

BY HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED. Isaiah.53v5. 1Peter.2v24.

PREFACE AND CONTENTS.

In this study we will dwell in particular upon the text "By His stripes we are healed," which literally translated means, "By His bruise we are healed." I also include, in other folders, subjects that are vitally related to Christ's bruising. Some studies have been on my former discs, however, some are upgraded. These are very relevant to the study of the terrible bruising of Jesus, which we are going to consider. This second edition is rewritten, and significantly upgraded with the addition of a considerable amount of new material. **W. Turner. Second Edition December 10th. 2005. (First Edition 25/10/04.)**

1. BY HIS STRIPES (Literally BRUISE), WE ARE HEALED. Page 4.

Introduction and Hymn. "By the Cross of Jesus standing."

N.B.1. The incalculable bruising that occurred when the eternal God the Word became flesh.

N.B.2. Jesus bravely endured terrible bruising of His body, soul and spirit, for all of His life.

a. The main emphasis in Is.53v5., and 1Pet.2v24., is on forgiveness of sin.

b. In Is.53v4. God's promise of healing is an emphatic "SURELY," and "VERILY," not a doubtful "maybe."

c. Some more striking revelations about salvation in Jesus, found in the rest of Isa.53v5. and 1Pet.2v24.

2. THE LIFELONG SEVERE, CRUEL, AND BRUTAL BRUISING OF JESUS AT NAZARETH. Page 8.

Hymn. Blessed be His Name!

N.B. 1. Jesus experienced dreadful and relentless conflict and bruising all of His life.

N.B. 2. Christ's continual bruising fights of faith, and His victories of faith at Nazareth.

The bruising conflicts Jesus experienced at Nazareth through Satan inspired people.

1. Jesus experienced great rejection, and a heartbreaking fight of faith in His home.

a. Jesus experienced some good early years with His family, and then things went badly wrong.

b. Jesus was treated like a stranger and alien by His brothers and sisters. Ps.69v7-11. Mt.13v55,56. Mk.6v3.

c. We read in Mk.3v21., that Christ's family said that Jesus was insane when He upset the religious hierarchy.

d. We read in Jn.7v5., that His brethren did not believe in Him.

2. Jesus was bitterly criticised, and sceptically rejected by most of the people in Nazareth.

Moral, honest and sincere people at Nazareth admired Jesus in His early years, and then things went badly wrong.

a. We read in Ps 69v12., that the elders who sat in the gate of the town, spoke against Jesus and criticised Him.

b. We read in Ps.69v12., that drunkards made up and sang vile and disgusting songs about Jesus.

c. When Jesus preached His first sermon at Nazareth, the inhabitants of Nazareth tried to kill Him.

N.B. The insights that the epistle of James gives us into the life of Jesus at Nazareth.

3. JESUS WAS BRUISED IN DEVELOPING HIS PROPHETIC AND HIGH PRIESTLY MINISTRY.

Jesus had dreadful fights of faith in prayer at Nazareth, while God prepared Him for His apostolic and High Priestly ministries. The apostolic and High Priestly ministries of Jesus were the product of Christ's prayer life at Nazareth.

a. The development of Christ's prophetic and High Priestly ministry was a truly bruising experience.

b. Christ's visit to the temple at twelve reveals His resolute and dedicated preparation for His ministry.

c. The qualifications to be our Great High Priest were gained at enormous personal cost to Jesus.

d. The excruciating burden and cost of Christ's prayer life at Nazareth.

e. Jesus had to set His face like a flint at Nazareth, as well as in His ministry and Passion.

N.B. Christ's prayer ministry at Nazareth placed huge demands on Him.

a. Jesus had to pray a revival into being from ground zero.

b. Jesus had to pray John the Baptist through.

c. Jesus touched the world with His prayer ministry.

N.B. Jesus won major battles in prayer all over the world during His prayer ministry at Nazareth.

d. The excruciating burden and cost of Christ's prayer life at Nazareth.

N.B. Jesus experienced real fights of faith, and painful bruising of His soul, while praying through for His ministry.

GOD DEVELOPED CHRIST'S PROPHETIC AND HIGH PREISTLY MINISTRY BY LIFE'S TRIALS.

a. God developed Christ's ministries in the stress and trials of daily living, and the hardship of real poverty.

N.B. Paul declares in 2Cor.8v9., that Jesus experienced the total poverty of a penniless beggar.

b. God trained Jesus through running the family business, and the hard work of providing for Mary's large family.

c. God the Father trained Jesus to examine and reject the false tradition of His times.

d. God the Father trained Jesus in prophetic prayer ministry, and in development of spiritual gifts.

e. God the Father rooted and grounded Jesus in a vital experience of the truth of the Scriptures.

N.B. Jesus fully partook of our humanity and victoriously overcame all areas of temptation.

4. WHY DID GOD HIDE AWAY CHRIST'S SUPERB PROPHETIC MINISTRY? Page 16.

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

2. Jesus was hidden by God until His prophetic prayer ministry was fully developed and perfected.

3. God protected Jesus from the jealousy, envy, and hostility of worldly people, and carnal religious leaders. N.B. It was to prevent Israel's religious leaders from being prematurely moved with jealousy and envy.
4. Jesus was hidden away until the fullness of time.

WHY DID JESUS HIDE AWAY MOST OF HIS PERFECT REVELATION MINISTRY?

- a. It was obviously a command of God the Father.
 - b. Was it so that people would not tremble before Him as they did before Moses and Samuel?
- N.B. Our Lord's revelation ministry was even hidden away in His healing ministry.

5. JESUS WAS BRUISED BY HIS CONFLICTS WITH ISRAEL'S RELIGIOUS LEADERS. Page 18.

The traumatic effect on Jesus of His conflicts with Israel's religious leaders.

- a. We must "look away to" Jesus, and "consider" Jesus. Heb.12v2,3.
- b. Consider the astounding steadfast and brave endurance of Jesus in vicious opposition.
- c. Consider the horrors Jesus endured which are recorded in Psalm 22.
- d. Consider how Jesus was persecuted and murdered because of the envy in Israel's religious leaders.

6. JESUS WAS BRUISED BY EXCRUCIATING TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS FROM SATAN. Page 20.

- a. Jesus was badly bruised by Satan's attacks in the wilderness, and throughout His ministry.
- b. There were many other attacks by Satan on Jesus besides the temptation in the wilderness.
- c. We read in Lk.4v2., that Jesus was tempted throughout all of the forty days and nights.
- d. There were many further attacks on Jesus by Satan, indirectly through people.
- e. Satan tempted Jesus with real and bruising temptations from the flesh.

THE THREE LAST TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS.

1. SATAN TRIED TO ROB JESUS OF THE POWER OF GOD BY AN ATTACK ON HIS FAITH.

- a. Satan aggressively attacked the reality of Christ's most holy and blessed experiences.
- b. Satan tried to undermine and destroy Christ's faith in God's Word.
- c. Satan sneered at, disparaged and maligned Christ's thirty years of love and devotion to God at Nazareth.
- d. Satan fiercely attacked the Sonship and Deity of Jesus. N.B.Rom.8v14-17. 1Jn.3v1,2.
- e. Satan attempted to undermine Christ's faith in God's provision and love for Him.
- f. Satan viciously attacked the reality of Christ's spiritual gifts.

2. SATAN TRIED TO GET JESUS TO USE HIS GIFTS IN THE WRONG WAY. Mt.4v5-7.

- a. Satan tried to get Jesus to misinterpret the Scriptures in a self willed, presumptuous and fanatical way.
- b. Satan tried to get Jesus to use spiritual gifts in a spectacular way to win the praise of people.
- c. Satan tempted Jesus to strive for and win position and prestige in men's religious power structures.

3. SATAN TEMPTED JESUS TO EXCHANGE GOD'S BLESSING FOR EARTHLY GLORY.

- a. Satan tried to seduce Jesus with an offer of worldly wealth, prestige, and glory.
- b. Satan tried to get Jesus to supplement the power of God with the glory of the world.
- c. Satan tried to get Jesus to build a worldly or religious empire around Himself.

7. JESUS WAS GREATLY BRUISED BY HIS HORRENDOUS CONFLICTS IN GETHSEMANAE. P 25.

- a. The horrific words used to describe Christ's awful depression, anguish and agony of soul in Gethsemane.
- b. Christ's agonising praying was so physically destructive that God had to send an angel to strengthen Him.
- c. Great sorrow was followed by even greater sorrow and heavy depression. Mt.26v37,38.
- d. The great suffering of Jesus, which is seen in the parallel texts in Mt.26v37. and Mk.14v33.
- e. Adam Clarke's enlightening commentary on Mt.26v37,38.
- f. The sorrow, pain and anguish of Gethsemane were so severe that it nearly killed Jesus.

8. IN HIS PASSION JESUS SUFFERED EXCRUCIATING PHYSICAL PAIN AND SUFFERING. Page 28.

- a. The soul destroying fights with evil men and angels that Jesus bravely conquered.
- b. The horrors of crucifixion recorded in Psalm 22.
- c. The Jews erroneously thought that Jesus was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted for His own sins,
- d. The Jews erroneously thought that Jesus was being judicially stricken and abandoned by God.
- e. The Jews erroneously thought that Jesus was being judicially smitten by God.
- f. The Scriptures warned Jesus that He would be smitten "in the house of my friends." Zech.13v6-9.
- g. The Jews thought that Jesus was being judged by God for His sins, but He was purchasing healing for us.
What are the hindrances in our Churches that stop God from fulfilling His Word to heal us?

9. JESUS ENDURED THE AGONISING AND BRUISING BIRTH PAINS OF HADES. Page 31.

The tragic failure of the Church to preach about and meditate upon our Lord's imprisonment in Hades for us.
The creed states that Jesus did descend into Hell.

THE WORDS THAT ARE USED FOR THE PLACES TO WHICH THE UNSAVED DEAD GO.

A. GEHENNA occurs 12 times in the New Testament.

B. HADES is translated as "Hell" 10 times in the Authorised King James Version.

TWO WORDS ARE USED DESCRIBE THE PART OF HADES IN WHICH EVIL BEINGS ARE INCARCERATED.

1. **THE ABYSS, OR THE DEEP.** "Abussos," Strong 12, the immeasurable depth.
2. **TARTAROS.**

C. PARADISE. The place in Heaven where Christians go to at death.

N.B. THE HUGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN OLD TESTAMENT AND A NEW TESTAMENT SAINT AT DEATH.

1. The Old Testament saint's fear and dread of death.
2. The New Testament Christians victory over Hades and joy in death.

D. JESUS SUFFERED THE PAINS OF HADES TO REDEEM HIS DEARLY LOVED SAINTS.

- a. Christ's descent into Hades was the only way that the Old Testament saints could be released from Hades.
- b. The agonies of Gethsemane were an anticipation and result of the agonies of Hades.

WHAT WERE THE BIRTH PAINS OF HADES?

1. The soul-agony of being separated from the Father.
2. The soul-agony of being made sin for us.
3. The soul-anguish of trusting God without His spirit and God's presence.
4. The soul anguish Jesus suffered in Hades was the greatest that He suffered.
5. The soul-agony of losing His body at death, and experiencing all these horrors of Hades.

E. THE GREAT JOY OF JESUS AFTER HIS GLORIOUS TRIUMPH OVER DEATH AND HADES.

1. Jesus had the supreme joy of restored fellowship and communion with the Father.
2. Jesus had the great joy of knowing that atonement had been made.
3. Jesus had the great joy of taking the multitudes of His beloved captive saints from Hades into Heaven.

F. JESUS PREACHED LIKE A HERALD TO THE IGNORANT AND WICKED IN HADES.

N.B. The words used for Jesus preaching to the dead, are the normal words for preaching the Gospel.

G. JESUS ALSO PREACHED GOOD NEWS TO THE REST OF THE DEAD. Page 38.

H. IS THERE A CHANCE OF SALVATION AFTER DEATH?

1. Peter states that Jesus has **ALREADY** preached to the dead in Hades. 1Pet.3v18-20. 4v6.
2. The early Church fathers also testify that Jesus preached to the dead.

3. Seven further Scriptural proofs that salvation and forgiveness is possible after death.

1. In Rev.20v15., "And whosoever," "kai ei tis," should be translated, "And if anyone."
2. In 2Cor.6v2., Paul is addressing the Corinthians, who have had their opportunity of salvation.
3. In Heb.9v27., "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement."
4. In 1Tim.2v5,6., Paul tells us that the Christ who died for all, will give the testimony to all in due times.
5. The Judge of the whole earth will do right. Gen.18v25. Rev.6v10. 15v3. 19v2.
No one will be able to point an accusing finger at God, and every mouth will be stopped. Rom.3v19.
6. In Mt.12v31,32., Jesus said all sin can be forgiven in the next age but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit..
7. In Mt.11v20-24. Jesus said there was hope for those who in limited light had come under Divine judgement.

CONCLUSION. "BEHOLD THE MAN." "BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD. Page 41.

THE GLORY AND VICTORY OF OUR LORD'S HUMANITY.

- a. The apostle John tells us in 1John.4v2,3., that if we deny Christ's humanity we "are not of God."
- b. A. T. Robertson states that Heb.2v17,18., teaches the true sympathetic humanity of Jesus.
- c. In Rom.8v3., Paul states Christ's victory over the flesh.
- d. The Expositor's Greek Testament also gives light on Rom.8v3...
- e. Alford writes on Rom.8v3.

N.B. The Scriptures could not be clearer, or more emphatic, "by His bruise we are healed," Is.53v5.

Appendix. The Catastrophic Effects Of The Doctrine Of "Original Sin." Page 44.

1. "BY HIS STRIPES (Literally BRUISE) WE ARE HEALED."

Introduction.

It is a most appalling fact that few preachers preach at any depth on the terrible emotional bruising and dreadful mental pressures that Jesus suffered all His life, and during the anguish, torment, and horrors of Gethsemane, His Passion, and His descent into Hades. Peter majored on Christ's descent into Hades in his first sermon on the day of Pentecost, and Paul and Peter did the same in their writings. Acts.2v24-31. Rom.10v7-9. Eph.4v7-11. 1Pet.3v18-20. 4v6. Can you remember, if, or when, you heard a sermon on how Jesus descended into Hades, and suffered its horrific birth pangs? This important "truth" has been held by the Church from the Day of Pentecost, and was taught by our Lord during His earthly and post-resurrection ministry to the Apostles and His Disciples. Matt 12v40, Luke 24v25-27. **Tertullian**, one of the early Church fathers stated that the belief that Jesus descended into Hades and preached there, had been held in the Church since the days of the apostles, his testimony is of great value since Tertullian censured anything that was new.

The Lord Jesus, repeatedly tried to teach His Apostles about His approaching death by crucifixion, and His descent into Hades and His Resurrection, during His earthly Ministry. However the Apostles repeatedly rejected this vital truth from the lips of our Lord, even after God the Father spoke to Peter, James and John, on the Mount of Transfiguration, and instructed them to listen to what Jesus was trying to tell them. Matt 17v5, 12v40, 16v21-23, Mark 9v31,32, Luke 18v31-34. Because of their repeated and determined refusal not to believe the vital truths about His rejection by Israel's religious leaders, and His death and atonement, they were filled with fear and overwhelmed with grief and sorrow; when on the night of the Passover at the Last Supper, Jesus warned them again that He was about to be taken from them. John.14v1. Also, because of their rejection of the truth about His death, descent into Hades and Resurrection, they were unable to bear other vital truth that Jesus had wanted to teach them. John 16v12. He would have to withhold this truth from them until after His Resurrection, when the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, would make it known to them. John 14v26. 16v13.

Even after being with Jesus for 40 days during His Post Resurrection ministry, the minds of the apostles were still largely "blinded" to the truth regarding His death, descent into Hades and Resurrection, for they asked Jesus, "wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel"? Acts.1v6. Jesus had warned the apostles about being influenced by the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees. Mt.16v6. They were, however, still "clinging," like most of the people, to the false hope that the Messiah would deliver them from the Romans, and they were longing and expecting Jesus to do it. However, after ten days in the Upper Room with the other disciples, prolonged prayer and earnest seeking of God, and the ministration, and illumination of the Holy Spirit, Jn.14v26. 16v13., their attitudes were transformed and they became of "one accord," Acts.1v14. 2v1., Greek, "homothumadon," "same mind" 3661. On the Day of Pentecost Peter stands up and preaches the truths that he had previously vigorously rejected. His sermon in Acts.2v14-39., covers 26 verses, which are dedicated to the truth of our Saviour being crucified and suffering the "pangs of Hades," in order to make Atonement for our sins, and procure our Salvation. The outflow of Christ's glorious atoning death and victory was, that after His Resurrection and Ascension, on the Day of Pentecost, the disciples received "the Promise of the Father," the Holy Spirit, and God gave spiritual gifts and ministries to men. Acts.2v16-21 with Eph.4v8.

