

JESUS HIDDEN AND PREPARED

We read in Isa.49v1-2., "Listen, O coastlands, to Me, and take heed, you peoples from afar! The LORD has called Me from the womb; from the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name. v2. And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand He has HIDDEN ME, and made Me a polished shaft; in His quiver He has HIDDEN ME." (NKJ)

All the great ministries in the Bible, including that of the our Lord, were prepared by God in secret, before they were manifested in public.

a. Moses. Moses spent 40 years in Egypt to learn what the world, the flesh and the Devil were doing; then 40 years in the wilderness to learn that walking with God was more valuable, precious, and rewarding than anything that the world and the Devil could offer. Heb.11v26. "He esteemed (2233 "hegeomai") the contempt, shame and disgrace for the sake of Christ as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he turned his eyes away and fixed his gaze steadfastly ahead to the reward." As he kept the sheep he learned the ways of God.

David. Another person who learned the lessons of faith while keeping sheep. His loving concern for his beloved sheep, caused him to walk on "the more excellent way," 1Cor.12v31., and enabled him, through the Name and power of God, to kill the lion and the bear that threatened to kill his sheep. His devotion to his sheep caused God to cry, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' Acts.13v22. Ps.89v20. Jesse did not even think that David should be present when Samuel asked him to bring his sons before him, he left him outside looking after the sheep. 1Sam.16v1-13. Even the godly and wise prophet Samuel thought that Eliab was God's choice, until God revealed Eliab's heart to Samuel, and showed that the uninvited and despised boy David was His choice.

Elijah and Elisha. These were both prepared by God in secret while they were farming, and suddenly burst on to the scene, when the word of the Lord came to them. 1Kings.17v1. 19v15-21. Elisha was ploughing with 12 pairs of oxen, when called to the prophetic office..

Paul. Paul spent several years hidden away in Arabia and Tarsus, and during this time Jesus revealed to him the truth about the Church. Gal.1v17 to 2v1. Acts.9v20-30. Paul's ministry took off after Barnabus brought him to Antioch. Acts.11v22-26. At Antioch Barnabus and Paul were promoted from being teachers to apostles. Acts.13v1-4. God used Paul's previous theological training to prepare Paul for His work, as well as his Christian experience. However, he had a great deal of man-made tradition to unlearn as well as New Covenant truth to learn. Paul's conversion took place around B. C. 34, he came to Jerusalem after being in Arabia for about three years, and he then went to Damascus and Jerusalem in about A. D. 37. Paul was sent to Tarsus by the Jerusalem church because of a death threat, and stayed there until Barnabus brought him to help with the church in Antioch in A. D. 43. In about A. D. 44 God directed the church at Antioch to send Paul and Barnabus on apostolic ministry. So we see that God prepared Paul for ten years before sending him out on apostolic ministry.

1. JESUS HID MOST OF WHAT GOD REVEALED TO HIM DURING HIS MINISTRY. WHY WAS THIS?

Jesus had the greatest revelation ministry of all the prophets, He was a prophet like unto Moses. Deut.18v10-22. However, we only see a few public manifestations of His prophetic revelation ministry. **Why was this?** We see the revelation of the thoughts and prayers of Nathaniel, the name of Peter and his father, and his God-given new name. Jn.1. We see the remarkable effect of one word of knowledge on the Samaritan woman and her townspeople. Jn.4. We see the warnings about our Lord's death, and Peter's denial, and how the apostles would forsake Him, all of which were not believed and ignored. At his entrance on palm Sunday to Jerusalem, our Lord warned all around him with uncontrolled sobbing of the destruction of Jerusalem, and he warned his apostles in private again of this tragic event, on the way to the cross He again warned the weeping women of the most tragic coming event of their history. Lk.19v41-44.

a. Jesus knew the spiritual state of ALL He met and the untrustworthiness of many of those that believed in Him.

We read in John.2v23-25., "Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed and trusted in His name when they saw the signs which He did. v24. But Jesus did not trust Himself to them, because He knew all men, v25. and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man." Ps.44v21. 139v2.

The verb "pisteuo" is used twice. The first time to show how the miracles caused people to trust and believe in Jesus, the second time to show how Jesus knew the superficial nature of their faith and trust, and He would not accept testimony concerning his ministry from them. This is; a truly valuable lesson for us today, for it is the regular practice of modern evangelists to parade people to give their testimonies of healing, among these are people who are mistakenly testifying in the hope that because they testify to healing, they will be healed, and when these people are later proved not to be healed, or die, the result is positively harmful to the Gospel. Jesus did not make this grave mistake, he did not even ask those who were indisputably and openly healed to give a public testimony, He just let people see the obvious. Jesus was completely free of pride, He never put on a spectacular show, He was humble, gentle and lowly minded.

b. Jesus often charged people, with the strongest words possible, not to publish abroad their remarkable healings.

However, they often did the very opposite. Mt.12v14-21. Lk.5v12-16. Jesus charged the people who saw His miracles not to talk about them, but they also did the very opposite and proclaimed them abroad like a herald, "kerusso." In Mk.1v43. Jesus sternly charged [1690 "embrimaomai" {from 1722 and "brimaomai," to snort with anger} to scold, to sternly warn] the cleansed leper not to tell people about his healing, but he disobeyed Jesus and published his healing like a herald, "kerusso." Mk.7v32-36. Jesus strictly commanded Jairus and his wife not to tell others how He had raised their daughter from the dead. Mk.5v39-43. Lk.8v52-56. Mk.1v42-45. Jesus commanded the unclean spirits not to make His deity known. Mk.3v11,12. Jesus sharply commanded ("epitimaō") His apostles not to reveal that He was God's Son and the Messiah, Mk.8v27-30. Mt.16v18-20. Lk.9v20-22. Jesus commanded Peter, James and John, not to speak of His transfiguration until after His resurrection from the dead. Mt.17v8,9. All these facts reveal the true humility of Jesus, He refused to be a showman. He only told the demoniac of Gadara to go and tell what great things the Lord had done for him, because He was not going there. Lk.8v35-39. The Roman Catholic Church is quite correct to demand irrefutable medical evidence that proves people have been genuinely ill and have been definitely healed, before such healings are published.

