their guide will get the understanding of that passage wrong, and those who teach such things will be perpetuating **End Times fiction**.

The Voice

The voice of a verb gives us understanding of the **subject** of the verb: the one who acts or is acted upon, and it also indicates whether they chose to act or just are found doing what they do.

- The *active* voice is used when the subject of the sentence is the agent of the action, the one performing the deed.
- The *middle* voice is used when the subject is both the agent of the action and participates in it. In other words, they make a deliberate choice to act. I like to say that

a person digs down deep in their soul and chooses to do something.

- The *passive* voice is used when the subject is acted upon. Throughout the **Codex**, this is most often used to indicate action in which **Yahweh** is the primary actor and we are *passive* receivers of His action.

The Mood

The mood indicates the nature of the verb and its context. For instance, the mood tells us if something is a fact or an expression of intent, a wish, or a command, and so on. As with the *tense*, there are 6 key moods of which we need to be aware.

- The *indicative* mood refers to an objective fact, something real or certain, indicating a statement of fact, something upon which we can bet our lives.
- The *subjunctive* mood provides an expression of intent yet contains a lingering doubt as to the certainty of things. In other words, there is an uncertainty as to whether the action may or may not happen.
- The *optative* mood is a wish or expression of hope.
- The *imperative* mood is a command and is used to give orders.
- The *participle* mood indicates ongoing or continuous action. In English it is translated with the ending of “ing”. For example, He is walking^{ing}, He is having^{ing} desert, or she is believ^{ing}—an act that is continuing.
- The *infinitive* mood is used to describe acts or situations in a general state-of-affairs that are dependent upon another verb. The infinitive is often translated with the English “to” and used to function as a noun. For example, “for me to live is Christ”. The words “to live” are an *infinitive* and function as the subject of the sentence (or as the noun).

When the tense, voice, or mood impact our understanding of a passage, rendering it different than the English translation, or if we generally tend to not grasp the importance of the rendering,

I will spell it out and highlight it so we can start to be trained to understand what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Most of this explanation will be found in the footnotes of the transcripts which can be downloaded for free at threshermediagroup.com.

This may seem like boring content for a podcast, but again, the **Code** is intended to function as our plumbline for interpreting the text in the **Codex**. Without the **Code** we are “flying-blind” and will be making things up as we go based on what we think the Spirit is saying to the churches versus what the Spirit is even now saying. Honestly, I wish this was taught in all our churches, Bible studies, Sunday schools, and reinforced in our institutions of Christian learning. Understanding the **Code** is essential and is beyond liberating.

For instance, in **1 Peter 1:15** we are told: “*but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior.*” This passage always left me with a terrible guilt trip because no matter how hard I tried I simply could not be holy. I always felt as if I was failing God and therefore deserving of some punishment. Honestly, I started to close my eyes when I came near this passage, so I did not have to be reminded of my failure. Then when I looked at the **Code**, I discovered that this command is in the *passive* voice. This was beyond liberating; this was exciting and something that filled me with joy.

The use of the *passive* voice means that God is the one who must make me holy, and it is not something I can do. He is the one responsible for my transformation, which makes sense since **Only God is Good**. Once again, **the source matters, the source is everything!** Therefore, this passage should have been translated as “*but like the Holy One who called you, let Him cause you to be holy in all your behavior.*” This speaks to my **willingness** to be holy or set apart for God and not my ability to be holy.

By way of another example, one of the themes in **Revelation** is the challenge for true believers to understand what the Spirit is even now “*saying*” to the churches. The verb “*saying*” is used 50 times throughout **Revelation**, and except for one passage, it is always in the *present* tense *active* voice and its mood is a *participle*. Thus, even though John heard it said somewhere around 90-100 AD, the Spirit wants us to understand that each statement is even now being continually

spoken to those who are willing to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Without the **Code** we would fail to understand the direct implication of what the Spirit is saying to each of us.

The **Code** is the key to properly understanding the **Codex**. And even though a grammar lesson seems somewhat boring and not really a topic for a podcast, without the **Code** we are left to people's opinions, to the errant translations, and to a hodgepodge of Biblical interpretation based on one's bias, background, education, and so on.

The failure to use the **Code** consistently is one of the main reasons there are so many conflicting views about Biblical passages, and it is one of the main reasons for the religious fictions which abound surrounding the **End Times** narrative.

We will painstakingly stick to the **Code** throughout this study in **Jude** and **Revelation**. We will find that so much that once seemed confusing and strange lines up perfectly with the entire Biblical narrative and we will not have to pick and choose parts of this and parts of that to make a positional argument, but it will all be in perfect alignment.