Another reason why the Apostles failed to receive and believe the vital truths that Jesus told them was because they were carnal, Greek "sarkikos" 4559, 1Cor.3v1-4. The Lord Jesus had referred to the Apostles as spiritual "babes", just as Paul also had referred to members of the Corinthian Church. Matt.11v25. Paul writes in 1Cor.3v1-4., v1 "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. v2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. v3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? v4. For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" (KJV) The Apostles, like members of the Corinthian Church, were manifesting disgraceful "envying, strife and divisions" amongst themselves. Even on the night of the Last Supper they were squabbling over which of them would be the first and greatest in the Kingdom of God. Luke.22v24. So the Lord Jesus washed their feet, and showed them by example, that the one who would be considered truly great among them, was the one who was the loving and humble servant of all. John.13v5, Lk.22v26. Acts.2v24.

Can you remember, if, or when, you heard a sermon on how Jesus descended into Hades, and suffered its horrific birth pangs? Acts.2v24. Once when I preached on Christ's descent into Hades, a quite elderly lady refused to accept what I said about Jesus descending into Hades, even after I had read the Scriptures on the subject to her. She said that she had never heard her Pastor preach on it, so she could not accept that what the Scriptures and I said was true. Her Pastor later confirmed to her that Jesus did descend into Hades, and then she accepted it. This disastrous omission of one of the major truths connected with our salvation, is common and widespread in the Church. The full price for our salvation was paid for in Hades, and not just on the Cross. It was when the soul of Jesus was made "an offering for sin," in Hades, and He was raised for our justification, that salvation was finally and completely won for us. Is.53v10. Rom.4v25.

Where does healing of the body and soul, and all the blessings of the new covenant come from? The Holy Scriptures make it quite clear; they all proceed, and are derived, from the perfect holy life, and the atoning death of our Lord Jesus. The following outstanding and inspiring hymn by Horatius Bonar, superbly proclaims, that all the forgiveness and blessings that we receive from God our heavenly Father, come to us because of the atoning death of our dear Lord Jesus, the sin-bearing Lamb of God. Jn.1v29,35,36. Acts.20v28. 1Pet.1v18,19. Rev.1v5. 5v6,12-14. 6v16,17. 7v9,15. 19v7-9. 21v9. 22v1-7. Christ's death reveals to us the amazing grace and riches of God's mercy, and His great love towards us. Eph.2v4-10. Through His great suffering and atoning death Jesus fulfilled all the redemptive types and prophecies in the Old Testament. Blessed be His Name!

**v1. By the Cross of Jesus standing
Love our straitened souls expanding,
Taste we now the peace and grace!
Health from yonder Tree is flowing,
Heav'nly light is on it glowing,
From the blessed Suff'rer's face.**

**v2. Here is pardon's pledge and token,
Guilt's strong chain for ever broken,
Righteous peace securely made;
Brightens now the brow once shaded,
Freshens now the face one faded,
Peace with God now makes us glad.**

**v3. All the love of God is yonder,
Love beyond all thought and wonder,
Perfect love that casts out fear!**

**v4. Here the living water welleteth;
Here the Rock, now smitten, telleth
Of salvation freely given;**

**Strength, like dew, is here distilling,
Glorious life our souls is filling-
Life eternal only here!**

**This the fount of love and pity,
This the pathway to the city,
This the very gate of heaven.**

On the basis of the King James Version's translation of Is.53v5., "By His stripes we are healed," and other translations like the New American Standard reading, "by His scourging we are healed," many good Christians confidently affirm that we are healed through the vicious scourging that Jesus received. This has further been confirmed in some people's minds by other versions translating this phrase as, "by His wounds we are healed," and the commentaries of some distinguished Christian scholars on this verse, which come to a similar conclusion. However, the truth behind this Scripture is much more awe-inspiring, and astonishing, and even more horrifying, than Christ's scourging, as shocking and gruesome as it was. The Scriptures reveal that the vicious and horrendous bruising of Jesus here referred to, encompasses and embraces the whole of Christ's agonizing and extraordinary earthly life, and not just the events around His death. **I have stated some of the truths in this study and the accompanying studies, several times, in order to drive home the great and vital truths that the Scriptures reveal.**

Vines Expository Dictionary of N.T. Words, states that 1Peter.2v24., "by His stripes we are healed," is "not referring to Christ's scourging." He writes, "Stripe," "molops," 3468, "a bruise, a wound from a stripe," is used in 1Pet.2v24. (from the Septuagint. of Isa.53v5.), **lit., in the original, "by whose bruise," not referring to Christ's scourging,** but figurative of the stroke of divine judgment administered vicariously to Him on the cross." End of Quote. Vine is stating the absolute truth when he writes that 1Pet.2v24. is speaking of the whole vicarious atonement of Jesus, for healing of our body, soul and spirit, spring from Christ's atonement, and the precious shed blood of His cross. Jesus was aggressively and viciously tested, tempted and tried throughout all of His life by Satan, evil men and circumstances, but in spite of all this evil pressure against Him, He lived a perfect sinless life. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for sin, the sinless Lamb of God. It is not the scourging of Jesus, but the precious atoning blood of Jesus that brings us healing of body, soul, and spirit to us.

In Is.53v5. "And with His stripes," the word used for "stripes," in the Hebrew, is "**chaburah**," Strong 2250. It is in the singular, and it literally means, "a bruise," the result of a blow on the skin. As we have already seen, "stripes," in 1Peter.2v24., is "**molopi**," Strong 3468. It likewise is in the singular, "a bruise," this reveals to us that the body, soul, and spirit of Jesus was one massive and terrible bruise. He voluntarily suffered being beaten black and blue in body, soul, and spirit, for us.

Barnes writes about "chaburah." "It is not a flesh wound; it does not draw blood; but the blood and other humours are collected under the skin." End of quote. The scourging Jesus received, mangled His flesh, and produced many dozens of deep bleeding wounds in His flesh, terrible wounds that even reached and exposed Christ's bones. So we can see that Is.53v5. is speaking of something more than this scourging. The inner bruising that the kind and gentle soul of Jesus suffered during this dreadful beating, was even worse than the mangling of His flesh. He was despised and rejected by those He came to save, the inner bruising and pain of this was immense. See Lk.19v41-44.

N.B.1. The incalculable bruising that occurred when the eternal God the Word became flesh.

When the eternal God the Word became man, it was a sacrificial act beyond compare, it was so great that the heavenly hosts, bursting with love and admiration, had to come and tell the shepherds about it. The omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and unlimited unchangeable eternal God the Word, who knew none of the constraints of time and space, emptied Himself of all these attributes and abilities and became a little baby, with all the huge limitations that this implies. We read in Phil.2v5-11., **v5** "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: **v6** Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **v7** But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (KJV) Before His incarnation Jesus was, "in the form of God," "en" 1722, "morphe" 3444, "Theou" 2316. By the use of "morphe," Paul proclaims that Jesus possessed the essential and exclusive attributes of absolute Deity. Jesus laid all this glory and power aside and took upon Himself our humanity. See "The Glory and Victory of our Lord's Humanity," on page 39. in the Conclusion.

In Phil.2v7., the King James Version, "But made himself of no reputation," does not convey the sense of the original Greek, "alla 235, heauton 1438, ekenosen 2758." "Ekenosen," is the aorist active indicative of "kenoo," 2758, which means literally, to empty, "to make empty, to make vain or void." It only occurs in the following places in the New Testament, it is translated as; "made void" in Rom.4v14., "made of none effect" in 1Cor.1v17., "make void" in 1Cor.9v15., and "should be vain" in 2Cor.9v3. Young translates Phil.2v7., "But did empty Himself," others read, "But emptied Himself." (NAS) (RSV) (ASV) v7. the Amplified reads, "But stripped Himself." Jesus was truly emptied and stripped, and had to refill His mind with truth and wisdom, we read in **Lk.2v40,52., v40.** "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. **v52.** And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." (KJV) This refilling with wisdom took 30 years, and Jesus started His ministry "full of grace and truth." Jn.1v14. The courage and cost of the incarnation cannot be overestimated, it was truly immeasurable. "Our God contracted to a span, incomprehensibly made man." This was the first great bruising of Jesus. The cost was incalculable, but He did it out of pure love for us. Blessed! Blessed indeed, be His holy Name!!

N.B.2. Jesus bravely endured terrible bruising of His body, soul and spirit, for all of His life.

An examination of Is.53v5., shows that this bruising is referring to the whole of Christ's life, and not just in His scourging and the events around His atoning death. In Is.53v4., the Hebrew word for the King James Version, **"sorrows," is "mak'ob" 4341**, which can speak both of physical and mental pain. The commentary by the eminent Hebrew scholars **Keil & Delitzsch** on "mak'ob," is very enlightening, it states, **"He was [mak'obowt 4341] 'iysh 376)], a man of sorrow of heart in all its forms, i.e., a man whose chief distinction was, that His life was one of constant painful endurance."** End of quote. This comment on "mak'ob" reveals the enormous painful pressures that were inflicted on Jesus during the whole of His life.

In Is.53v5., "bruised," is "daka" 1792, which means, "to be broken in pieces, to be utterly shattered and crushed" by calamities and trials. See Job.6v9. Ps.72v4. It speaks of the most severe inward and outward sufferings. In purchasing our redemption, Jesus was under such a weight of sorrows that He was broken in pieces, utterly shattered and crushed to the earth. Men said that Jesus suffered because of some great sin of His own, but they were dreadfully and totally wrong; God did not smite Him for His own sins, but for ours. We will consider the terrible lifelong bruising that Jesus endured at greater length later on.

a. The main emphasis in Is.53v5. and 1Pet.2v24. is on forgiveness of sin.

In both Is.53v5., and 1Pet.2v24., the context in each verse is about forgiveness of sins, and healing of the soul, not healing of the body. This can be seen by the following translations of these Scriptures.

Isa.53:5. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." (KJV) (ASV)

1Pet.2v24. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (KJV)

1Pet.2v24. "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-- by whose stripes you were healed." (NKJ)

b. In Is.53v4. God's promise of healing is an emphatic "SURELY," and "VERILY," not a doubtful "maybe."

Jesus informs us in the account of the healing of the paralysed man in Mt.9v1-8., Mk.2v1-12., and Lk.5v17-26., that healing of the body should be an expected attendant and result of healing of the soul and forgiveness. This is confirmed by Is.53v4., where God deals with healing of the body in an unambiguous and very direct and powerful way. **In Is.53v4., "surely, " is "aken," a strong and forceful word, meaning truly, surely, indeed. God reveals the totally emphatic nature of His promise of physical healing. We know that healing of the soul is more important than healing of the body, but here God puts a "surely" on healing of the body, it appears that He knew how the Jews and the Church would neglect, and fail to take hold of this "charismata" of Divine grace.** The translation by Keil & Delitzsch, give the true sense of **Is.53v4.** "VERILY He hath borne our diseases and our pains: He hath laden them upon Himself; but we regarded Him as one stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."

N.B. The Jews, like Job's "friends," mistakenly looked upon Jesus as "one stricken" ("naguwa" 5060), and "smitten" ("nakah" 5221), by God. They looked upon Christ's sufferings as the punishment for His own sins. However, the truth was the very opposite of this. Jesus took upon Himself the fellowship of our sufferings, the sufferings, which we deserved to bare, and not only took them away, Mt.8v17., but carried them in Himself, in order that He might deliver us from them. When Jesus took upon Himself the suffering, which we would, or should bear, and endured it, with, and for us, in our place, this is called substitution. Jesus took upon Himself the sicknesses and sorrows of the world; and taking them upon Himself, He bore them away.

In Is.53v4., the word for "carried" in the King James Version, is the Hebrew, "cabal" 5445, which means to carry or bear a heavy burden, Jesus lifted and bore away the heavy burden of our mental and physical pain and sickness. Jesus not only took our physical diseases, and bore and carried them away, He also took and bore and carried away our mental pain and griefs.

The King James Version accurately translates Isaiah 53v4. in of Mt.8v17., it reads, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

The New American Standard Update reads, "This was to fulfil what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES."

The Hebrew "choliy," in Is.53v4., translated as "griefs" in the A.V., is accurately translated in Mt.8v17., as "astheneias" 769, that is "infirmities," for "choliy" 2483, "means sickness, disease, and affliction, it does not refer to sins, but to physical suffering. Matthew uses the quote from Is.53v4., to prove that the healing ministry of Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah. The Hebrew "nasa" 5375, "borne," or "took," carries the double thought, that Jesus not only took our sicknesses on Himself, He also in doing so, took and carried them away. In Mt.8v17., Matthew translates, "mak'ob," physical or mental pain, and sorrow, with the Greek "nosos" 3554, which means properly sickness, disease, and it is used in this way in Mt.4v23,24. 9v35., but it can also be used of the mental and physical pains, sorrows, and trials of life. Isaiah states that Jesus was afflicted for our physical and mental pains, and has taken them upon Himself, and carried them away, and through His atoning death,

removed them from us.

Our Great High Priest subjected Himself to the most severe physical and mental pressure and pain for our sakes, not just to be a sympathetic Saviour, but a delivering Saviour as well. The emphatic nature of this promise of healing is confirmed by the word, "surely," "aken" 403, which means, surely, truly, verily, indeed; it carries a strongly emphatic and assertive force. God Himself emphasises His promise of healing. He knew that this was absolutely necessary, for He knew that both the Old Testament Israel and the New Testament Church, would neglect and frustrate His loving desires in respect of healing.

c. Some more striking revelations about salvation in Jesus, found in the rest of Isa.53v5. and 1Pet.2v24.

Isa.53:5. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." (KJV) (ASV)

In Isaiah 53:5., "But he was wounded for our transgressions." "Wounded," is 2490 "chalal." It literally means, to pierce, to bore through, to perforate, hence, to wound, even fatally. 1Sam.31v3. 1Chron.10v3. The word gives a prophetically accurate picture of the physical sufferings of Jesus, the promised Messiah, whose hands, feet, and side were pierced. Ps.22v16. This word speaks of a painful and lethal piercing and wounding of the body, and not just mental pain. It can also speak of the desecration and violation of a person.

In Is.53v5. "But he was wounded for our transgressions," is a striking parallel to the passage in Rom.4v25. "Who was delivered for ("dia," 1223) our offences." See 2Cor.5v21. Heb.9v28. 1Pet.2v24. The Hebrew preposition "for," "min," 4480, is here equivalent to the Greek "dia," 1223, which means "through," or "on account of," and denotes the real reason why Jesus suffered and died, it was our transgressions that killed Him, not the Jews, or the Romans.

In Isaiah 53:5., "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." "Chastisement," is 4148, "muwcar," which means, discipline, a chastening, correction. In the Greek Septuagint it is translated as, "paideia," 3809, it literally means, as in Heb.12v5-11., the training of, and correction, by a parent of a child for their good. Jesus was not guilty of any sins to be punished for, but He took on Himself our chastisement by God the Father, so that we could be reconciled, and be at peace with God our Father. See Rom.5v1,2. Eph.2v14-17. The death of Jesus brought about the redemption of those, who in God's amazing and wonderful foreknowledge, were to become His beloved children. Heb.2v14.

We read in Is.53v5. that Jesus came to heal our sin burdened, diseased souls. "We are healed," literally means, "it is healed to us," or "healing has happened to us." "Healed," is "rapha" 7495, it literally means, "to mend by stitching," and figuratively to cure, to heal, to make healthful, it is used of both divine and medical healing, as well as the healing of national hurts, and personal distress. So we see that it means, to heal, to make healthful, both spiritually and physically. Ps.41v4. Is.53v4. Jer.8v22. The removal of our appalling and horrendous burden of sin is represented as an act of healing. David writes in Ps.41v4., "I said, O Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee." In Ps.103v3., David rejoices that the merciful grace of God heals both our souls and our bodies, "Who forgiveth all thine, iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."