2. THE TEMPTATION TO PREMATURE MINISTRY AND OUT OF TIME REVELATION.

a. Two out of the three temptations of Jesus by Satan were aimed at the premature manifestation of His spiritual gifts.

This was obviously not the first time that Satan had tried to get Jesus to manifest His wisdom and knowledge prematurely. For well over 20 years Jesus had sat in the Synagogue at Nazareth listening to false traditional doctrine, empty preaching, powerless praying, and had hidden away the truth, wisdom and powerful prophetic gifting that the Father had given to Him. Young Samuel was known throughout the land to be a prophet even while he was a child; here was a greater child than Samuel, with a greater prophetic revelation and power ministry than the young Samuel, but the Father had commanded Jesus not to reveal His spiritual gifts and knowledge until He started His ministry. The proof that Jesus did not reveal any of His knowledge or spiritual gifting to the people of Nazareth before He started His ministry, is seen by the astonished and critical response of the people of Nazareth to our Lord's preaching, "Whence has this fellow these things?" Lk.4.Mk.6v1-6. The theological knowledge that astonished the theologians at Jerusalem, when Jesus was twelve, was hidden from them. Our Lord's ministry had to be hidden away until the right time.

b. We read in Ps.69v8-12., that the holiness and prayer life of Jesus brought considerable persecution upon Jesus.

Ps.69v8. "I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children; v9. Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. v10. When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach. v11. I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. v12. Those who sit in the gate speak against me, and I am the song of the drunkards. (NKJ) This was certainly not the experience of David, who was extolled for his victory over Goliath.

c. The world today is taken up with "Instant" food preparations, remedies and solutions.

God does not follow this pattern as regards to ministry God takes time to prepare the ministries of His Church, He gives us time to learn and grow. Our Lord's yoke is gentle and light and not overburdening. His yoke is personally and made by Him to perfectly fit our shoulders, and takes into account our temperaments, talents, work, home environment, and desires. God does not desire to dominate our lives, He gently asks us what we would like to do for Him, and He takes into account all that we have and are, and doing His will fills our lives with joy, fulfilment, and delight. In Rom.12v1,2, Paul tells us that the constraint of the compassionate mercies and love of God should cause us to present our bodies as a holy, living sacrifice to God; and we should refuse to be conformed to the worlds standards, and have our minds renewed and lives transformed, so that we may prove God's good, acceptable and perfect will

3. WHY DID GOD THE FATHER HIDE OUR LORD'S SPIRITUAL MINISTRY AT NAZARETH?

That God the Father and Jesus did hide most of Christ's perfect revelation prophetic ministry away both before and during His public ministry is a fact of Scripture. As we have just seen from Is.49v1,2., God hid our Lord's knowledge and spiritual gifts away from the people at Nazareth, their astonishment at His ministry can be seen from Lk.4v20-22. and Mk.6v1-6. .

1. God the Father developed the ministry of Jesus secretly in the environment of home and work life.

Paul makes it quite clear in Col.3., that "God's will" does not just involve those in full-time ministry, or just our church lives, God's will involves our daily home relationships and work lives, because this is where most of the lives of believers is lived. Paul states that we are serving the Lord, when we do all our daily duties heartily, and as unto the Lord, and will receive the reward of the inheritance for it. Our Lord Jesus has given us the perfect example, He lived the sermon on the mount at Nazareth before He preached it. His life of perfect love and service at Nazareth, was the foundation of His spiritual power and ministry in public.

The ministry of Jesus was developed in secret in a home and work environment, by God the Father and the Holy Spirit. This was in sharp contrast to John Baptist, who spent his years of preparation in the wilderness. Jesus was totally familiar with the problems of life, and He showed sympathetic gentleness with needy and sinful people, which was much kinder and more thoughtful than John's thunderings about the broken Law of God; we read in Mt.11v13., "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." See Lk.16v16. Jn.1v17. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Jesus was "full of grace and truth." Jn.1v14. " And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (NKJ)

The Father developed the prophetic ministry of Jesus and His sympathetic High Priestly ministry.

a. By the pressure and trial of daily living and work, and the hardship of real poverty. Jesus went through the whole range of human trial and temptation on a deeper level than anyone else, in order to have a sympathetic apostolic and High Priestly ministry. Heb.4v14-16.

b. By having to work and provide for at least seven brothers and sisters and His mother Mary, when Joseph died. Mk.6v1-6.

c. By overcoming the false tradition of His times. Real strength comes from rejecting incorrect but orthodox doctrine. Jesus did not openly show His rejection of their false traditions until His ministry started. This is good advice for young students.

d. By the Father's training in revelation and prophetic prayer ministry, and in development of truth. Is.49v1,2. 50v3-7. Jn.1v14.

e. By the revelation of the Scriptures into His experience. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. Jesus proved by experience the truth of Scripture, and lived it. He fully partook of our humanity and victoriously overcame all areas of temptation.

f. Jesus was hidden until the fullness of His love was manifested, a love filled with the sympathetic experience of practical living and caring. Heb.2v17,18. He was hidden away until His ministry was fully grown and perfected. Is.50v3-7. Jesus grew, until He was "full of grace and truth." Lk.2v40,52. Jn.1v14. The lesson is clear, the premature appointment of immature ministry, is not wise, or of God.