We also read that God caused Jesus to experience sickness. In Is.53v10. "He has put Him to grief," is literally, "He has made Him sick," for "grief," is the same Hebrew word, "choly," that is used in Is.53v4., "He has borne our griefs." "Choly," 2483, means, "sicknesses," and is so translated in the Greek of Mt.8v16,17

Sin is a disease, which results in the death of our souls, and Jesus provided the cure for this disease by the sufferings He bravely endured. In Heb.12v2,3., "endured," is "hupemeinen," the aorist active indicative of "hupomeno" 5278. The sin of Adam brought sickness, disease and death to the human race. Our dear Lord Jesus purchased for us both forgiveness for our sins, and healing for our souls and bodies, by His atoning death. We were sick to death because of our sins, but Jesus, the sinless one, by His suffering and death, brought us both spiritual and physical healing.

"The joy that was set before Him," Heb.12v2., was not the joy of receiving exalted position and honour in Heaven, but rather the joy of redeeming us, and bringing salvation and healing to us; it was the joy of opening Heaven to all who would believe in Him.

We read in 1Peter.2v24. that Jesus "bare our sins." "Bare," is the aorist active indicative of "anaphero," 399, "to carry or bring up," a common verb which is used for bringing a sacrifice to the altar. See Is.53v12. with Deut.21v23. Jesus was the perfect sin offering. Heb.9v28. 1Cor.11v24. See Heb.1v3., "when he had by Himself purged our sins." Jesus did not make expiation for our sins by offering a sacrifice; He Himself was the sacrifice. Is.53v4,12. Jesus did not take upon Himself the sins of people so as to Himself become a sinner; He bore the judgement of God that our sins deserved. See 2Cor.5v21. Barnes states, "He was treated as if He had been a sinner, in order that we might be treated as if we had not sinned."

"In His own body on the tree." Though perfectly innocent, Jesus suffered the horrific sufferings of execution by crucifixion, just like a wicked criminal, in our place. "On the tree" ("xulon," literally means, "on the wood," that

is, the cross, which is translated as "tree" in Acts.5v30. 10v39. 13v29. and Gal.3v13.). In Gal.3v13., Paul quotes Deut.21v22,23., to show how Jesus suffered the penalty laid down by the Law.

"That we, being dead to sins, "hamartiais" 266. The atoning sacrifice of Jesus enables us to become dead to sin, and live to God. The phrase "being dead to sins," is, literally, "to be absent from sins." "That we might live unto righteousness, "dikaiosune" 1343." Through the death and High Priestly ministry of Jesus we can actively and positively live a new and beautiful life with God and people. See Rom.6v1-23. N.B. v20.. and 1Pet.2v2,10. The atoning death of Jesus demands that we, "should live unto righteousness," and enjoy the reality of a beautiful life lived in righteousness and holiness. See Rom.6v11. Gal.2v20.

The word Peter uses for "stripes," "molops," in 1Pet.2v24., is not used in the Scriptures to describe a scourging.

The word "plege," 4127, a blow, stripe, wound, (akin to "plesso," which was used to describe Paul's scourgings, in Acts.16v23. 2Cor.6v5. 11v23-25., is not used by Peter here in 1Pet.2v24.. "Plege" it is translated as "stripes" in Lk.12v48., and if 1Pet.2v24. had been speaking of our Lord's scourging, "plege" would have been one of the words to use. "Mastix," 3148, is another word that is used for scourging, it literally meant, "a whip," the terrible Roman whip for flogging criminals. See Acts.22v24. Heb.11v36. "Mastix," is used figuratively of the scourges and plagues of sickness. Mk.3v10. 5v29,34. Lk.7v21. People can feel that they are under the whip, when they are scourged by sickness, and God feels their pain, and wants to deliver them.

Sin is often spoken of as a terrible disease, and redemption from it as a healing of deadly sickness. "Healed," is "iathete," 2390, the aorist passive indicative of "iaomai," 2390, a verb, which means, "to heal." See James.5v16.

2. THE LIFELONG SEVERE, CRUEL, AND BRUTAL BRUISING OF JESUS AT NAZARETH.

Many Christians have limited the sufferings of Jesus to the last few hours of His life, however, this is very far from the truth. The Scriptures reveal that Jesus suffered a lifetime of great hardships, opposition, suffering, and spiritual conflict. The anticipation of this suffering occurred before the foundation of the world. Titus.1v2. Rev.13v8. The following beautiful hymn by C. A. Tydeman expresses the fearful cost of our salvation, and the eternal commitment and dedication of Jesus to our salvation.

1. I have a friend whose faithful love path He trod, Is more than all the world to me, soul apart, 'Tis higher than the heights above, Himself and God And deeper than the soundless sea: that filled His heart: So old, so new, so strong, so true; He turned not back Before the earth received its frame, want and shame He loved me-Blessed be His name! be His Name!	2. He held the highest place above, Adored by all the sons of flame, Yet, such His self-denying love, He laid aside His crown and came To seek the lost, and, at the cost Of heavenly rank and earthly fame, He sought me-Blessed be His name!	3. It was a lonely From every human Known only to Was all the grief Yet from the track Till where I lay in He found me-Blessed
4. Then dawned at last that day of dread When desolated but undismayed, With wearied frame and thorn-crowned head He, now forsaken and betrayed, Went up for me to Calvary, And dying there in grief and shame He saved me-Blessed be His name!	5. Long as I live my song shall tell The wonders of His matchless love: And when at last I rise to dwell In the bright home prepared above, My joy shall be His face to see, And bowing then with loud acclaim, I'll praise Him- Blessed be His name!	

Only God the Father, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus, can fully know the terrible trials, heartbreak, and anguish that Jesus has endured for us. The great and good angels stand amazed at the sufferings and totally sacrificial love of Jesus for us, but even they cannot fully comprehend the sufferings that the Trinity have endured for us. **My aim in this study is to be illuminating, not controversial, and to bring fellow Christians face to face with our wonderful Lord, by seeing what He has endured for us.** The realisation of the sufferings of the Trinity for us, will give us a true realisation of the value that they put on us.

N.B. 1. Jesus experienced dreadful and relentless conflict and bruising all of His life.

The Church has largely confined the sufferings of Jesus to the last few days and hours of His life, and has completely failed to see the tremendous conflicts, bruising and pain He had to endure in His daily life at Nazareth and His ministry. This is revealed by **Isa.53v11., "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied:** by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." However, this verse means much more than is conveyed by King James Version.

Today's English Version gives a very enlightening translation of Isa.53v11., it reads, **"After a life of suffering,**

He will again have joy; He will know that he did not suffer in vain. My devoted servant, with whom I am pleased, will bear the punishment of many and for His sake I will forgive them." End of quote.

In Is.53v11., "He shall see of the travail of His soul," "travail," "amal" 5999," does not refer to travail in childbirth, but to the drudgery, hard labour and tough grind of a worker, which produces exhaustion, sorrow, grief, and trouble. The salvation of all those who believed in Him was going to make all this drudgery and hardship worthwhile. Hebrew for "shall be satisfied," "saba" 7646, means, to be saturated; to be abundantly satisfied and full. The foundations of the eternal kingdom of God are built on the impregnable and indestructible foundation of the amazing sacrificial love of Jesus. In Heb.12v2., "the joy that was set before Him," was the joy of redeeming us and making us partakers of the kingdom of Heaven. Paul too, like his Lord, said that his joy and crown was getting His converts into heaven. Paul states in 2Cor.1v14., "As also you have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as you also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus. Paul repeats this again in 1Thes.2v19,20., "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? v20. For you are our glory and joy." And yet again in Phil.4v1., "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."

So we see that the word translated in Is.53v11. as "travail," "amal" 5999, speaks of a lifetime of arduous and exhausting labour and toil, which produces sorrow, grief, trouble and trials. It is a dark word that speaks of burdensome and protracted toil, a life of toil, trials and trouble, not a short period of trials, problems and difficulties. Jesus was badly bruised throughout all His life. A lifelong trial of unrelenting bruising and hurt..

Barnes writes about, "bruised," "daka," in Is.53v5.. "The word used here, "daka" 1792, means properly to be broken to pieces, to be bruised, to be crushed. Job.6v9. Ps.72v4. Applied to mind, it means to break down or crush by calamities and trials; and by the use of the word here, no doubt, the most severe inward and outward sufferings are designated. The Septuagint renders it, "memalakista," `He was rendered languid,' or feeble. The same idea occurs in the Syriac translation. **The meaning is, that he was under such a weight of sorrows on account of our sins, that he was, as it were, crushed to the earth."**

N.B. 2. Christ's continual bruising fights of faith, and His victories of faith at Nazareth.

The bruising conflicts Jesus experienced at Nazareth through Satan inspired people.

In Psalm.69v7-21., we have an amazing prophetic insight into Christ's life at Nazareth. The Amplified Bible translation is most enlightening. v7. Because for Your sake I have borne taunt and reproach; confusion and shame have covered my face. **v8.** I have become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien to my mother's children. [Jn.7v3-5.] **v9.** For zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches and insults of those who reproach and insult You have fallen upon me. [Jn.2v17. Rom.5v3.] **v10.** When I wept and humbled myself with fasting, I was jeered at and humiliated; **v11.** When I made sackcloth my clothing, I became a byword (an object of scorn) to them. **v12.** They who sit in [the city's] gate talk about me, and I am the song of the drunkards. **v13.** But as for me, my prayer is to You, O Lord. At an acceptable and opportune time, O God, in the multitude of Your mercy and the abundance of Your loving-kindness hear me, and in the truth and faithfulness of Your salvation answer me. **v14.** Rescue me out of the mire, and let me not sink; let me be delivered from those who hate me and from out of the deep waters. **v15.** Let not the floodwaters overflow and overwhelm me, neither let the deep swallow me up, nor the [dug] pit [with water perhaps in the bottom] close its mouth over me. **v16.** Hear and answer me, O Lord, for Your loving-kindness is sweet and comforting; according to Your plenteous tender mercy and steadfast love turn to me. **v17.** Hide not Your face from Your servant, for I am in distress; O answer me speedily! **v18.** Draw close to me and redeem me; ransom and set me free because of my enemies [lest they glory in my prolonged distress]! **v19.** You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonour; my adversaries are all before You [fully known to You]. **v20.** Insults and reproach have broken my heart; I am full of heaviness and I am distressingly sick. I looked for pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none. **v21.** They gave me also gall [poisonous and bitter] for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar (a soured wine) to drink. [Matt.27v34,48.]

Satan attacked Jesus in a major way during all of His life at Nazareth. Jesus did not just meet Satan in the wilderness; he tempted and tried Jesus on an almost daily basis at Nazareth through circumstances, His family, and evil and foolish people. At Nazareth, Jesus experienced the very worst trials of faith that any human being has known; but through communion with God His Father, Jesus had tens of thousands of victories over the trials of life, and Satan's temptations. For just as Satan demanded the opportunity to test Job to the very utmost, Satan also demanded the opportunity to test God's Only Begotten Son to the very utmost. Jesus was tempted by circumstances, people and Satan, in all points just as we are, only much more severely than we are, indeed, to the very limits of human endurance. When Jesus said to Peter in Lk.22v31-34., that Satan had demanded the opportunity to sift Peter as wheat, Jesus had already been there, experienced that, and fully knew the awful horror of it. We know from Lk.4v13., that Satan's attacks on Jesus were not limited to the forty days and nights of temptation in the wilderness; Satan had other seasons of attack on Jesus, both before, and after, His horrific trial in the wilderness. We are told in Heb.2v17,18., and 4v14-16., that our Saviour's conflicts with evil, and His victories over evil, mean that Jesus totally understands our problems, and is entirely sympathetic to our needs. Jesus is our perfect and sympathetic Saviour. We will not know until we get to heaven, the full extent of what Jesus suffered for us during His earthly life, in order to be our perfect Saviour and Great High Priest.

1. Jesus experienced great rejection, and an heartbreaking fight of faith in His home.

a. Jesus experienced some good early years with His family, then things went badly wrong.

We read in Lk.2v39,40. **v39.** "So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. **v40.** And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." NKJV. Then after Christ's visit to the temple at twelve we read in Lk.2v49-52., **v49.** "And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" **v50.** But they did not understand the statement, which He spoke to them. **v51.** Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. **v52.** And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men." NKJV.

The fact that Mary kept these things hidden away in her heart speaks volumes, the reasons become obvious when we read and study the Scriptures. Luke.2v50,51. Mary was definitely influenced by the bad attitude to Jesus of the people of Nazareth and the rest of her children, and so she hid the events of former years, and the deep feelings of her heart from everybody. See Psalm.69v7-12,20. 4v16-30. Note the "ALL" in Luke.4v28. When Jesus upset the religious leaders of Israel, His brothers came to forcibly take Him home, "kratesai" 2902, 'to seize by force' (Weymouth). They said "elegon," the imperfect tense of "lego" 3004, "they kept saying," that Jesus was out of His mind; "exeste," the aorist active indicative of "existemi" 1839, to be beside ones self, to be insane. This very same charge was brought against Paul. See Acts.26v24. 2Cor.5v13.

The Greek of the K.J.V., "His friends," in Mk.3v21., is "hoi 3588, par 3844, autou 846," which literally means, "they who were from beside him:" that is, His family. Wycliffe has; "kinsmen." Tyndale has; "they that belonged unto him." They were not His disciples, for they were in the house with him. There can be no doubt that Mary did not believe that Jesus was insane, though she certainly seems to have doubted His judgement when He deliberately challenged the theology of the religious leaders of Israel, and greatly offended them. This caused Mary to fear for Christ's safety, and the safety of rest of the family, for Mary and Christ's brothers realised the danger that they would be in if Israel's religious leaders thought that they shared the same views as Jesus, and so Mary backed His brothers' plan of action to forcibly take Jesus home. By linking, "My mother and my brothers" together in Mk.3v34,35., the Scriptures imply that Mary felt that this action was correct, and indicate that she was dominated by the unbelief of the rest of the family, and the enmity towards, and rejection of Jesus by the people of Nazareth. Mark.6v1-6:

Mary could also not help but be influenced by the gross moral and spiritual conditions of Nazareth. Matt.4v14-16. Nathanael, who lived at Cana, some four to eight miles from Nazareth, knew full well of its evil reputation, and said, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" John.21v2. 1v46. The false traditions that were taught in the Synagogue would also have had a bad effect on Mary's faith. Mt.15v1-14. Lk.11v52-54. Rom.3v23. 7v7-24. Eph.2v1-3. James.1v13-15. Living with Jesus rescued Mary from the worst of the unbelief of the rest of the family, and she manifested great faith at the marriage in Cana when she believed that Jesus could do a miracle and provide wine for the feast. Anyway, she could never forget that she had been visited by the angel Gabriel, and knew that the birth of Jesus was totally miraculous, and she had seen Jesus do many miracles at home to provide for their material needs, that is why in Jn.2v5., she had the faith to say to the servants at the marriage feast, "Do whatever he tells you."

The favour, which is mentioned in Lk.2v52., that Jesus had with people at Nazareth seems to have quickly disappeared, from His family, and most of the people in Nazareth, for like people elsewhere, they loved darkness more than light, because their deeds were evil. Lk.2v52. Jn.3v19. Without preaching, Jesus, the light of the world exposed their sinful darkness by His godly, unselfish actions, and life of love and prayer. We know that Jesus did not preach to the people of Nazareth until His first sermon there, which resulted in them trying to kill Him. Jesus and God the Father knew how they would reject anything that Jesus had to say, so God hid the marvellous knowledge of Jesus away, until Jesus started His ministry. Is.49v1,2. The life of Jesus at Nazareth was not preaching time, but education time for Jesus, in preparation for His earthly ministry, His atoning death, and His heavenly ministry as our Great High Priest. Is.50v3-7. The fact that Mary "kept all these things in her heart," shows that she was unable to openly repeat the wonderful things that God had done for her, and it confirms the rejection that both she and Jesus suffered at Nazareth. Satan certainly succeeded in turning the town against Jesus in a major way.