2. Hidden until His prophetic prayer ministry was completely fulfilled, fully developed and perfected.

a. Jesus was hidden away until He was fully equipped by the Father for His ministry, not only in knowledge and truth, but also in a practical experience, on the highest levels of the operation, of all the power and revelation gifts which were necessary to accomplish His ministry. This training in the operation of the spiritual gifts took place in private as Jesus exercised the greatest prayer warrior ministry there has ever been. Even Jesus had to grow in wisdom and knowledge and spiritual strength, and be put to the test at the hands of the Devil in the wilderness, He knew He was being humbled, proved and tested, "To humble thee, to prove thee, to know what is in thine heart." Deut.8.

b. Jesus had a perfect and totally consecrated prayer life, which prepared Him for His ministry. Ps.69v7-11. Jesus manifested revelation and power gifts in private before He manifested them in public. Mary's words to Jesus at the marriage feast in Cana reveal that she had seen many miracles of provision done by Jesus, we read in Jn.2v3-5., And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine. v4. Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." v5. His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." (NKJ). Obviously no one else knew about these miracles but Jesus and Mary, Jesus had obviously told Mary that no one else was to know about them. The feeding of the 5,000 and 4,000 were not the first miracles of provision that Jesus had performed, He had obviously sent Mary to feed the widows and needy, without anyone knowing the source. These miracles were obviously just kept private between Jesus and Mary, the first public sign miracle in Cana("semeion," 2592), was the turning of the water to wine. Jn.2v11. We read in Jn.4v54., that the second sign miracle in Cana was the healing of the nobleman's son. However, we read in John.2v23., that Jesus had done many more sign miracles in Jerusalem before the healing of the nobleman's son, and "many believed in His name when they saw the signs ("semeia, 4592) which He did."

3. Hidden from the jealousy, envy, and antagonistic pride of worldly people and carnal religious leaders.

a. There was the contemptuous familiarity and angry rejection of Jesus by the people of Nazareth. Jesus was despised and rejected by the people of Nazareth as soon as His ministry was manifested, but there was also a contemptuous rejection of our Lord's holy prayer life for many years before this attempt to murder Jesus after His first sermon.

b. There was the bitter jealousy and murderous envy of Israel's religious leaders. God hid Jesus away to save Him from prematurely coming up against violent and vicious opposition at Nazareth and in Israel.

4. Hidden away until the fullness of time.

We read in Gal.4v4,5., "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, v5. to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Everything in the life of Jesus was in the fullness of God's perfect timing. See Jn.2v4. 17v1. Jn.7:6,8.

4. WHY DID JESUS HIDE MOST OF HIS PERFECT REVELATION MINISTRY?

a. It was obviously a command of God the Father.

We read in Isa42v1-4,19-21. "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, my Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. v2. He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. v3. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; he will bring forth justice for truth. v4. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law. --- v19. **Who is blind but My servant, or deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is blind as he who is perfect, and blind as the LORD'S servant? v20. Seeing many things, but you do not observe; opening the ears, but he does not hear.** v21. The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; he will exalt the law and make it honourable."

Jesus came to heal the broken reeds and smoking fax of humanity, not expose and criticise broken and needy mankind, He can to save and heal. He knew and felt their sins and needs, but He acted as if He was blind and deaf to them. From Is.42v19-21. We see from our Lord's example, that there is a real need to hide most of what God reveals to us about people, God respects the desire for secrecy in people's hearts, God is a perfect gentleman, He does not want to expose and humiliate people in public. Needs that are revealed are usually for prayer, not proclamation.

b. Was it so that people would not tremble before Him as they did before Moses and Samuel?

Exod.19v16. "Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled." (NKJ)

1Sam.16v4. "So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" (NKJ)

People can get very nervous and frightened when confronted by genuine prophetic ministry. The Father and Jesus wanted all who felt condemned to freely come to Him, and so the wondrous revelation ministry of Jesus was almost completely hidden away. The Lord's ministry mainly consisted of an enormous number of physical healing mercy gifts, and on a few occasions of the operation of workings of miracles in provision, the turning of the water to wine, the feeding of the five and four thousand, and the miraculous fish catches.

N.B. Our Lord's revelation ministry was hidden away even in His healing ministry.

Our Lord did not call out the illnesses of the sick, or tell the sick what their problem was. Jesus was so full of the power of God that such revelations were not necessary. Such revelations could have frightened the sinful and timid away, and stopped them from coming to Him.

b. It was also obviously because of the envy and jealousy of Israel's religious leaders.

Joseph brothers sold him into slavery because of their jealousy and envy, Jesus was murdered by Israel's religious leaders for the very same reason. Even Pilate knew the Jews wanted to kill Jesus out of envy, Mt.27v18., " For he knew that through envy ("phthonos") they had delivered him up." The manifestation of the fullness of Christ's prophetic revelation ministry would have caused even more hatred and opposition from Israel's religious leaders, in any case this tender healing ministry was reserved for broken and needy people, or genuine seekers, not evil opponents. As we will see, Jesus continually had the critical thoughts and evil and murderous plans of his enemies revealed to him, and sometimes, as the Father directed Him, exposed and answered the evil in their hearts. These remarkable revelations of their hearts failed to bring them to repentance, and they continually made plans to kill Jesus.