In spite of all the problems at Nazareth, Jesus "increased in wisdom and stature." "Increased," is "proekopten" the imperfect active of "prokopto" 4298, which means properly, "to cut and beat a passage forward, to drive forward, to advance and make progress," then to grow, to increase. ("Prokopto," is used of Paul's pre-Christian progress in Judaism in Gal.1v14.; of false teachers going forward in evil and to judgement in 2Tim.2v18, and 3v9., of time being far spent in Rom.13v12. Paul warns us in 2Tim.3v13., that evil men will stubbornly beat their way forward, and advance into greater and greater evil and deception.)

In the case of Jesus, the imperfect of "prokopto," informs us that Jesus kept actively and vigorously cutting his way forward, as through a forest or jungle. Jesus was the true spiritual pioneer of faith, He resolutely hacked and cut His way through the dark spiritual jungle of Nazareth, and went forward with God His Father. The wonderful child, youth, and man, Christ Jesus, was totally determined to save and bless us. No praise that we can give, is sufficient to thank Him for the terrible trials He faced and overcame for our sakes. He is beyond doubt, truly worthy of all the praise that we can give Him. Jesus also kept growing in stature "helikia," 2244, as in Luke.12v25., and in wisdom, which is far more than knowledge. Jesus matured physically, intellectually, and spiritually, and victoriously overcame the gross spiritual darkness of Nazareth. Blessed be His Name!

b. Jesus was treated like a stranger and alien by His brothers and sisters. Ps.69v7-11. Mt.13v55,56. Mk.6v3. 3v21.

We read in Ps.69v7-11., that because of Christ's holiness and dedicated prayer life, His four brothers, and at least three sisters, were severely hostile to Jesus and despised and rejected Him, and treated Him like a stranger and an alien, and verbally reproached and criticised Him. Mk.3v21. Jn.7v5. We are definitely told that this was because of Christ's dedicated life of fasting and prayer, and holy living, because zeal for God's house and children had eaten Him up and devoured Him. See Jn.2v13-17. We must remember that no temple had been built when David wrote this psalm, and scholars tell us that the word "house" here can, and does, mean the household and family of God. Christ's constraining love for us impelled Jesus forward.

c. We read in Mk.3v21. that Christ's family said that Jesus was insane when He upset the religious hierarchy.

In Mk.3v22. the religious hierarchy said that Jesus was possessed by, and did His works by Beelzebub, and as we have seen, when His family heard of this, they came to take Him home. The religious leaders of Israel may well have instructed them to do this. The four big and strong brothers of Jesus came to lay hold of Jesus, "kratesai" 2902, and by force to take Him home. The words "hoi para autou," mean literally, "those from the side of Him," this is undoubtedly referring to the family of Jesus, as it does in the Septuagint, as Mk.3v31. expressly mentions, "His mother and brothers." What a sad day for Jesus when His family thought that He was insane, "exeste" 1839, literally, "beside Himself."

d. We read in Jn.7v5. that His brethren did not believe in Him.

However, after His resurrection Jesus appeared to James and restored and revolutionised Him, and he became a pillar and leader in the Church, and Jude also came to faith in Jesus. James and Jude wrote short but powerful epistles, and in them they humbly acknowledged the Divine Lordship of Jesus. James.1v1. Jude.1v1.

2. Jesus was bitterly criticised, and sceptically rejected by most of the people in Nazareth. Moral, honest and sincere people at Nazareth admired Jesus in His early years, then things went badly wrong.

We read in Lk.2v40,52., that Jesus found favour during His early years at Nazareth with the decent people there, they could not help but appreciate this beautiful, helpful, gracious and loving, and God-blessed boy, then things went badly wrong/

a. We read in Ps.69v20. that the vicious verbal attacks on Jesus made Him physically ill.

The Devil, the Slanderer, stirred up almost everybody to viciously criticise Jesus. In Ps.69v7,9,10,12,19,20., we are told five times that at Nazareth, as well as elsewhere, Jesus was taunted, reproached and spoken against, and the Hebrew of Ps.69v20., states that this reproach broke His heart and made Him physically ill. The heartbreaking horror of this rejection and loneliness is graphically revealed in these Scriptures. See what He endured for you! Blessed be His holy Name!

The Amplified Bible correctly translates **Ps.69v19-21., v19.** "You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonour; my adversaries are all before You [fully known to You]. **v20.** Insults and reproach have broken my heart; **I am full of heaviness and I am distressingly sick ("nuwsh" 5136, a primitive root, which means, to be sick, and (figuratively) distressed).** I looked for pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none. **v21** They gave me also gall [poisonous and bitter] for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar (a soured wine) to drink. [Matt.27v34,48.]" **End of quote.**

The Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, states that, "And I am full of heaviness," literally means, "I am sick."

Barnes makes the following valuable comments on Ps.69v20.: "[Reproach hath broken my heart] The reproaches, the calumnies, the aspersions, the slanders of others, have crushed me. I am not able to bear up under them; I fail under the burden. Distress may become so great that life may sink under it, for many die of what is called "a broken heart." Undeserved reproaches will be as likely to produce this result on a sensitive heart as any form of suffering; and there are thousands who are crushed to the earth by such reproaches. **[And I am full of heaviness]** Or, I am sick; I am weak; I am ill at ease. My strength is gone. **[And I looked for some to take pity]** Margin, "to lament with me." The meaning of the Hebrew word is to pity; to commiserate; to show compassion. <Job.2:11; 42:11; Isa.51:19; Jer.16:5>. **[But there was none]** There was no one whose heart seemed to be touched with compassion in the case; none who sympathized with me. **[And for comforters]** For those who would show sympathy for me; who would evince a friendly feeling in my distress. **[But I found none]** He felt that he was utterly forsaken by mankind. There is no feeling of desolation like that." **End of quote.**

Spiritual conflict through people and evil angels, caused Jesus considerable stress, mental conflict and physical illness. Jesus looked in vain for people who would comfort Him, and take pity on Him, but He could not find anyone who was able to understand His problems and heartache, or who were prepared to help Him, this was why God sent Moses and Elijah to talk with Him and help Him in the mount of transfiguration. Life at Nazareth was extremely hard for our dear Lord Jesus. Even His good mother Mary was unable to give the kind of sympathy or spiritual help that Jesus needed. We read in Ps.69v20,21., that Jesus did look for people who could

help, strengthen, and comfort Him, but no one was in the spiritual condition to do so. The heart of Jesus was broken by the reproach He suffered at Nazareth and during His ministry. Everyone, including the apostolic band, failed to comprehend, or help Jesus, with the great inner pain and suffering that this reproach and rejection caused Him. Mary of Bethany may have partially perceived it, but no one else did.

b. We read in Ps 69v12., that the elders, who sat in the gate of Nazareth, spoke against Jesus and criticised Him.

c. We read in Ps.69v12., that drunkards made up and sang vile and disgusting songs about Jesus.

These drunkards, aided by the Prince of darkness, evidently made up foul, offensive, and evil songs about Christ's birth and Mary's seeming immorality and unfaithfulness. Like the Jewish leaders later on, almost everyone at Nazareth, openly sneered at, and taunted, Jesus about His birth, and said that He was born of fornication. John.8v41. Others whispered against and slandered Jesus behind His back, and said that Joseph had to marry Mary, because she was pregnant before they were married. The Holy Lamb of God patiently endured this false accusation, and violent speaking against Him by sinners. Heb.12v3. They mocked and derided His wonderful and miraculous birth. Christ's brothers and sisters could not stand this pressure, and stood with the critics against Jesus, and refused to believe in Him. This was a very severe trial for Joseph, Mary and Jesus.

The prohibitions God laid down in Deut.23v2. shed significant light on some of the persecutions against Jesus.

The New King James Bible translates Deut.23v2., "One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the congregation of the Lord; even to the tenth generation, none of his descendants shall enter the congregation of the Lord." **The Living Bible** translates Deut.23v2., "A bastard may not enter the sanctuary, nor any of his descendants for ten generations." Christ's critics surely used this Scripture to attack Jesus, for He had to live all His life with the accusation that Israel's religious leaders hurled at Him in John.8v41., "We be not born of fornication." They pointed the finger at Jesus and accused Him of being the product of fornication, when He said that they were seeking to kill Him, and that the Devil was their father. See John.8v40-44. "Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God." (KJV)

d. When Jesus preached His first sermon at Nazareth, the inhabitants of Nazareth tried to kill Him.

We are told in Lk.4v22., that the people of Nazareth marvelled at the beautiful and gracious words that Jesus spoke to them, and then after His sermon, they exploded in a frenzy of murderous rage, and tried to throw Him over a cliff and kill Him. Lk.4v22-30. Jesus knew that the listeners were going to try to kill Him, when He finished His sermon, but He still spoke to them with the utmost kindness, gentleness and grace, "charis" 5485. They were charming, appealing and winsome words, that revealed and conveyed the beautiful, caring, and gentle personality of Jesus, but they rejected both His words and Him, and tried to kill Him. The people of Nazareth said that Jesus was a wonderful carpenter, but they treated Him with contempt and rejected His ministry. Jesus was despised and rejected of men in His own hometown; this was an extremely bruising experience.

e. Israel's religious leaders continually and viciously attacked Jesus throughout His ministry.

This was very hard to take, and the heart broken weeping of Jesus over their rejection of Him, and the consequences of their rejection are vividly seen in Luke.19v41-44.. It was a supreme test of endurance and love. Heb.12v3. "For consider Him who endured such hostility ("antilogian" 485, "to speak against with hatred) from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls." "Endured," is the perfect active participle "hupomemenekota," of the same verb "hupomeno" 5278, which is used in Heb.12v2., to describe our Lord's brave endurance of the Cross, where "endured is "hupomeinen," the aorist active indicative of "hupomeno." "Consider," is "analogisasthe," the aorist imperative of "analogizomai" 357, which means to reckon up, to compare, to weigh; it only occurs here in the New Testament. See Heb.3v1., where "consider" is "katanoesate," the aorist active imperative of "katanoeo" 2657, to put the mind down on a thing. We have to consider attentively and fix our eyes and minds upon the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. Considering Jesus and the violent criticism and opposition He overcame for us, is the answer to our problems, and the cure for all our ills. Fix your eyes and minds on Jesus and thoroughly reckon up and weigh all that He is, and all that He has endured for us, and all the ministrations that His High Priestly ministry is now doing for us, and you will be changed from glory to glory, and transfigured into His likeness. Rom.12v1,2. 2Cor.3v18.

N.B. The insights that the epistle of James gives us into the life of Jesus at Nazareth.

James was one of the five sons of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and he lived with Jesus for almost 30 years. Mt.13v55. Mk.6v1-6. The bitter rejection of Jesus by the people of Nazareth infected James and Christ's other brothers and sisters. They were appalled when the Rabbis and other leaders tried to kill Jesus, and they felt totally unable to stand with Jesus against the hostile and violent opposition that came against Him. However, Jesus revealed Himself to James after His resurrection and the scales dropped from his eyes, and he saw the glory, beauty and majesty of our Lord's life at Nazareth. The epistle of James gives us a priceless insight into the life of Jesus at Nazareth, for the practical wisdom of James is derived from the memories that James had of the life and words of Jesus. Every Christian who met James undoubtedly asked, "What was it like to live with Jesus in the home? What did He teach? Tell us about it." This epistle gives the answer. People listened with bated breath as James told the facts about Christ's patient endurance of trials, His practical caring love for all, particularly widows and orphans, His remarkable wisdom, and how He worked so very hard to provide for Mary's large family after Joseph died. The practical advice that James gives in his epistle, came out of living with Jesus,

and the truths that Jesus spoke, and lived out, during His life at Nazareth.

When in James.1v2,12., James speaks of endurance in trial, and joy in tribulation, he recalls how Jesus overcame the violent hostility at Nazareth with constant enduring love. In James.5v7-12., the patient endurance of Job and Jesus, is set forth as an example for us to follow. In James.2v1-13., the impartial integrity and justice of God and Jesus is revealed. In James.1v17., when James speaks of the invariable goodness of God, he remembers that Jesus was always the same, and had no bad days.

James had seen how he himself and the people of Nazareth had been led astray by sinful desires, James.1v13,14., and in sharp contrast had seen the sinless purity of Jesus, who kept Himself unspotted from the world. Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. Heb.4v15. The temptations of Nazareth were lethal, vicious, and unrelenting, but Jesus conquered them all. James warns us that worldliness will bring God's judgement upon us. We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world and seek to do the will of God in our daily living, just like Jesus did in His everyday life for 30 years at Nazareth. James.4v1-17.

James learned from Jesus that "faith without works is dead and worthless." James.2v20. We see in James.2v14-26., the practical nature of the faith of Jesus. James saw pure and caring religion manifested in Christ's life. Jesus met the needs of the poor, widows and orphans; He lived out the Sermon on the Mount at Nazareth before He preached it. James.1v22-27. Like Abraham, who is used here as an illustration of faith with works, Jesus proved His faith by His works, and so must we.

James is thinking of Jesus when he speaks of the perfect man who controlled Himself and bridled His tongue. Jesus was totally open and without guile, and free from hypocrisy, He lived out the pure, peaceable, gentle, merciful, and impartial wisdom of God, in spite of the vicious opposition, slander and criticism that was hurled against Him at Nazareth. James.3v1-18. James could not forget this rejection and criticism of Jesus, for he joined in with Christ's critics against Him. Ps.69v7-10. The Scribes accused Jesus of doing miracles by Satan's power, when His brothers heard of this, they said, "He is mad," came to take Him home by force. Mk.3v21-35. Jn.7v5. James and Jude certainly regretted their alliance with Christ's enemies for they write with awe about Jesus, and say they are a lowly servant, "doulos" 1210, of "the Lord Jesus Christ." James.1v1. Jude.v1.

Christ's scathing criticism of the selfish rich is clearly seen in James.2v1-7. 5v1-6.. James warns the rich against defrauding the labourers of their rightful wages. Jesus certainly did not try to make Himself popular with the rich. Mt.23v1-39. Lk.16v13-15.

In James.5v13-20., James states that prolonged determined praying will bring healing to the sick, and uses Elijah as an example to prove it. "The earnest (heartfelt and sustained) prayer of a righteous man avails much." James was also thinking of the matchless prayer life of Jesus, which brought ostracism and criticism from James and Christ's other brothers and sisters. Ps.69v7-10. We see from the parable in Lk.11v9-13., that the desire to get bread for others had been the driving force of our Lord's dedicated prayer life. Jesus had prayed through into complete victory, until everybody was healed, who came to Him for healing. Mt.12v15. 14v14. 15v30. 19v2. 21v14. Lk.5v15. 6v19. We read in Mt.8v16,17., that all healing flows from the atoning death of Jesus. James followed our Lord's example in holy living, he was known as "James the Just." He also tried to imitate our Lord's prayer life, it is reported that he prayed so much on his knees, that his knees became as calloused as a camel's knees.

3. JESUS WAS BRUISED IN DEVELOPING HIS PROPHETIC AND HIGH PRIESTLY MINISTRY.

Jesus had dreadful fights of faith in prayer at Nazareth, while God prepared Him for His apostolic and High Priestly ministries. The apostolic and High Priestly ministries of Jesus were the product of Christ's prayer life at Nazareth.

a. The development of Christ's prophetic and High Priestly ministry was a truly bruising experience.

It is one thing to have a private prophetic prayer ministry, it is quite another to have a ministry that brings deliverance and healing to **all** the people that come to you for help. In the parable on prayer in Lk.11v9-13., Jesus was not just giving us instructions on how to seek God, and how to pray through, and keep on knocking for answers to prayer; He was telling us of His own dedicated prayer life at Nazareth. Jesus knew that He had to be fully empowered so that everybody that He prayed for and ministered to was healed. Christ's mighty ministry did not just drop upon Him from heaven, it came as a result of the most earnest seeking of His heavenly Father for very many years, indeed, for the whole of His life, from a child to an adult. Some would object to this and say that Christ's ministry did drop on Him at Jordan, however, this was the final anointing on a marvellously prepared vessel. See the study, Did Jesus Have Spiritual Gifts at Nazareth?

b. Christ's visit to the temple at twelve reveals His resolute and dedicated preparation for His ministry.