Jesus, like Joseph, suffered great persecution because of jealousy and envy. Pilate knew the Jews wanted to kill Jesus out of envy, Mt.27v18., "For he knew that through envy ("phthonos") they had delivered him up." Cf. Mt.12v14. 21v38. Mk.3v4-6. Jn.5v16-18. 7v19,25. 8v37,40. 10v31,32,39. 11v53.

Jealousy, "zelos," can be used in a good sense.

In the Septuagint in a good sense of God's zeal; "The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this;" Is.9v7.; and the jealous dedicated love of God. Ezek.16v37,38. 23v25. It describes Christ's passionate zeal for God and righteousness. Ps.69v9. Jn.2v17. Paul uses it to describe the zeal of the Corinthians for him in 2Cor.7v7.; and his godly jealousy for them, 2Cor.11v2.; and their zeal in their repentance, 2Cor.7v11.; and their zeal for the poor at Jerusalem. 2Cor.9v2.. The verb "zeloo" is used of a godly zeal for spiritual gifts in 1Cor.12v31. and 14v39..

Jealousy, "zelos," is used in a bad sense.

Paul uses "zelos" of his own and the Jews misguided "zeal for God," and the Law. Rom10v2. Phil.3v6. In Rom.13v12,13. Paul warned the Corinthians that jealousy is an evil work of the flesh; and a proof of the domination of the old nature, and told them that he feared that it could return. 1Cor.3v3. 2Cor.12v20. Jealousy cannot stand the light and glory of Christ's holy presence.

Envy, "phthonos," is more malignant than jealousy, "zelos."

As we have seen, "zelos," "jealousy," can sometimes speak of noble ambition, and desire for something good, as well as a covetous evil desire; whereas. "phthonos," "envy," can only speak of a bitter ill will. The sin of jealousy, "zelos," casts hostile grudging looks; "phthonos," has arrived at the stage of hostile acts. Envy has grief at another's good fortune, but it is even worse than that. It is not just the pain that they do not possess another's good fortune or blessings; but the bitterness that the other person does. It is not so much the desire for what another person has; it is the desire to take away what they have, or prevent them from possessing it. The jealousy, "zelos," of the Jews led to the active opposition of the more malignant "phthonos," "envy;" and caused them to murder Jesus. They did not possess His ministry, so they did their very utmost to suppress it and destroy it, Though Judas became possessed by Satan, it is not recorded that any of the leaders of Israel became possessed, the evil jealousy and envy in their hearts drove them to oppose and murder Jesus. Christ's miracles, anointed preaching, love, and integrity, exposed their lack of ministry, loveless leadership, extortion and wickedness. They looked upon Jesus as a threat to their influence, greed, and power, and were determined to destroy Him. Mk.2v5-7,16,23,24. 3v1,2. 15v10. Mt.27v18. "Phthonos," is not just the pain over an enemy's good fortune; it can also be the grief over the good fortune of a friend's or a member of the family. This envy moved Joseph's brothers to sell him into slavery, they removed his influence from their lives.

"Phthonoi," occurs in the Majority Text in Gal.5v19-22.; Paul uses it in Rom.1v29., to speak of one of the sins which people are filled with when they choose not to retain God in their knowledge; and in Phil.1v15,16., of some who preached Christ to spite Paul and hinder his ministry. God warns us envy is a dangerous and very evil sin. 1Tim.6v4. Tit.3v3. 1Pet.2v1. (Gal.5v26. "phthoneo").

The warning is clear, be careful over your revelations and hide away most of them in your quiver; you must not tell them to critical and envious brethren, tell them to friends who are sympathetic, spiritual and understanding, and who will diligently pray for you.

5. THE REVELATION OF PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS IN CHRIST'S MINISTRY.

Heb.4v12,13. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. v13. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (KJV)

Rev.2v23. "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. (KJV)

1. Jesus answers the confused thoughts of His apostles.

Jesus answers Peter over the tribute money, and sends Peter to get a coin from the mouth of the fish.

Mt.17v24-27. When they had come to Capernaum, the collectors of the two drachma temple tax came to Peter and said, "Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?" v25. He said, "Yes." And when he had come into the house, Jesus spoke first to him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?" v26. Peter said to Him, "From strangers." Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are exempt (from liability or obligation). v27. Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the first fish that you catch. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a four drachma coin (a "stater," in our Lord's time a silver stater was equal to four Attic drachmas, or two Alexandrian drachmas, a Jewish shekel); take that and give it to them for Me and you."

Jesus answers the lack of spiritual perception in his apostles due to their hardness of heart.

Mk.8v16,17. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread. 17. And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Mt.16v7,8.

Jesus answers the confused thoughts of His apostles which arose when He prophesied of His death.

Jn.16v19. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? (KJV)

Jn.16v19,20,28-33. Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me?' v20. Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. v28. "I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father." v29. His disciples said to Him, "See, now

You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! v30. Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God." v31. Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? v32. Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. v33. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (NKJ)

Jesus tries to heal the pain in Peter because of his denial of Jesus, and He reinstates him to his apostolic office.

Jn.21v17. He said to him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love me? Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, Do you love me? And he said unto him, Lord you know all things, you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, Feed my sheep.

2. Jesus gives an answer to the dispute among the apostles over which of them would be the greatest.

Lk.9v46-48. Then there arose a dispute among them, as to which of them should be greatest. 47. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and stood him by His side, v48. and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all, he is the greatest."

Lk.22v20-26. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. v21. But, behold, the hand of him that betrays me is with me on the table. v22. And truly the Son of man goes, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! v23. And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. v24. And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. v25. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. v26. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he who serves."

Jesus washed their feet to teach them the lesson of humility, and to remove the arrogance and greedy ambition from their hearts,

3. Jesus answers the critical thoughts of some of His disciples who were about to forsake Him,

Jn.6v61,64,70., "When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Does this offend you? v64. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. v70. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil ("diabolos," a slanderer)?"

4. Jesus answers His enemies critical thoughts, "This man blasphemeth," when the paralysed man was healed.

Peter's account of the healing of the paralysed man is recorded by Mark, in Mk.2v1-12..

We read in Mk.2v8., "But immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, He said unto them, Why do you reason these things in your hearts?" Here "perceived," is "epignous," the aorist participle of "epiginosko," to fully know, which shows that Jesus not only knew their thoughts, but that He felt and knew the full intent and nature of their hearts and thoughts. We see in Heb.4v12., that God differentiates between thoughts and intents of the heart. "Thoughts," is "enthumesis," 1761, from "en," "in," and "thumos," strong feeling, passion, and so a rumination, a compelling inward reasoning. It occurs in Mt.9v4. 12v25. Acts.17v29. and Heb,4v12.. "Intents," is "ennoia," from "en," in, and "nous," mind, primarily "a thinking, idea, consideration," denotes "purpose, intention, design," the inward resolute purposes and intentions of reason, it is derived from "en, in, and "nous," mind. "Ennoia," only occurs twice in the New Testament, in the A.V. it is rendered as "intents" in Heb.4v12., as "mind," in 1Pet.4v1.

We read in Mt.9v1-8. Of the healing of the paralysed man.

When Jesus said to the man who was paralysed that he was to take heart for his sins were forgiven, the Scribes said within themselves that Jesus had committed blasphemy, Jesus answered their criticisms, and then healed the man to prove He had authority to forgive sins. We read in Mt.9v4., "And Jesus knowing (the aorist active participle of "oida," to perceive, to know) their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (KJV)

Those who have a developed prophetic ministry will also experience the nature of people and their intents, as well as their thoughts. Jesus "perceived in His spirit," what they were thinking, it was spiritually revealed to Him, He did not hear it with His ears, or judge by their facial expressions, the Father let Jesus hear their critical thoughts and feel their evil intentions in His spirit.

Luke describes this same incident in Lk.5v17-26..

Luke also uses "epignous," the aorist participle of "epiginosko," to become fully and experimentally acquainted with, Jesus had full knowledge of their thoughts and plans. We read in Lk.5v22., "But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?" Who were these critics? Luke

states in Lk.5v17., "And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them." The critics consisted of many of Israel's religious leaders and Biblical scholars, God's healing power was present even for them to be healed, but it seems that they came to criticise, not to be blessed.

5. Jesus answers the thoughts, that He healed by the power of Beelzebub when he heals a blind and dumb man.

Mt.12v25. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: (KJV)

Mark's account in Mk.3v22-30., does not say that Jesus knew the thoughts of the Scribes who came down from Jerusalem, when they mentally and privately accused Jesus of casting out devils by the prince of the devils. However, the context shows that He did know their thoughts, for we read that Jesus does give them a terrible warning that they were in danger of committing the unforgiveable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, when they ascribed His miracles to Satan.

Lk.11v17. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. "Knowing their thoughts," is "eidos, " the perfect active participle of "oida,"

6. Jesus answers the critical thoughts over healing on the Sabbath, and Simon the Pharisee's critical thoughts.

Lk.6v8. But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. Lk.7v40. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

7. Jesus knew the inner intent of the smiling deceitful Rabbis who were out to trap Him in His words.

Mt.22v18,-22. But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? v19. "Show Me the tax money." So they brought Him a denarius. v20. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" v21. They said to Him, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." v22. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left Him and went their way. (NKJ) See also Mk.12v15., "Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a denarius, that I may see it."

The hatred and persecution of His enemies, sorely wounded and grieved Jesus..

The vicious verbal attacks upon Jesus made Him emotionally and physically ill. We read in Ps.69v20,21., "Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. v21. They also gave me gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." "I am full of heaviness," means literally "I am sick," for "heaviness," is "nuwsh," 5136, which means to be sick, and figuratively to be distressed. The Amplified Bible translates Ps.69v20,21., "Insults and reproach have broken my heart; I am full of heaviness and distressingly sick. I looked for pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. v21. They gave me also gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. [Mt.27v34,48.]"

"Reproach," is "cherpah," 2781, which means reproach, scorn, rebuke, insults, vilification and shameful verbal abuse. The verbal abuse was so vicious that it made Jesus ill. See Heb.12v3., "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied ("ekluo," 1590), and faint in your souls ("psuche," 5590, it is translated in the A.V. as soul, or life, occasionally as mind)." "Consider," is "analogisasthe," the aorist imperative of "analogizomai," which means to reckon up, to consider, compare, to weigh, it can also speak of meditation. It only occurs here in the New Testament. See "katanoesate" in Heb.3:1., put your minds down to contemplate Jesus. Contemplating and understanding Jesus is the cure for our problems, doubts and fears. "Endured," is "hupomemenekota," the perfect active participle of the verb "hupomeno," to bravely endure, to patiently endure with fortitude, in Heb.12v2., it is used to describe our Lord's triumphant and brave endurance of the cross. See Mt.10v22. 24v13. 1Cor.13v7. 2Tim.2v10,12. Heb.12v7. James.1v12. 5v12. 1Pet.2v20. "Contradiction," is "antilogian," 485, which means, gainsaying, i.e. opposition in the form of vicious and abusive verbal criticism.

In spite of all this opposition Jesus brought His Father's mission perfectly to the goal.