We read in Lk.2v49,50., that at twelve years old, Jesus said to Mary and Joseph in the Temple, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them." This reveals that, by twelve, and almost certainly many years before this, Jesus was completely on His own in finding and doing the will of His heavenly Father. Even His godly and remarkable mother Mary did not understand the divine calling that was on His young life, and what Jesus meant when He said, "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business." This makes the victorious and

sinless life of Jesus even more remarkable. All the odds were stacked against Him, and He still won through, and developed a perfect prophetic power ministry, through which all were healed who came to Him.

We read in John.5v19,20., "Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, 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. v20. "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel." (NKJ) Jesus had continual visions about what the Father wanted Him to pray for and do; it was part of His everyday prayer life in Nazareth. Jesus was directed in His prayer life by vision like Paul in 1Cor.5v1-5. and Col.2v1-5.. The dedication and prayer life of Jesus is totally breathtaking. When Jesus was twelve, His spiritual maturity, and His understanding of the Scriptures, astonished the learned Scribes and Biblical teachers in the Temple at Jerusalem. Extol and praise the dedicated all out prayer life, the systematic and meticulous study of the Scriptures, and practical daily life of love, of the wonderful boy and man, Jesus.

c. The qualifications to be our Great High Priest were gained at enormous personal cost to Jesus.

To obtain the qualifications to become our Great High Priest, Jesus experienced a truly demanding, exceptional and excruciating testing and bruising of His body, soul and spirit. Jesus was tempted and tried in all points in order to be our perfect, sympathetic and understanding Great High Priest. Heb.2v17,18. 4v14-16. 5v8. Jesus had the intolerable pressure of going through all the difficulties and trials of life that we experience, so that He could totally sympathise with us in all our temptations, trials and difficulties; so that we might know without any doubt, that He fully understands all our problems. Jesus was tried and tested to an even greater extent than Job, He was tempted in all points just as we are, but without sin. He had the most extreme and painful tests of anyone, in all areas of life and character, but was totally victorious in them all. Glory and praise be given to Him!

N.B. CHRIST'S PRAYER MINISTRY AT NAZARETH PLACED HUGE DEMANDS ON HIM.

a. Jesus had to pray a revival into being from ground zero.

The Jewish nation had got away from God, Jesus himself said that they were not just bad, "kakos," they were gripped by an evil, "poneros", that was not content until they had corrupted others down to the same level of evil as themselves. Mt.16v4. Lk.11v26,29. Jn.8v44. Satan's name is "Ho Poneros," the one who is not content until he has corrupted others to his own terrible levels of depravity and corruption. Mt.13v19. 1Jn.5v18. Apart from a few exceptions, the religious leaders of Israel were part of Satan's corruption, and when Jesus started His ministry, He exposed their corruption, and Jesus said that they had seen and hated both Himself and God the Father for it. Jn.15v20-25. The spiritual condition of God's people was truly appalling, Jesus tried to remedy this in the following ways.

b. Jesus had to pray John the Baptist through.

Jesus the young intercessor prayed John the Baptist through. Jesus watched in vision the developing ministry of John and prayed Him through, just as Paul prayed the Colossians, and other Christians through by prophetic prayer vision ministry. Col.2v1-5. If Paul could, by Holy Spirit inspired visions, see Christians a great distance away at Laodicea, and other places, and by prevailing prayer, transform the lives of those Christians, many of whom he had never met; we can be quite sure that Jesus had an even more remarkable ministry in prayer. During the years at Nazareth, Jesus developed a perfect prophetic ministry before He started His public ministry, and the essential source and foundation of a prophetic ministry, a perfect prayer warrior ministry. Christ's ministry did not suddenly drop on Him from Heaven at Jordan, He had 30 years of diligent praying of the highest quality, and blood, sweat, tears, and costly effort, and it was all done out of perfect love for us. Blessed be His Name!.

c. Jesus touched the world with His prayer ministry.

N.B. Jesus won major battles in prayer all over the world during His prayer ministry at Nazareth.

God has shown to me world events of significant, and even great importance, several months before they have happened, like the Chernobyl disaster, the terrorist attack on the Mountain Lodge Pentecostal Church, Darkly, and other terrorist atrocities. Though some of these events were not stopped, I believe that prayer did affect the outcome. Other national and international forthcoming disasters have been shown to me, which have been stopped by the operation of the power of God, sometimes in open and manifest judgement by God, in answer to prayer. If a simple prophet like myself can be used in prayer to alter national and international events, how much more would Jesus, the prophet like unto Moses, effect the nations of the world with His prayers. Deut.18v15-19. From the simple carpenter's work place at Nazareth, Jesus touched, influenced, and changed events, and people, all over the world with His wonderful vision directed prophetic prayer ministry. This leads on to our next point.

d. The excruciating burden and cost of Christ's prayer life at Nazareth.

N.B. Jesus experienced real fights of faith and painful bruising of His soul while praying through for His ministry.

When we see Jesus praying "with strong cryings and tears" in Gethsemane, Heb.5v7., we realise that we are looking at the greatest prayer warrior of all. In Lk.11v1-13., Jesus gave us instructions on how to pray, and pray through. When Jesus told the story of the man obtaining bread for his friend, He was revealing to us His own steadfast determination and persistence in prayer to obtain the ministry He needed to give bread to the world. Lk.11v8. "I tell you, although he will not get up and supply him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his shameless persistence and insistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs." AMP. Jesus was the

most determined and sacrificial of all who have prayed through, and it cost Him very dear at Nazareth, and brought Him rejection and criticism from His own brothers and sisters, and the people of Nazareth.

e. Jesus had to set His face like a flint at Nazareth, as well as during His ministry and Passion. Is.50v3-7.

We read in Isa.50v3-7. "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. v4. The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. v5. The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. v6. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. **v7. For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint ("challamiysh," 2496, flint, rock), and I know that I shall not be ashamed.**" "Set," is "suwm," or "siym," 7760, which means, to put, to set, to fix, to establish, to ordain, and to make. It is used in Is.49v2. of God establishing and making the mouth of Jesus like a sharp sword, and making Him a polished shaft. It can be also used in the bad sense of people hardening themselves against God and being obstinate, stubborn, intractable and stiff-necked, etc. See Jer.42v15-18., where "set," is "suwm." God also uses "**qasheh**," 7186, which means, hard, cruel, severe, fierce and obstinate, to describe unregenerate intractable stubbornness, as in Is.48v4. "Because I knew that thou art obstinate "qasheh," and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass." "Qasheh" 7186 is derived from "**qashah**" 7185, which properly means, to be dense, i.e. to be hard, severe, fierce and cruel; it is used with the verb "**chazaq**" 2388, (which means "to be and make strong, to strengthen, and so harden, to be courageous and resolute) to describe Pharaoh's obdurate and intractable resistance to God. in Ex.7v3.

In the opposite condition, "chazaq" is used to denote the strength of purpose imparted to God's people. In Deut.11v8. we see that loving God and obeying His commandments made God's people strong. In Deut.31v6., **Moses was commanded to "charge Joshua, and encourage him," with the words of the covenant promise and command to "be strong ("chazaq") and of a good courage;" "...for the Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Note Deut.3:28., "But charge Joshua, and encourage ("chazaq") him, and strengthen ("amats" 553) him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see."**

See also Joshua.1v6,7,9,18., v6 "Be strong ("chazaq")and of a good courage." v7 "Only be thou strong ("chazaq") and very courageous." v9 "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong ("chazaq") and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." v18. "only be strong ("chazaq") and of a good courage." **God encourages Gideon** in Judges.7v11. "Thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened ("chazaq") to go down unto the host." In Zech.8v9,13., both "chazaq:" Hag.2v4. "chazaq," twice, the same encouraging words.

In 2Chron.16v9., the prophet said, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them [NASB, "to strongly support them"] whose heart is perfect toward him" God gives strength of purpose to men evil men, as a chastisement on their evil. Men turn their strength of purpose into stubbornness against God. **See Josh.11v20.,** For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses."

In Rom.9v1-27. Paul answers the objection that, "If God has decreed a thing, it seems unfair, for who can resist His will?" Paul follows exactly the thought of **Jer.18v1-17.,** and shows that the kind of vessel the divine potter makes depends on the response of the will of each individual. Jeremiah told the Israelites that if they really repented they would be a vessel of honour and blessing; whereas rebellion and love of evil meant that they would be a vessel of dishonour, whose end was destruction. **Paul also states that in Pharaoh, God used an irreconcilable evil person, who was so wicked that before Moses met him he was already sentenced for execution. God raised this evil man to power, it was no accident; it was part of the will and purpose of God. God postponed judgement upon Pharaoh to make use of Pharaoh's intractable obstinacy and hardness of heart, so that others could be inspired by, and benefit from, the manifestation of God's kindness, power, and judgement upon Pharaoh.** God made use of an irreconcilable evil person, who would fight God and truth to the bitter end; and so an evil vessel of wrath was made a blessing to mankind. There are a lot of people today who follow Pharaoh's evil example and resist all of God's efforts to save, bless, and heal them. There are, on the other hand, people who were willing to repent and accept God's mercy; these God has been able to call to positions of honour in His kingdom.

Pharaoh's heart was hardened in the following ways.

1. By God allowing Satan's servants to do the Satanic miraculous.

When Pharaoh saw his magicians do the same miracles he hardened his heart. We read in **Exod.7v10-13. v10** So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the LORD commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. **v11** But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. **v12** For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. **v13** And Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said."

We read in **Exod.7v21-23. v21** The fish that were in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. **v22** Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said. **v23** And Pharaoh turned and went into his house. Neither was his heart moved by this." (NKJ)

We read in **Exod.8v17-19. v17** "Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and it became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. **v18** Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast. **v19** **Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them; as the LORD had said.**" Pharaoh's magicians, full of fear, warned Pharaoh that he was fighting God, but he rejected their warnings.

2. By God allowing Satan to energise and harden Pharaoh, and compel him to resist God's will for Israel. Satan was determined to stop the promises of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from coming to pass, and in doing this to stop the plan of redemption in Christ Jesus. God used Satan's resolute, calculated, and stubborn opposition to God, to harden Pharaoh's heart.

3. By God allowing Satan to make Pharaoh realise that he was about to lose his unpaid workforce. The Egyptians would have to do hard manual work, and many of Pharaoh's schemes would have to be shelved. Pharaoh resisted this to the utmost. Satan has always dominated and energised his children. In **Eph.2v2.**, "worketh is "energeo" 1754, to put forth power, to effect, to energise, to be operative, to display one's activity, in the children of disobedience. See Eph.5v6. Col.3v6.

4. By God stopping the plagues and letting Pharaoh off. Pharaoh trampled under foot God's longsuffering and mercy. We read in **Exod.8v15.** "But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said." The mercy of God hardened Pharaoh's heart, as Paul states in **Rom.2v3-6., v3** "And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? **v4** **Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?** **v5** But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, **v6** who "will render to each one according to his deeds." (NKJ) This rejection of the mercy of God still occurs a great deal today, and people become hardened in their sins, and trample under foot the Lord Jesus Christ. See **Heb.10v28-31.**

Here, in Is.50v7., "set," describes the courageous resolution that Jesus would manifest, when an avalanche of opposition, contempt, scorn and abuse was hurled at Him, and the great physical pain and suffering that evil men inflicted upon Him. This prophecy must have given great comfort to Jesus in the frightful opposition that came against Him at Nazareth as He prepared for His early apostolic ministry and His High Priestly ministry. We see an actual fulfilment of Jesus setting His face like a flint, in **Lk.9v31.**, "Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face ("to prosopon esterisen") to go to Jerusalem. (NKJ) Jesus resolutely set His face to go to Jerusalem. **In Lk.9v51., "set" is "sterizo" 4741,** to set fast, it literally means, to turn resolutely in a certain direction. Our dear Lord Jesus also had to set His face with flinty determination at Nazareth as He prepared for His ministry, it was anything but easy for Him, indeed, the pressures and difficulties at Nazareth, tried and tested His strength of mind and resolve, to the very uttermost.

GOD DEVELOPED CHRIST'S PROPHETIC AND HIGH PREISTLY MINISTRY THROUGH LIFE'S TRIALS.
a. God developed Christ's ministries in the stress and trials of daily living, 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 the perfect qualifications of a sympathetic apostolic earthly ministry, and a sympathetic High Priestly heavenly ministry.

N.B. Paul declares in 2Cor.8v9., that Jesus experienced the total poverty of a penniless beggar.

We read in 2Cor.8v9., "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might become rich." "He became poor," is "epocheusen," (only here in the New Testament) it is the aorist active indicative of "ptocheuo" 4433, to be a beggar, (from "ptochos" 4434, the totally destitution of a cowering beggar, as in **Lk.14v13.** In "through his poverty," poverty is "ptocheia" 4432, "abject" poverty" and "beggary." (In **2Cor.8v2.** "deep poverty, is "bathous 899 ptocheia" 4432, "poverty down deep," from "ptocheuo"4433). Jesus became totally destitute so that we "might become rich," "ploutesete," 4147, the aorist active subjunctive of "pluteo" 4147), to be rich. Rich with Heaven's blessings. Those who trust in riches end up empty in their souls. **Lk.1v53.** Paul warns us in **1Cor.4v8.,** that we can have a distorted perspective of our true spiritual condition, and **Rev.3v17-19.,** solemnly warns us that we can be spiritually penniless, when we think that we are rich, and be completely deceived by the possession of worldly riches and financial prosperity.

b. God trained Jesus through running the family business, and the hard work of providing for Mary's large family.

When Joseph died Jesus took over the family business and had to provide for His mother, Mary, His four brothers and at least three sisters. Mt.13v53-58. Mk.6v1-6. Jesus experienced all the stresses that come in a family business in a poor society. The greedy and grasping people who were unwilling to pay their bills. The very poor people who were unable to pay their bills, for whom He worked for no pay. The people who were never satisfied with what you did, no matter how good the work was. Jesus met people who demanded that their work was done immediately, regardless of the needs of anyone else, or of the workload on Jesus. The Devil made quite sure that selfish and dishonest people put enormous pressure upon Jesus. Jesus was truly tempted in all points like any Christian worker or businessman. Satan tried and succeeded in making sure that Jesus was very short of money. God had to do miracles to provide for Jesus and His family, this was why Mary could say, "Whatever He says unto you, do it." This was all invaluable education for Christ's apostolic and High Priestly ministry. Jesus understands our problems, because He has personally experienced them, but at a more difficult and painful level than any of us can conceive.

c. God the Father trained Jesus to examine and reject 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. However, the trial of living under and being constantly taught false tradition cannot be under estimated. Everyone else has usually capitulated to, and followed the line, of their religious leaders, Jesus did not do this, for even at twelve, His perception of truth was clear, His knowledge of the Scriptures was accurate and precise. He was full of truth as well as of grace. Jn.1v14.

d. God the Father trained Jesus in prophetic prayer ministry, and in development of spiritual gifts.

The training that the Father gave Jesus was not an easy thing, according to Is.49v1,2. and 50v3-7., it was a daily affair, and very demanding. The work that Jesus had to do made this severe preparation necessary, Jesus had to be at the peak of spiritual power, and heal all that came to Him, and by being tried and tempted in all points just like we are, to be the perfect sympathetic High Priest. Jesus fully partook of our humanity and victoriously overcame all areas of temptation.

e. God the Father rooted and grounded Jesus in a vital experience of the truth of the Scriptures.

Jesus meditated upon and filled His mind with the Scriptures, He answered Satan, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." Jesus did this for thirty years; He defeated Satan with the sword of the Spirit, God's Word. If we want to conquer Satan, we will have to love God's Word, and study it diligently, as He did. Jesus lived, and proved the truth of Scripture. Jesus was full of truth Jn.1v14. A correct knowledge of God's Word will save us from, error, folly, fanaticism and defeat.

N.B. Jesus fully partook of our humanity and victoriously overcame all areas of temptation.

We must remember that Jesus overcame all the pressures, temptations and difficulties of life at Nazareth, while possessing the limitations, weakness, and weariness of a human body. Jesus went resolutely and steadfastly forward through all the difficulties, temptations, and vicious opposition that came against Him, and He prepared diligently in prayer, study, and practical caring love for the great mission that lay before Him. No praise can be too high for our Saviour's dedicated love, courage and fortitude.

4. WHY DID GOD HIDE CHRIST'S SUPERB PROPHETIC MINISTRY FROM PEOPLE?

The Scripture declares that God the Father hid most of Christ's perfect revelation prophetic ministry from people, both before and during His public ministry. We read in Is.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). The sharp sword was a correct and mighty use of the Scriptures, the polished shaft meant that Jesus was totally obedient to God the Father and only went where God told Him, He always hit the target that God aimed Him at.

We also read in Is.50v3-7., **v3** "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. **v4** The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, he awakens My ear to hear as the learned. **v5** The Lord GOD has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away. **v6** I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. **v7** For the Lord GOD will help Me; therefore I will not be disgraced; therefore I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed." (NKJ) This remarkable Scripture again states how God the Father educated Jesus on a daily basis and prepared Him for His earthly apostolic ministry, and His heavenly High Priestly ministry. The task ahead of Jesus was incredibly difficult, the odds against Him were enormous, the training, therefore, was exceedingly demanding. How completely and successfully God hid away our Lord's remarkable Scripture knowledge, His supreme prophetic ministry, and His unequalled manifestation of spiritual gifts, from the people at Nazareth, is seen by their totally astonished, critical, and murderous reaction to His ministry when it started. Lk.4v20-30. On Christ's second visit to Nazareth, most of the people there were still just as critical and sceptical about the source of Christ's ministry. Their bitter rejection of His ministry is revealed by their impenetrable unbelief and their malicious and cutting, "Whence hath this fellow, these things?" Mk.6v1-6. .

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

Paul makes it 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 are lived. Paul states that we are serving the Lord, when we do all our daily duties heartily, and as unto the Lord, and we will receive the reward of the inheritance for it. Our Lord Jesus gave us the perfect example, He lived the Sermon on the Mount (Mt.5 to 7) 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 Jesus showed sympathetic gentleness with needy and sinful people, which was much kinder and more thoughtful than John Baptist'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." (NKJV)

2. Jesus was hidden by God until His prophetic prayer ministry was 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, Luke.2v40,52., 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 was hidden away until He had a perfect prayer life and revelation ministry, which were the essential foundations for His public 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 ("semeion," 2592) in Cana, 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. God protected Jesus from the jealousy, envy, and hostility of worldly people and carnal religious leaders.

God hid Jesus away 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. Luke.4v16-30. 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.

N.B. It was to prevent Israel's religious leaders from being prematurely moved with jealousy and envy.

Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery because of their jealousy and envy. Gen.37v4,11,38. Israel's religious leaders for the very same reason murdered Jesus. 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.

4. Jesus was 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.

N.B. Jesus was hidden away until the time came for the fullness of His love to be manifested.

Jesus was full of sympathy and grace as well as truth, this was the result and product of Christ's love being manifested every day in practical living and heart felt caring love. Heb.2v17,18. He was hidden away until His ministry was fully grown and perfected. God the Father started the ministry of Jesus when He was fully prepared for it, and Jesus was full of truth as well as grace. Lk.2v40,52. Jn.1v14. The lesson is clear, the premature appointment of immature ministry, is not wise, or of God.

WHY DID JESUS HIDE AWAY 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?

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

5. JESUS WAS BRUISED BY HIS CONFLICTS WITH ISRAEL'S RELIGIOUS LEADERS.

The traumatic effect on Jesus of His conflicts with Israel's religious leaders.

As we have see before in Ps.69v19-21., Jesus was very badly emotionally effected by the violent verbal abuse of His enemies. We are told in **Heb.12v2,3., v2.** "Looking to Jesus the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. **v3.** Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted." RSV. The gentle and kind soul of Jesus was attacked and ravaged by every kind of lie, insinuation, and vicious verbal abuse from the vast majority of Israel's religious leaders. Murder was in their hearts, and they planned to kill Jesus, as soon as it became possible. They got plausible people to ask Jesus trick questions, in order to accuse Him to Pilate, and so get Jesus executed for treason. Israel's religious leaders knew the merciful and forgiving nature of Jesus, and looked upon the case of the women taken in adultery as another good opportunity for them to accuse Jesus of breaking God's Law.

a. We must "look away to" Jesus, and "consider" Jesus. Heb.12v2,3.

In Heb.12v2., "looking away to," is "aphorontes eis." "Aphorontes," is the present active participle of "aphorao" 872, to look away to, to look away from one thing to concentrate on another. Unto" is "eis" 1519, which means "into," as well as, "to," or "unto." We should not just look to Jesus, but also actively and continuously look into all the glorious splendour and majesty of His inner being, His humanity and Godhead, "looking away into Jesus." Fix your eyes into all that Jesus is, He is our goal. Imitate Moses, who "accounted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he kept on looking away to the recompense of reward." Heb.11v26. "For he kept on looking away to," is "apeblepen gar eis," the imperfect active of "apoblepo" 578. The reward of Moses, and ourselves, is knowing the fullness of Jesus. We should ceaselessly and perpetually look away to Jesus the Author and Pioneer ("archegon" 747, see Heb.2v10.) of faith, and the Perfecter, "teleioten" 5051, one who brings to the goal, Jesus will assuredly bring our faith and our characters to the goal of conformity to His image. Rom.8v29. It is Jesus speaking to our inner being that changes us into His

image, the literal translation of Heb.1v2. reads, "God has spoken in Son." A similar thought is expressed by Jesus in Jn.14v6., I am the way, the truth and the life, no man comes unto the Father but by me;" it is Jesus, and the truth about Jesus, that feeds and changes our inner being into His likeness. Christ's life of suffering, and the sufferings of His atoning death, has made Jesus the complete and perfect Saviour and High Priest. Heb.5v5-10. Jesus has fully earned and merited the position that God the Father has given to Him, and is worthy of all the praise that we can give Him.

In Heb.12v3., The King James Version reads. "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." **In Heb.12v3., The New King James Version reads.** "For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls." **In Heb.12v3., "consider" is "analogisasthe,"** the aorist middle imperative of "analogizomai" 357, which means, to reckon up, to count up, to compare, to weigh, to consider, it only occurs here in the New Testament. "The verb can also include the idea of meditation."

In Heb.3v1., "consider," is "katanoesate," the aorist active imperative of "katanoeo," 2657, to put the mind down on a thing, to fix the mind on something, it speaks of a continuous observation and attention. Meditating on, knowing, and understanding Jesus is the key to all our problems, the cure for all our doubts, fears, and uncertainty.

b. Consider the astounding steadfast and brave endurance of Jesus in vicious opposition.

In Heb.12v2., "he endured," is "hupemeinen." It is the aorist active indicative of "hupomeno" 5278, to patiently endure, to steadfastly and bravely endure. Jesus despised, ("kataphronesas" the aorist active participle of "kataphroneo" 2706, to think down on something, to despise and treat as contemptible), the shame and disgrace, ("aischunes" 152), of "the death of the Cross," Phil.2v8., the most shameful and discreditable of deaths. In Gethsemane He briefly shrank from the suffering ahead, but love for us drove Him forward, and He submitted to the Father's will, and at immeasurable cost and personal suffering, anguish and grief, brought about our salvation. Christ's glorious sacrificial victory, justly won and made Jesus a co-partner of His Father's throne. "Hath sat down," is "kekathiken," the perfect active indicative of "kathizo" 2523, the perfect tense informs us that He still sits at the right hand of the Father, and has all authority and power. Heb.1v3. Eph.1v20-23. Mt.28v18-20.

In Heb.12v3., "endured," is "hupomemenekota." This is the perfect active participle of the same verb, "hupomeno" 5278, that is used in Heb.12v2., to speak of Jesus bravely enduring the Cross, is here used to speak of our Lord's brave endurance of the vicious verbal attacks spoken against Jesus by His enemies. The A.V. "gainsaying," is "antilogia" 485, (from "antilogos," and "antilego" 483), which means speaking against, controversy, dispute, contradiction, and opposition. In opposing Jesus, Christ's enemies became enemies of their own souls. However, in Heb.6v16. and 7v7., "antilogia" is used in a positive way to state that God's Word and oath end all possibility of strife and contradiction. Christ's superlative example under extreme opposition, slander and persecution, should strengthen us against ever being "weary and faint in our minds," in the temptations, trials and conflicts of life. "Faint," is "ekluomenoi," the present passive participle of "ekluo," 1590, to release, to loosen out; in the passive, to be tired out and enfeebled, to become extremely weary, to faint from exhaustion, here in Heb.12v3., in soul, as in Heb.12v5.

In Psalm.22., we see the amazing prophetic accuracy of the events concerning the crucifixion of Jesus. It gives us a clear insight into how the vicious verbal attacks on Jesus affected Him. In the Gospels, generally speaking, we see the outward acts of Jesus, in the Psalms and Isaiah, we see the inner pain and conflicts of Jesus. We see how Israel's religious leaders baited, reviled, and mocked Jesus in the most terrible and blasphemous manner.

c. Consider the horrors Jesus endured which are recorded in Psalm 22.

We read in The Amplified Bible in Psalm.22v7-20. **v7** All who see me laugh at me and mock me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, [Matt.27:43.] **v8** He trusted and rolled himself on the Lord, that He would deliver him. Let Him deliver him, seeing that He delights in him! [Matt.27:39,43; Mark.15:29,30; Luke.23:35.] **v9** Yet You are He Who took me out of the womb; You made me hope and trust when I was on my mother's breasts. **v10** I was cast upon You from my very birth; from my mother's womb You have been my God. **v11** Be not far from me, for trouble is near and there is none to help. **v12** Many [foes like] bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have hedged me in. [Ezek.39:18.] **v13** Against me they opened their mouths wide, like a ravening and roaring lion. **v14** I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax; it is softened [with anguish] and melted down within me. **v15** My strength is dried up like a fragment of clay pottery; [with thirst] my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and You have brought me into the dust of death. [John.19:28.] **v16** For [like a pack of] dogs they have encompassed me; a company of evildoers has encircled me, they pierced my hands and my feet. [Isa.53:7; John.9:37.] **v17** I can count all my bones; [the evildoers] gaze at me. [Luke.23:27,35.] **v18** They part my clothing among them and cast lots for my raiment (a long, shirt like garment, a seamless under tunic). [John.19:23,24.] **v19** But be not far from me, O Lord; O my Help, hasten to aid me! **v20** Deliver my life from the sword, my dear life [my only one] from the power of the dog [the agent of execution].

After the precise and accurate description of the awful scenes around the cross, and the inner and outward suffering of our dear Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit takes us to the scene in Heaven. All the massed angelic choirs sing for joy at our Saviours glorious victory, and Jesus rejoices before the Father with all those dearly loved

saints that He has redeemed and brought out of the darkness of Hades into His Father's kingdom. What a day of rejoicing that was, and that rejoicing continues today when sinners repent. Lk.15v7,10.

Ps.22v22-31. v22 "I will declare Your name to my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise You. [John 20:17; Rom 8:29; Heb 2:12.] **v23** You who fear (revere and worship) the Lord, praise Him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify Him. Fear (revere and worship) Him, all you offspring of Israel. **v24** For He has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither has He hidden His face from him, but when he cried to Him, He heard. **v25** My praise shall be of You in the great congregation. I will pay to Him my vows [made in the time of trouble] before them who fear (revere and worship) Him. **v26** The poor and afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord — they who [diligently] seek for, inquire of and for Him, and require Him [as their greatest need]. May your hearts be quickened now and forever! **v27** All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow down and worship before You, **v28** For the kingship and the kingdom are the Lord's, and He is the ruler over the nations. **v29** All the mighty ones upon earth shall eat [in thanksgiving] and worship; all they that go down to the dust shall bow before Him, even he who cannot keep himself alive. **v30** Posterity shall serve Him; they shall tell of the Lord to the next generation. **v31** They shall come and shall declare His righteousness to a people yet to be born — that He has done it [that it is finished]! [John 19:30.] AMP " Jesus has won a glorious victory, and in Heaven everyone will give Him the praise that He truly deserves.

d. Consider how Jesus was persecuted and murdered because of the envy in Israel's religious leaders.

Pilate knew that Israel's religious leaders had delivered Jesus up out of envy. Mt.27v17,18. Mk.15v9,10. Envy, "phthonos," is even more destructive and malignant than "zelos," jealousy; "zelos," casts hostile grudging looks; "phthonos," "envy," has arrived at the stage of hostile and even murderous acts. It is grief at another person's good fortune, it is not just the pain that they do not possess the other person's good fortune or blessing, 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 from them what they have, or prevent them from possessing it. "Zelos," "jealousy," can sometimes speak of noble ambition, and a desire for something good, as well as a covetous evil desire; whereas. "phthonos," "envy," can only speak of a bitter and evil ill will. It is not just grief over an enemy's good fortune; it can even be anger at a friend's good fortune. The Jews went beyond jealousy to the active hatred of the more malignant "phthonos," "envy." Though they were certainly inspired by Satan, we are not told that they were possessed by Satan, like Judas was. The jealousy and envy in their hearts drove them to oppose and murder Jesus, and fulfil Satan's desires.. Mk.2v5-7,16,23,24. 3v1,2. 15v10. Mt.27v18.

6. JESUS WAS BRUISED BY EXCRUCIATING TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS FROM SATAN.

a. Jesus was badly bruised by Satan's attacks in the wilderness, and throughout His ministry.

Satan demanded that Job and Peter should be put into his hands to test them. Job.1v6-22. 2v1-8. Lk.22v31-34. That the very same thing happened to Jesus, is proved by His temptation in the wilderness, and by Heb.4v15., which states that Jesus was tempted in all points like ourselves. Satan demanded the opportunity to make many all out attacks on Jesus, and to tempt and try Him to the very limit. Satan said that if the hedge of protection that was around Job was removed, Job would curse God to His face, and asked for the opportunity to prove it, but His malignant and malicious attacks on Job failed to turn him from the God he loved. God removed the hedge about Jesus, and gave Satan the opportunity to tempt and test Jesus, and Satan set about it with ferocious and evil enthusiasm, and tried to corrupt the pure soul of Jesus, but Jesus was totally victorious over his evil stratagems and vicious temptations. Satan completely failed to corrupt our dear Lord Jesus.

b. There were many other attacks by Satan on Jesus besides the temptation in the wilderness.

This is clearly revealed in Luke.4v13., "And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season." (KJV) "Season," is "Kairos," 2540, it means, "the time when things are brought to crisis, a decisive epoch in time, an opportune, convenient, or seasonable time." Here it is used of the timing of Satan's strategic attacks on Jesus, but it is also used of the timing of God's strategic plans, epochs and events in the world. Mt.11v25. 26v18. Mk.1v15. Lk.19v44. 21v24. Rom.5v6. 1Tim.2v6. Rev.11v18. etc.

The New King James Version of Lk.4v13., reads, "Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time." "In, "had ended every temptation," "had ended," is the verb "suntelesas" 4931, which is derived from "sun," 4862, "together," and "teleo" 5055, to "accomplish, to end, complete, conclude," and means "to bring to one end together;" and so, "concluded completely." When Satan had tried every kind of temptation, he gave up all his attempts at seducing Jesus. "Every temptation," is "panta" 3956, "peirasmon" 3986, Satan's primary attack was on Christ's relationship and standing with God the Father, and the best way to fulfil His mission for God His Father, the desire for food was part of this temptation. Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are." Heb.4v15. For forty days and nights Satan strove with all his craft and cunning to entrap, seduce, and defeat Jesus, but his evil desires and plans were in all points defeated. Make no mistake, this was no mere intellectual dispute, it was a cataclysmic and devastating spiritual confrontation, which was so physically and mentally debilitating, that Jesus needed angelic ministry to sustain and renew His body, soul, mind, and spirit. Mk.1v12,13.

c. We read in Lk.4v2., that Jesus was tempted throughout all of the forty days.

There were also the three major temptations at the end of His forty days in the wilderness. This undoubtedly included the terrifying dreams and visions in the night that Job experienced at the hands of the Devil. Poor Job

felt that God was afflicting him and giving him these terrible nightmares and visions in the night, when it was really Satan. We read in **Job.7v13-15. v13.**, When I say, 'My bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint,' **v14.** Then You frighten me with dreams and terrify me with visions, **v15.** So that my soul chooses strangling and death rather than my body and pains." Jesus knew that it was Satan who was putting Him to this fearsome test, but the temptation in the wilderness was so severe that angels had to physically sustain and renew Him, just as an angel had to strengthen Him in the devastating experience He suffered in the garden of Gethsemane. Mk.1v13. Lk.22v43. In the wilderness Satan was trying to seduce and trip Jesus up, and put paid to His ministry before it started. In Gethsemane Satan tried to make Jesus turn back from the agony and horror of the Cross and Hades, and so frustrate God's plans to save mankind. The first man, Adam, failed miserably, the last Adam, Jesus, triumphed gloriously, and against all the odds, won through and purchased our salvation with His own precious shed blood. 1Cor.15v45-49. Blessed be His wonderful Name! Heb.2v14. Col.2v15.

d. Satan made many more crafty and vicious attacks on Jesus through people.