"Tetelestai, "the perfect passive of "teleo," to bring to an end, to fulfil, to accomplish, to complete, and bring to the goal; is used twice in Jn.19v28,30., being translated in the A.V. in v28, as "were now accomplished," and in v30., as, "It is finished." Jesus brought His Father's work perfectly to the goal, in spite of all the vicious opposition of wicked men, He had hit all the targets His Father had aimed Him at.. How wonderful! What remarkable and unique dedication to the Father, and His will and plans for us. Unspeakable wonderful love for us.

THE NEED FOR KNOWING PEOPLE BY DIVINE REVELATION.

a. One of the key spiritual weapons of prophets is the revelation of the thoughts and intents of people's hearts.

In Jn.2v23., we read that many believed ("episteusan") in His name, when they beheld ("theorountes," the present active participle of "theoreo") the manifestation of sign miracles ("semeia") which Jesus was doing (imperfect tense) at the Passover feast in Jerusalem. However, Jn.2v24., says that, "Jesus did not trust himself to them;" the negative imperfect here, "ouk episteuen," makes this verse read, Jesus kept on refusing to trust Himself to them." So we see that, "Many trusted in Him, --- but Jesus kept on refusing to trust himself to them;" the double use of "pisteuo," to believe, to trust. He examined their faith, and had no faith in it. The fact that a person believes in Jesus does not make them trustworthy.

b. In Jn.2v24., we read that Jesus did not trust Himself to His converts "because of the knowing of all men."

This was the knowledge of all men He met by revelation knowledge. We read in Jn.2v25., "And because he did not have need (the imperfect active). That anyone should bear witness (the aorist active subjunctive of "martureo") concerning man. For He Himself kept on knowing ("eginosken," the imperfect active), what was in man."

Vincent states, "The imperfect expresses continuance; He was all along cognisant as the successive crises presented themselves; thus falling in with the next words, 'what was in man,' i.e. in each particular man with whom he had to do."

Robertson says, "For He Himself knew, "autos gar eginosken." Imperfect active," "for He Himself kept on knowing," as He did from the start." Robertson goes on to say, "This supernatural knowledge of man is a mark of deity. Some men of genius can read men better than others, but not in the sense meant here." However, Robertson misses the point that such revelation ministry was the normal thing for those with a prophetic ministry. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus exercised a prophetic ministry like Moses, we read in Deut.18v15,18., "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, v18. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him."

Jesus also stated that He spoke the things that He received from the Father by revelation, we read in John.5v19,30., "Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. v30. I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgement is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me."

Here is the key to John.3v1., "**But** there was a man of the Pharisees," unlike the people of Jn.2v24., Jesus did trust Nicodemus, and did reveal Himself, and the truth of a New Covenant spiritual rebirth to him. Jesus knew by revelation from the Father that He could trust Nicodemus. Our Lord's manifestation and knowledge of people's thoughts , was not because of His deity, He had to grow in knowledge. Luke.2v40, 52. It was not a manifestation of His Divine omniscience, He emptied of this when He became a man. Phil.3v6,7. Heb.2v17,18.

1. THE REVELATION OF PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF PROPHETIC MINISTRY.

The revelation of the thoughts and intents of the heart was a normal attribute of prophetic ministry in both the old and the new testament.

a. Samuel's revelations about Saul, his father's asses and his father. 1Sam.9v6. to 10v7.

Samuel not only told Saul of the concerns on his mind, he also gave a completely accurate detailed prediction of events and experiences which were about to happen to Saul, all of which came to pass, " And Samuel answered Saul and said, "I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart." 1Sam.9v19.

b. Elisha's warnings of the imminent attacks of Benhadad, the king of Syria, on Israel. 2Kings.6v8-12. N.B. v11,12.

2Kings.6v8-12. Now the king of Syria was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place." v9. And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there." v10. Then the king of Israel sent someone to the place of which the man of God had told him. Thus he warned him, and he was watchful there, not just once or twice. v11. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was greatly troubled by this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?" v12. **And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words** (the noun "daw-bah," 1697, speech, a word, matter, or thing, it occurs over 1,400 times) **that you speak** (the verb "dah-bar," 1696, to speak, to declare, to converse, to command, to promise, to warn, to threaten, it occurs over 1,100 times) **in your bedroom."** NKJ)

c. The prophet Ahijah's warning to the wife of king Jeroboam. 1Kings.14v1-11.

God let His aged blind servant, the prophet Ahijah, see the wife of Jeroboam coming to his house, and warned her of the death of her son and the judgement that was coming on the house of Jeroboam. We read in 1Kings.14v1-6,11-13., At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick. v2. And Jeroboam said to his

wife, "Please arise, and disguise yourself so that they may not recognise that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; behold, ("hinneh," 2009, behold, lo, see) Ahijah the prophet is there, who spoke concerning me {that I would be} king over this people. v3. And take ten loaves with you, {some} cakes and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will happen to the boy. v4. And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age. v5. Now the LORD had said to Ahijah, "Behold ("hinneh," 2009, behold, lo, see), the wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, for he is sick. You shall say thus and thus to her, for it will be when she arrives that she will pretend to be another woman." v6. And it came about when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet coming in the doorway, that he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam, why do you pretend to be another woman? For I am sent to you with bad ("qasheh," hard, heavy, cruel severe, obstinate) tidings. --- v11. Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs will eat. And he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat; for the LORD has spoken {it.} v12. Now you arise, go to your house. When your feet enter the city the child will die. v13. And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he alone of Jeroboam's {family} shall come to the grave, because in him something good was found toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam."

d. Paul's superintendence by vision of the churches under his care. Col.2v1-5. 1Cor.5v1-5.