Satan even used Peter to try to sidetrack Jesus from His mission. Mk.8v33. Mt.4v10. 16v23. Lk.4v8. Satan used Israel's religious leaders on many occasions to attack and oppose Jesus, by malicious slander, craft, and schemes to kill Him. Lk.22v1-6. Jn.5v18. 7v1. 8v39-40. Jesus said in Lk.22v53. "When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." "The power of darkness," is "he exousia 1849 tou skotous" 4655. All the massed might of the evil angelic powers came against Jesus in full force as the time came for Him to make atonement for sin, but He overcame all their malicious, brutal, and sadistic opposition, and conquered and subjugated them. Blessed be His wonderful Name! Heb.2v15.

Paul reveals the hosts of evil that waged war against Jesus, and we fight against, in Eph.6v12. "For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (RSV) There can be no doubt whatever, that Paul is speaking here of the different ranks and orders of evil spirits. Jesus resisted and stood against these hosts of evil that attacked Him, and took up all the armour of God and totally defeated them, and through His armour, presence and grace we can do the same.

"Against Principalities," "archas" 746. The chief rulers over the nations, evil angels of the first rank and order in their kingdom.

"Against Powers," "exousias" 1849. The evil angels that act with delegated authority from the principalities.

"Against the rulers of the darkness of this world." "Tous 3588, kosmokratoras 2888, tou 3588, skotous 4655, tou 3588, aionos 165, toutou 5127." The rulers and emperors of the darkness of this present age. "Kosmokratoras," the evil lords of this present world, the princes of this age. The Devil and his evil angels, are the real powers behind the world's kingdoms.

"Against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places." "Ta 3588, pneumatika 4152, tees 3588, ponerias 4189, en 1722, tois 3588, epouraniois 2032." Evil beings in the heavenly places, who are full of corrupting evil, "poneros." These are different orders of evil spirits, angels who kept not their first estate; who fell from the heavenly places, who Satan employs to hinder the spread of the Gospel, and to destroy men's souls, and we strive against them and resist their evil plans.

e. Jesus experienced testing and bruising temptations from the flesh.

Paul had to beat his body under, restrain it, and keep it under control, we read in 1Cor.9v26,27., **v26.** "Well, I do not run aimlessly, I do not box as one beating the air; **v27.** but I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. (RSV) The living Bible translates 1Cor.9v27., "Like an athlete I punish my body, treating it roughly, training it to do what it should, not what it wants to. Otherwise I fear that after enlisting others for the race, I myself might be declared unfit and ordered to stand aside."

Satan certainly made use of the human side of Jesus in the wilderness, when Jesus became very hungry after fasting for forty days. Jesus is called "the man Christ Jesus," and we are told that He "was tempted in all points just as we are, yet without sin." 1Tim.2v5. Heb.4v15. Jesus never gave way to temptations from the flesh, He was totally victorious over all temptations.

N. B. THE THREE LAST TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS.

It is impossible to think of a more bruising and trying experience than a face to face all out attack by Satan for forty days and nights in the wilderness. The conflict was so great, and so ruthless, relentless, vicious and destructive, that it physically and mentally totally exhausted Jesus, to such an extent, that angels had to come to Jesus and physically strengthen Him, just as an angel had to strengthen Him in the garden of Gethsemane, when He was under such spiritual and physical pressure that He could well have died without this angelic ministry. Mk.1v12,13. Lk.22v43.

1. SATAN TRIED TO ROB JESUS OF THE POWER OF GOD BY AN ATTACK ON HIS FAITH.

a. Satan aggressively attacked the reality of Christ's most holy and blessed experiences.

When John saw the Holy Spirit as a dove rest upon Jesus in unlimited power, he testified that Jesus was God's Lamb, and only begotten Son, and Israel's promised Messiah. Jn.1v15-19,29-36. 3v27-36. The Father's voice

confirmed John's witness, for all to hear, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mt.3v11-17. Yet Satan challenged the witness of the Father and Spirit, and cast doubt on Christ's blessed and holy experiences. What evil affrontery! Satan will try to challenge and cast doubt on our lovely God-given experiences and gifts, we must resist him and rejoice in what God has given to us, for God's word and promises to us are always true and reliable.

b. Satan tried to undermine and destroy Christ's faith in God's Word.

Satan will try to destroy our faith in the promises, power and love of God. "Has God said," still comes from Satan's lips. Gen.3v6. with Rev.12v9. Satan still denies the reliability of God's Word and the reality of His promises to us, including the promise of the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures, which confirm that Christ's experience was from God, confirm that ours is too, and that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for today, and the heritage of the children of God. Acts.2v38,39.

c. Satan sneered at, disparaged and maligned Christ's thirty years of love and devotion to God at Nazareth.

Christ had lived a life of perfect holiness and purity for 30 years, and Satan knew it; yet he dismisses and casts doubt on Christ's beautiful life of perfect love and devotion to His Father, with his lying and sarcastic, "If." Satan tried to bring Jesus to a place of dejection and despair by his evil insinuations, and he will try to give us feelings of guilt and despair by casting aspersions on our character and work for God. Satan will try to dismiss all our acts of love and devotion to God by his evil insinuations; however, the Scriptures assure us that "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love." Heb.6v10. Nagging, condemning, destructive attacks upon our minds, come from Satan, "The Accuser," not from God. Rev.12v9-12. Don't accept Satan's lies about yourself; only recognise and confess what the Scriptures say you are in Christ. Mt.7v7-11. Lk.11v9-13. Jn.3v16. 15v9. 17v23. Eph.1v3. Jesus understands and cares, and even His disciplines spring out of His great love for us. Heb.4v14-16. Christ is made unto us all we need, His strengthening grace is more than sufficient for us. 1Cor.1v30,31. Phil.4v13,19. Let praise and worship take the place of your heaviness and despair, draw near to God in praise and prayer, resist Satan and he will flee from you. James.4v7-9. God is love, He appreciates all our love and work for Him.

d. Satan fiercely attacked the Sonship and deity of Jesus. N.B.Rom.8v14-17. 1Jn.3v1,2.

Jesus created Satan and named him Lucifer, Son of the morning, Is.14v12. Lucifer, Hebrew, "heylel," from halal 1984, to shine which most translators translate as "Daystar," that is. "Morning-star," Strong 1966. the Greek translates this as, "Phosphoros," which means Light-Bearer, and Light-Bringer. Daystar, is one of the titles which belongs to Jesus, "the bright and morning star." Rev.22v16. It is here given by God to Satan before he fell. In Job.38v7. God also calls all the angelic "sons of God," "the morning stars," before Satan and the other angels who fell with him, rebelled and chose evil. It is an astonishing fact that Lucifer and his evil followers, rejected God, goodness and truth, and wilfully exercised their free wills to chose evil, sinful selfishness, in the very presence of God in Heaven, in the full light of the character, glory and works of God. In doing so Lucifer, "the bringer of light," became Satan, the Devil, the Prince of Darkness, and the Lying Slanderer of God and God's children, and his evil angels, the powers of darkness. Is.14v12-20. Ezek.28v12-19. Rev.12v10-12. Satan knew that Jesus was his Creator God, yet he tried, by lies and insinuations, to attack Christ's Deity and Sonship, and he will certainly attack our sonship and standing in God. Resist Satan's attack on your position in Christ. James.4v5-7. Do not give place to him for an instant, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." 1Jn.3v1,2. We are joint heirs with Jesus, God's own beloved children. Rom.8v17.

e. Satan attempted to undermine Christ's faith in God's provision and love for Him.

Satan was in effect saying to Christ, "You say that you acted on the revealed will of God, and look where it got you, into a wilderness with no provision, what a good God you serve." Satan loves to imply that God has failed us, or does not love us, because God has not miraculously intervened in our circumstances; but it is a lie, we are always on our Father's heart. God may allow our faith to be tried by difficult circumstances, temptation, and trials; but He will never leave us or forsake us. Heb.13v5,6,8. 1Pet.1v3-9. How much more reliable than the closest of earthly ties is the abundant affection, unceasing care, and unfailing love of our heavenly Father. Luke.11v13.

f. Satan viciously attacked the reality of Christ's spiritual gifts.

Satan taunted Christ, "You have not had one miracle. What, you God's Son? What an imagination you have. If you are God's Son, and have been filled with the Spirit, where are the miracles? If you have received the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts, why are you having such a bad time?" Jesus knew that God's power and gifts are manifested under the guidance of God's wisdom and in God's time and will. We cannot demand great manifestations of God's power at our will, it is "severally as He will." 1Cor.12v11. The lack of great spiritual gifts after our baptism in the Spirit can be a major temptation, however, great gifts of revelation and demonstration, are given to mature Christians, and in particular to the leading ministries of Christ's Church. Jn.5v19,30. Satan will try us as he tried our Lord, and we must answer him as Jesus did. **Jesus quoted from Deut.8v3., which states that God allows His children to be tried and qualified by adversity, and that God is always with us in our temptations and trials.** Jesus knew that the God who looked after the Israelites in the wilderness for forty years would look after Him, and God will look after us, He always with us. 1Pet.1v4-7. 5v7. Let us answer Satan with, "It is written," God's truth stands forever sure, our God will never fail us, or forsake us. Heb.13v5-8.

2. SATAN TRIED TO GET JESUS TO USE HIS GIFTS IN THE WRONG WAY. Mt.4v5-7.

Satan again makes an all out attack on the faith of Christ and His Sonship; so be aware and beware, he will

certainly persistently try to attack our faith, our position in Christ, and our standing as sons of the living God. Resist him and he will flee from you. In James.4v7. and 1Pet.5v9., "resist," is "antistete," the aorist active imperative of "anthistemi," 436, "take a stand against, be in opposition to." If we oppose and take a resolute stand against the Devil, it will make him take flight, even when he comes like a roaring lion, "pheuxetai" 5343, the future of "pheugo" 5343, to run away, to flee. See 1Pet.5v8,9. Eph.6v11. Luke.10v17,18. The Devil is, "Diabolos," 1228, the false accuser, and slanderer, of man to God, and of God to man. Draw near to God and resist him.

a. Satan tried to get Jesus to misinterpret the Scriptures in a self willed, presumptuous and fanatical way.

When Satan quoted Ps.91v11,12., he omitted some important words, as can be seen by a comparison with Lk.4v10,11. and Mt.4v6.. Satan omitted the words "in all thy ways," that is, the ways of Christ directed by God. Satan misquotes Ps.91v11,12., doubtless one of Christ's favourite portions of Scripture, and suggests that He had a Scriptural authority for a daring act of faith.

Satan was in effect saying, "This is one of the Scriptures that you particularly love and rest your faith on; this is one of the words out of the mouth of God, why not put it to the test? If you are God's Son and He has given you authority and power, then, prove it to me and everybody." Christ completely rejected the temptation to misinterpret the Scripture, and to put His Father to the test by going ahead on His own. Jesus knew that the promises of God must be used in the context in which they are quoted, and in conjunction with the whole tenor of Christian truth. Great manifestations of spiritual gifts can only be expected in the will and purpose of God. Jn.5v19,30. Jesus quoted from Deut.6v16., "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted Him in Massah," from the incident in Exod.17v1-7., where Israel put God to the Test. Our Lord inferred that those who embark upon presumptuous enterprises without the guidance of God, put God to the test; to doubt the guiding and providing hand of God is to repeat the sin of the children of Israel at Massah and Meribah. Those who usurp the Holy Spirit's position in the Church, and run it as they feel, have committed this sin of pride, self-will, and presumption.

Satan will try to incite to start upon presumptuous and fanatical enterprises, and try to get us to misuse spiritual gifts, he still comes to us "with a Bible under his arm, and a text in his mouth." Satan attacks every revival with misinterpretations and perversions of the Scriptures, we have to make sure that our manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are according to the Scriptural pattern.

If we want to pervert or dodge the truth, Satan will certainly find us a Scripture to back us up, but this will involve wresting a text out of its context, and wilfully ignoring other Scriptures upon the subject. The perils of pride, self-will, presumption and fanaticism are very great and lead to "great transgression." Let us follow the example of Jesus and resist Satan's attacks upon us and dependence upon God. Ps.19v13.

b. Satan tried to get Jesus to use spiritual gifts in a spectacular way to win the praise of people.

Satan will tempt us to use spiritual gifts in a spectacular way to win the support, praise and admiration of the people. Satan fell through the sins of pride, covetousness and love of praise and position; he tries to make His creator fall into the same sins that had caused his own downfall and doom. Ezek.28v17. Is.14v12-14. Satan challenged Christ to do an outstanding sign before the people. Jesus resisted this appeal to pride and love of praise, He had come to die, not to lead Israel to victory over Rome, He had come to save people from their sins, not to receive empty adulation. If Christ had followed Satan's suggestion it would have been a complete denial of His mission, and would have been a rejection of His Father's Word, love, provision and guidance. Satan will tempt us to use the power of God and His spiritual gifts in a proud and spectacular manner. There can be a desire to show people that God has called us and used us, and this is wrong. We can tell people what God has accomplished through us, if we do it in humility to God's glory, and in order to help people's faith, as Paul and Barnabus did in Acts.14v27.. Satan's servants, like Simon the sorcerer, may boast that they are a great one, but servants of the meek and lowly Christ must be genuinely humble. "Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips." Prov.27v2. Satan puffs up his servants; God humbles His, and measures their greatness by their humility. Mt.18v1-5.

c. Satan tempted Jesus to strive for and win position and prestige in men's religious power structures.

Satan will tempt us to use spiritual gifts in a spectacular way to win position and prestige. God has not given us His spiritual gifts to increase our prestige and position, He has given them to us to glorify His Name and meet people's needs. Jesus entirely resisted the temptation to use the power of God in a way that would win over the influential over to His side, and win a position amongst them. Satan was in effect saying to Christ, "Cast yourself down at the Temple before the elders of Israel. Seek the help and patronage of the influential. To do the work that you want to do, you need the people with money, power and authority behind you." Many have compromised both truth and experience by throwing themselves down at the Temple of worldly and religious prestige, and through seeking the praise of men, or by fighting for position in their Church, have offended God, and lost His power. Those who seek the praise of men, inevitably find that they compromise the truth because of the fear of man. Jn.12v42,43. Christ fearlessly preached against traditions that made void the Word of God, and exposed hypocrisy and sham. It cost Him His life, but He pleased the Father. These religious leaders opposed Christ, and in the end murdered Him. He threatened their power structure and they could not tolerate this. The test of the spiritual greatness of any Christian leader, is their willingness to step down from position and humbly

serve others. Jn.13v1-17. Mt.15v1-14. 20v20-28. Phil.2v1-11. Christ humbled the religious leaders of His day by showing His preference for the prayerful, spiritual, consecrated, and sincere ordinary working men, as leaders in His work; He can and does do the same today, when religious leaders lack spirituality and sincerity.

3. SATAN TEMPTED JESUS TO EXCHANGE GOD'S BLESSING FOR EARTHLY GLORY.

a. Satan tried to seduce Jesus with an offer of worldly wealth, prestige, and glory.

Satan tried to get Jesus to exchange His Father's blessing and His cross, for the defiled glory and power of the world. Satan showed Jesus all the glory of the world's kingdoms, and in effect said, "Why fight me? Why have a battle? You can have all these without a fight if you will go my way, accept my standards and worship me. Don't take up your cross, exchange your life of dedication to God, for the world's pleasures, power and wealth." The temptation to fill our lives with worldly things, and to judge our lives by worldly standards will come to every Christian. We need to realise, like our Lord Jesus did, that God owns all things, and that our allegiance should be His alone. Deut.6v13-15. A curse, not glory, comes upon all those who forsake God for the broad and easy way. Mt.7v13,14. with Deut.28v15-68. Satan's offer of his filthy and corrupt kingdoms was certainly no bargain, they will all be destroyed at Christ's return, the world belongs to Jesus and the Father, not Satan, he is a usurper.