Col.2v1-5. "For I want you to know what a great conflict (the noun "agona," contest, Paul continues with the metaphor of Col.1v29., where he used the verb "agonizomenai," which literally means, to compete and contend for a prize in the gymnastic games, and figuratively, to fight and contend with an adversary, and to endeavour with utmost strenuous zeal and effort to accomplish something) I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, v2. that their hearts may be comforted and encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, v3. in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. v4. And this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. v5. For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

Paul tells the Colossian Church of his great spiritual concern and efforts on their behalf, and also for the Christians at Laodicea, who he had not personally met. He states in Col.1v29., "To this end I also labour ("kopiao," to grow weary, to toil to the point of exhaustion), striving ("agonizomenai") according to His working ("energeia," working, this word is only used in the New Testament to describe the supernatural power of God or Satan), which works ("energeo") in me mightily."

Paul is defending the Christian faith and experience against the conceited intellectual Gnostics, who boasted that they knew the sacred mysteries. Paul proclaims that in Jesus the divine mysteries are truly revealed and that in Him are all the rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col.2v3. The Gnostics boasted in a perverted and limited knowledge ("gnosis"), but in Jesus there is true knowledge and a love that comforts, "paraklethosin"), knits and binds ("sunbibasthentes," see Acts.16vv10. Col.2v19.) Christians together. In Jesus there is "the full assurance of understanding," this is experienced by spiritual revelation, and not just by the diligent and balanced exercise of our mental powers. The divine purpose is that we might experience "unto full knowledge," "eis epignōsin," "the mystery of God, even Christ." Jesus is "the mystery of God," no longer hidden, but manifested, Col.1v26., and God desires us to know Him to the fullness of our capacity. Every believer can and should experience repeated transforming new revelations of the glories of our risen Lord.

In Col.2v4., Paul tells the Colossians the purpose of his theology and warnings, "I tell you this so that no-one may delude and deceive you by fine-sounding persuasive arguments." People can very gullible, and can be deceived by oratory and crafty arguments. Here the peril was from the arrogant claims of the Gnostics, however, Paul often warns us that there are dangerous theologians within the Church, in Eph.4v14., he states, "As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed to and fro by the waves, and blown about by every wind of doctrine, and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming."

In Col.2v5., Paul informs them of his prayer watchfulness over them by means of a divinely given vision ministry. "Your order," is "ten taxin," (from "tassō," unbroken, intact.), which like "steadfastness," "stereoma," (from "stereos," to make steady), also had a military usage. The Christian ranks had stood firm, a few may have been seduced by the Gnostics, but the line was unbroken. In 2Th.3:6,8,11., Paul warns about Christians who walk disorderly ("ataktos") and don't follow his orderly example and tradition, "taxis." In Acts.16v5., the verb "stereo" (to make firm, to strengthen) is used with "pistis" (faith), and in 1Pet.5v9., the adjective "stereos" (compact, solid, firm, steadfast) is used with "pistis." It is a fact that prophetic prayer ministry can greatly help Christians, who are a great distance away, and under severe attack, to be steadfast in God. This ministry is open to all Christians who walk on "the more excellent way" of "agape" love.

CONCLUSION.

The warning and instruction is clear, most of prophetic revelation should be kept hidden away, and just as in the ministries of our Lord and the apostle Paul, should be used for the purpose of prayer. Dedicated prophetic praying directed by divine revelation is the great need of the Church in this hour. Let us also learn from Joseph, not to let enthusiasm over God's gifting overwhelm our wisdom. Envy and jealousy are still very much at large

in the Church today, Joseph's brothers are still with us. Be careful. Be as wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove.

Matt.10v16. "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

"Wise," is "phronimos," 5429, (from 5424; thoughtful, understanding), and speaks of a sagacious, discreet and cautious person. "Harmless," is "akeraios," 185, the negative "a" makes the word mean, unmixed, unadulterated, unalloyed, or pure, as in wines or metals, and is used to speak of a person whose attitude and mind have no mixture, a person who is guileless, -harmless, innocent.

APPENDIX. THE GLORY AND VICTORY OF OUR LORD'S HUMANITY.

a. A. T. Robertson states that Heb.2v17,18. teaches the true sympathetic humanity of Jesus in his commentary.

Heb.2v17,18. "{It behoved him} "ôpheilen." Imperfect active of "opheilô," old verb to owe, money (Mt.18:28.), service and love (Rom.13:8.), duty or obligation as here and often in N.T. (Luke.17:10.). Jesus is here the subject and the reference is to the incarnation. Having undertaken the work of redemption (John.3:16.), voluntarily (John.10:17.), Jesus was under obligation to be properly equipped for that priestly service and sacrifice. {In all things} "kata panta." Except yielding to sin (Heb.4:15.) and yet he knew what temptation was, difficult as it may be for us to comprehend that in the Son of God who is also the Son of man (Mark.1:13.). Jesus fought through to victory over Satan. {To be made like unto his brethren} "tois adelphois homoiôthênai." First aorist passive infinitive of "homoioô," old and common verb from "homoios" (like), as in Mt.6v8., with the associative instrumental case as here. Christ, our Elder Brother, resembles us in reality (Phil.2:7. "in the likeness of men") as we shall resemble him in the end (Rom.8:29. "first-born among many brethren"; 1John.3:2. "like him"), where the same root is used as here "hoiôma, homoios." That he might be "hina genêtai." Purpose clause with "hina" and the second aorist middle subjunctive of "ginomai," to become, "that he might become." That was only possible by being like his brethren in actual human nature. {Merciful and faithful high priest} "eleêmôn kai pistos archiereus." The sudden use of "archiereus" here for Jesus has been anticipated by 1:3; 2:9. and see 3:1.. Jesus as the priest-victim is the chief topic of the Epistle. These two adjectives "eleêmôn" and "pistos" touch the chief points in the function of the high priest (5:1-10.), sympathy and fidelity to God. The Sadducean high priests (Annas and Caiaphas) were political and ecclesiastical tools and puppets out of sympathy with the people and chosen by Rome. {In things pertaining to God} "ta pros ton theon." The adverbial accusative of the article is a common idiom. See the very idiom "ta pros ton theon" in Ex 18:19; Rom.15v17. This use of "pros" we had already in Heb 1:7f.. On the day of atonement the high priest entered the holy of holies and officiated in behalf of the people. {To make propitiation for} "eis to hilaskesthai." Purpose clause with "eis to" and the infinitive (common Greek idiom), here present indirect middle of "hilaskomai," to render propitious to oneself (from "hilaos," Attic "hileôs," gracious). This idea occurs in the Sept.(Ps 65:3.), but only here in N.T., though in Luke.18:13. the passive form "hilasthêti" occurs as in 2Ki 5:18.. In 1Jo 2:2. we have "hilasmos" used of Christ (cf. Heb 7:25.). The inscriptions illustrate the meaning in Heb 2:17. as well as the Sept.

Heb.2v18. {In that} "en hôi." Literally, "In which" "en toutôi en hôi," in that in which), a causal idea, though in Rom.14v22. "en hôi" means "wherein." {Hath suffered} "peponthen." Second perfect active indicative of "paschô," permanent part of Christ's experience. {Being tempted} "peirastheis." First aorist passive participle of "peirazô." The temptation to escape the shame of the Cross was early and repeatedly presented to Christ, by Satan in the wilderness (Mt.4v8-11.), by Peter in the spirit of Satan (Mt.16v22f..), in Gethsemane (Mt.26v39.), and caused intense suffering to Jesus (Luke.22:44; Heb.5:8.). {He is able} "dunatai." This word strikes the heart of it all. Christ's power to help is due not merely to his deity as God's Son, but also to his humanity without which he could not sympathise with us (Heb.4:15.). {To succour} "boêthêsai." First aorist active infinitive of the old compound verb "boêtheô" "boê," a cry, "theô," to run), to run at a cry or call for help (Mt.15:25.). {Them that are tempted} "tois peirazomenois." Dative plural of the articular participle (present passive) of "peirazô." These Jewish Christians were daily tempted to give up Christ, to apostatise from Christianity. Jesus understands himself "autos" their predicament and is able to help them to be faithful." **End of quote.**

b. In Rom.8v3. Paul states Christ's victory over the flesh.

Paul rejoices in Christ's glorious victory over the trials and temptations of true humanity. It is a most glorious and wonderful fact, that out of pure love for us, God the Word became flesh "sarx," and suffered and overcame the trials and temptations of true humanity. Jn.1v14. 1Jn.4v2,3. 2Jn.v7. 1Tim.3v16. Rom.1v4,5. 8v3. Heb.2v17,18. 4v15. 5v7. 10v5. Christ was manifest in flesh, "sarx;" but He never allowed the flesh to dominate Him. In Rom.8v3. Paul states that Jesus was, "in the likeness of sinful flesh," "en homoiomati sarkos hamartias," just as Phil.2v7., "in the likeness of men," "en homoiomati anthropon," the likeness is real, Jesus had a real humanity, not a false or phantom humanity as the Docetic Gnostics taught. ("Homoioima," occurs in Rom.1v23. 5v14. 6v5. 8v3. Phil.2v7. Rev.9v7.)

The Expositor's Greek Testament also gives light on Rom.8v3..

It states: "But the emphasis in "homoioima" is on Christ's likeness to us, not His unlikeness; "flesh of sin" is one idea to the Apostle, and what he means by it is that God sent His Son in that nature which in us is identified

with sin. This was the "form" (and "form" rather than "likeness" is what "homoionoma" signifies) in which Christ appeared amongst men. It does not prejudice Christ's sinlessness, which is a fixed point with the Apostle 'ab initio'; and if anyone says it involves a contradiction to maintain that Christ was sinless, and that He came in a nature which with us is identified with sin, it may be pointed out that this identification does not belong to the essence of our nature, but to its corruption, and that the uniform teaching of the New Testament is that Christ is one with us-short of sin. The likeness and the limitation of it (though the former is the point here urged) are equally essential in the Redeemer."

Alford writes on Rom.8v3.: "in the likeness of the flesh of sin' (the flesh 'whose attribute and character was sin). The genitive is not 'hamartolou,' but implies far more-[not merely the contamination by, but] the belonging to and being possessed by."---He had a nature 'like sinful human nature'- but had not Himself 'a sinful nature,' Compare Heb.4v15. --- He was able to be tempted, i.e. subjected to sensuous incitements, e.g. of pain, which in other men break out into sin, but in Him did not."

The flesh that had corrupted and led all mankind into sin was conquered by Jesus. His victory over sin, not only condemned sin in the flesh, but also enables us to live in victory over sin, through the law of the spirit and life in Christ. Rom.8v4. Jesus partook of human flesh, but did not partake of the sins of the flesh, His holy life condemned sin in the flesh and showed that it was possible to live in victory over it. In Heb.2v16-18. we read that Jesus took on Him the seed of Abraham, and that it was a moral duty and obligation ("opheilen," the imperfect active indicative of "opheilo," to be obligated), for Him to be made in all points like unto His brethren, and experience the same temptations, so that He could be our sympathetic High Priest. To be tempted in all points as we are, He had to be made in all points as we are. Heb.2v17. with 4v15. From the level of our humanity, Jesus conquered the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Blessed be His Name!

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