There was a strong implication from Satan, that if Christ did not follow his advice, He would experience the most sustained and vicious opposition from these kingdoms, for they were under Satan's control. Indeed, Jesus did have to face the most vicious and ruthless slander, hatred, envy, malice and persecution from the children of Satan, and we will experience the same if we are going to do God's will and glorify God through the manifestation of His spiritual gifts. When we think that materialism, worldly standards and compromise have more to offer us than serving God, we are getting very close to bowing down, serving and worshipping Satan. Let us follow the example of Jesus, He refused to sell His heavenly anointing and call for the things of the world, or compromise truth because of the fear of man, and the hatred and opposition of the kingdoms of the world. Nothing deterred Him from the mission that the Father had sent Him to do.

b. Satan tried to get Jesus to supplement the power of God with the glory of the world.

Jesus refused to use the glory of the world to supplement or replace the power of God; He chose people who had no worldly power or influence to be the leaders of His Church. 1Cor.1v26-31. The further we get away from God, the more we rely upon human resources. However, universities, music, art and literature, good as these can be, cannot replace dependence upon God and His power. We are in real spiritual danger when we rely upon what we can do, and feel that we can manage on our own. We praise God for Christian scholars, and we would be lost without them, but our first need is for men with truly apostolic ministry. Mt.9v35-38. Paul was an outstanding scholar, but he gloried in his limitations, not his abilities, so that the power of Christ would rest upon him. In 2Cor.12v9-12., "rest," is "episkenose," the aorist active subjunctive of "episkenoo" 1981, literally, "to pitch upon him like a tent," "to dwell," "to abide," like the Shechinah over the Tabernacle. Acts17v15-34. 18v1-18. N.B. v10. 1Cor.2v1-8.

Evangelism can be based on human oratory, and this can be looked upon as a substitute for the power and miracles of the early Church. Churches that allow worldly glory and human ability to replace God's power, become empty husks that disillusion those who are broken in heart, weary, sick and sinful, who are seeking and longing for a loving fellowship, where they can find God and His healing, peace and blessing. Jesus knew that only God could meet the needs of the world, and that human endeavour and worldly glory would always fail.

c. Satan tried to get Jesus to build a worldly and religious empire around Him.

Christ refused to build an earthly empire around His ministry, His kingdom was not of this world, He lived just to glorify the Father and perform His will. Jn.4v34. 5v30. 6v38,39. 12v28. 17v1,4,5,10. 18v33-37. 21v19. Heb.10v5-7. Someone has said, "How often has ambition conquered those who have conquered nearly all else." If our only motive for desiring the gifts of the Holy Spirit is to build our personal or denominational kingdom, then we are desiring them for the very worst of reasons. We are not here to build our kingdoms, or our bank balance, by exalting Christ and His gifts; we are to follow the example of the Holy Spirit, and use His gifts for the sole purpose of exalting Jesus and glorifying God. Jn.16v12-15. 14v12-14. Our emphasis should be "Our Christ," not ourselves, or our Church, God is the only one to be served and worshipped.

Jesus has left us the perfect example of financial integrity and sincerity. His attitude to money was beyond reproach. His enemies mocked His preaching against love of money and worldly-mindedness, and His total lack of any desire for money. Lk.16v10-15. Jesus was called many things by His enemies, but He was never called a "money-grabber." Grateful people, mainly women, who had been greatly helped through His ministry; met Christ's simple needs; and sometimes other people also gave food and shelter for Jesus and His disciples. Lk.8v1-3. 19v5. etc. However, Jesus often had no shelter and had to "sleep rough," out in the open air; He knows what it is to be homeless. Mt.8v19,20. Lk.9v57,58. Christ never tried to squeeze finances out of the people that He was preaching to; no one was to be charged for divine healing, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Mt.10v7,8. Indeed, as they were able, the apostolic band gave money to the poor and needy. Jn.12v5-8.

Jesus made no demands for money for evangelism or good causes. He did not impose financial demands on those who sympathised with Him and helped Him in His work. Jesus did not ask for the best means of transport, or demand accommodation at the best hotels, He often had no accommodation, and nowhere to lay His head. Lk.9v57-62. Jesus did what the Father told Him to do, not what He felt was good or necessary. **It is a striking fact that the Father never told Jesus to do things that are looked upon as essential today by most**

Christians. Christ built no buildings, He had no means of transport other than His own feet, He did not even get Scribes to write down and distribute His sermons. Jesus just made Himself a channel of His Father's will, love and power. Jn.5v18,19,30. It is not just enough to see a need and try to meet it; we have to make quite sure that we meet the priorities that the Father lays down. Jesus kept His financial needs down to a minimum, His base was a simple home in Capernaum, and we will do well to follow His example. Mt.4v13. Mk.2v1. 9v33. Christ's one aim was to glorify His Father and do His will, and if we want to defeat the attacks of Satan, our aims and purposes in ministry will have to be the same.

7. JESUS WAS GREATLY BRUISED BY HIS HORRENDOUS CONFLICTS IN GETHSEMANAE.

a. The horrific words used to describe Christ's awful depression, anguish and agony of soul in Gethsemane.

We read in Mt.26v37-39., v37. And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, **He began to show grief and distress of mind and was deeply depressed. v38. Then He said to them, My soul is very sad and deeply grieved, so that I am almost dying of sorrow.** Stay here and keep awake and keep watch with Me. **v39.** And going a little farther, He threw Himself upon the ground on His face and prayed saying, My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will [not what I desire], but as You will and desire. AMP

We read in Luke.22v41-44., v41. And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, **v42.** saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." **v43.** Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. **v44. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.** NKJV

In Lk.22v44., "agony," is "agonia" 74, it is used to speak of, an intense struggle for victory, of extreme and prolonged efforts in wrestling, then of severe mental and emotional conflicts, anguish and agony. **Vincent states,** "Agony occurs only here. It is used by medical writers, and the fact of a sweat accompanying an agony is also mentioned by them." End of quote.

Adam Clark writes, "The word "agonia" (grk 74) (agony) points out the utmost anguish and grief of soul, and is of the same import with "ademonein" (grk 85) in Matthew and Mark." End of quote.

b. Christ's agonising praying was so physically destructive that God had to send an angel to strengthen Him.

The conflict was so great that it became too much for Christ's physical frame, and an angel had to appear from Heaven to strengthen Jesus. His praying was so intense that it nearly killed Him. In Luke.22v44. "being in an agony," "genomenos" 1096, en agonia" 74, the aorist participle suggests a "growing intensity" in our Lord's spiritual conflict, literally translated, it carries the thought, "having become in an agony:" Jesus progressed from His first prayer and severe spiritual conflict recorded in Lk.22v41., where it states that He "began to pray," and entered into an even greater spiritual conflict and overwhelming distress, and even more earnest prayer. "He prayed more earnestly," is "ektenesteron (1617) proseucheto." The adverb "ektenesteron," means "very fervently," so it means, "He prayed very fervently and even more earnestly."

The verb "ekteino," means literally, "stretched out," from "ek," out, and "teino," to stretch, and literally means extended, stretched out, and then, intense, fervent or earnest. **Vincent says, it signifies "intense strain," feeling "on the rack."** The pressures in Gethsemane made Jesus feel as if He was on a rack, and resulted in Him praying to the Father with most fervent and earnest "strong cryings and tears." Heb.5v7. The Amplified Bible translates Luke.22v44., "And being in an agony [of mind], He prayed [all the] more earnestly and intently, and His sweat became like great clots of blood dropping down upon the ground."

In 1Pet.1v22., Peter uses the adverb "ektenos," 1619, which means intensely, fervently, earnestly, to direct us to love fellow Christians with a fervent love from the heart, "ek kardias ektenos." In 1Pet.4v8., Peter uses the related adjective "ektenes" 1618, to speak of the necessity for fervent love between Christians. The adjective "ektenos" occurs in Acts,12v5., in the Majority Text and T.R., it is inaccurately translated in the A.V., as "without ceasing," it means earnest, stretched out, and fervent; it literally means, "prayer was arising earnestly," the Christians praying for Peter, prayed well. but they could not believe Rhoda when she insisted that Peter was at the door, they found out that she was correct. They did some great heart felt praying without really believing. God is very generous and kind, and graciously listens to our fumbling efforts at prayer, when we pray in love.

c. Great sorrow was followed by even greater sorrow and heavy depression. Mt.26v37,38.

Matthew 26:37,38. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. **v38. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.**

Jesus took with him Peter, James and John; the same disciples that had beheld His glory in the Mount of transfiguration. Now they beheld an even greater glory, the extent to which divine love is prepared to agonise and suffer to redeem sinful mankind. **In Mt.26v37.,** Matthew uses, "lupeisthai" 3076, "kai" "ademonein" 85. for "sorrowful and very heavy." "Lupeisthai" is the present passive infinitive of "lupeo," the passive means to be grieved, distressed and sorrowful. "Lupeo" is used to speak in Mt.19v22., of the sorrow of the rich young ruler, when he felt that he could not leave his riches and follow Jesus, Jesus left all the riches of Heaven for the awful

pains of Gethsemane, the Cross, and Hades. See also. Mt.26v22. John.21v17. Peter was grieved.

Barnes writes about "very heavy," "ademonein" 85. "The word in the original is much stronger than the one translated "sorrowful." It means, to be pressed down or overwhelmed with great anguish. This was produced, doubtless, by a foresight of his great sufferings on the cross in making an atonement for the sins of people." End of quote.

"Ademonein" 85, is the present active infinitive of "ademoneo" 85, to be full of anguish and sorrow, to be in great distress, to be very heavy, depressed and dejected. It is a much stronger word than the word rendered "sorrowful," "lupeisthai." **Scholars tell us that "ademoneo" is the strongest of the three Greek words that are used in the New Testament for depression.** (See Strong, 85, 916, 3076.) "Ademoneo" only occurs in Mt.26v37. Mk.14v33. and Phil.2v26. How great is the love of Jesus for us to suffer such great inner pain and depression for us. Do you suffer from depression? Jesus has been there before you, at the very worst possible level. He understands your pain, and He is risen with healing in His wings. He can and will deliver you.

d. The great suffering of Jesus, which is seen in the parallel texts in Mt.26v37. and Mk.14v33.

As we have seen in Mt.26v37., Matthew uses "lupeisthai" 3076, "kai" "ademonein" 85, for "sorrowful and sore troubled." Whereas, in Mark's parallel text, Mk.14v33., Mark uses, for "greatly amazed and sore troubled," "ekthambeisthai" 1568, "kai" 2532, "ademonein" 85. "Ekthambeisthai," is the present passive infinitive of "ekthambeo," 1568, it means to astonish utterly, to terrify, to throw into terror or amazement, to be thoroughly amazed, to be struck with terror. "Ekthambeo," occurs four times in the New Testament, and only in Mark's Gospel, Mk9v15. 14v33. 16v5,6.

In Mk.9v15., "ekthambeo" is applied to the amazed reaction of the multitudes who saw Jesus after His transfiguration. We read, "And straightway all the multitude, when they saw him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him." "Were greatly amazed," is the aorist passive, "exethambethesan," 1568. The after glow and glory of the transfiguration was obviously still resting on Jesus, and the sight of it filled the onlookers with fear and amazement.

In Mk.16v5,6., "ekthambeo," is used to describe the amazed fear of the women at the tomb when they saw the angels.

We read in Mark.16v5-6. "And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted." "They were affrighted," is "exethambethesan" 1568., the "ex" 1537, intensifies the verb, and reveals that they were utterly amazed and terrified, Luke.24v5. has "affrighted," "emphobon" 1719, which means, afraid, startled, terrified. "A young man," is "neaniskon," 3495, Matthew says the young man was an angel, and that he effortlessly rolled away the very great stone (Mk.16v4.) that sealed the entrance to the tomb, and sat upon it. The angel had a face like lightening, and brilliant white garments, his presence was so awe inspiring, that the soldiers guarding the tomb shook with terror, and became like dead men. Mt.28v1-12. Luke speaks of "two men with shining garments," obviously angels, speaking to the women. The apostles stubbornly refused to believe what the angels and Jesus had said to the women. They thought that the women were having some kind of hallucination, and rejected their genuine visitation by the risen Christ.Lk.24v1-12. Mk.16v5-8.

The Living Bible translates Mk.14v33. "He took Peter, James, and John with him and began to be filled with horror and deepest distress." The American Standard Version translates Mk.14v33."And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled. The Amplified Bible translation, "Struck with terror and amazement and deeply troubled and depressed," are an accurate translation of the Greek words, "ekthambeisthai 1568 kai ademonein" 85. Scholars tell us that the two verbs describe an extreme state of bewilderment, fear, uncertainty and anxiety, which are not seen anywhere else in such a forceful and telling way as here. Rawlinson translates them, "shuddering awe, amazement, deep distress," Swete translates them, "amazed awe... overpowering mental distress." "Weymouth, translates them, "full of terror and distress."

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus Himself feels and faces the most distressing and terrible fear and amazement, as He directly confronts Satan and His massed powers of darkness. The Lord Jesus had almost certainly never personally experienced such an intense level of mental anxiety, terror, depression and pressure during His humanity, as He experienced here. This was a critical time, and both Jesus and the Devil knew it full well, hence the great concerted effort by the Devil and his evil cohorts to try and force Jesus not to go on! If He did not go on, there would be no Eternal Kingdom and the Creation would end in failure. It was His limitless Love for us and the terrible thought that the Eternal Kingdom could not come into existence that "drove" Him on. Praise His Name!

Jesus strives with all of His being to win the battle over the powers of evil, and His humanity, and heroically and resolutely decided to go on, regardless of the cost, to purchase our salvation. Satan did his utmost to turn Jesus from His goal of our salvation, but Jesus conquered Satan and triumphed over him, in spite of all the horrendous physical and emotional suffering, spiritual conflict, and mental pressure and pain. Col.2v15. Heb.2v14. 1Jn.3v8-10.

We read in Mark 10:32-34. "And they were on the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them: **and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid.** And he took again the twelve, and

began to tell them what things should happen unto him, **v33**. Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: **v34**. And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again."

"And they were amazed," is "kai ethambounto," 2284, the imperfect passive indicative of "thambeo," to be astonished, amazed, frightened. The imperfect tense describes the continual disturbed feelings of the disciples as Jesus was walking on in front of them the imperfect active "en proagon autous," as they went on through Perea towards Jerusalem. It caused those who followed to be afraid, "ephobounto," grk 5399, the imperfect passive indicative of "phobeo," 5399, to put to flight by terrifying, to be struck with fear, to be seized with alarm.

The imperfect tenses of "thambeo" 2284, and "phobeo" 5399, describe the continual amazed fear in the twelve apostles. when they saw the look on the face of Jesus as He walked in advance of them towards Jerusalem, with a serious gravity, earnestness, and determination that warned of great danger and disaster ahead. The apostles read correctly the stress and determination on the face of Jesus, and were filled with a sense of foreboding, amazement and fear. The terrors of Gethsemane, His Passion, and Hades, were gripping Jesus, but the grace of God given to Him in the Mount of Transfiguration sustained Jesus and impelled and carried Him forward. Heb.2v9. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, **crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**" (KJV). God's great grace carried Jesus forward, as it does us.

We read in Mk.10v32., "And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them the things that were to happen to him." Jesus had already told them three times, Mk.8v31. 9v13. and 9v31., about the terrible sufferings that awaited Him in Jerusalem. Here He tries once more to get them to listen to His warnings. But they again refuse to listen to and accept Christ's warnings of His sufferings and death. We read in Lk.18v34., "They understood none of these things."

Mark and Matthew sadly reveal that the minds of James and John were totally taken up with their own selfish plans and ambitions, even while Jesus was giving the details of his approaching death and resurrection to them. They were totally ignorant of the great pressure on Jesus, and selfishly ask, "Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory." Jesus told them that positions of honour in the kingdom have to be earned, usually by baptisms of suffering. Mk.10v35-45. Jesus was under tremendous pressure from these forthcoming events, He was thinking about His suffering and death in the near future, they were thinking about sitting on thrones, in the near future. They were totally ignorant of the signs of the times and prophecy, like much of the Church today. Jesus again took the twelve, and began to tell them about His sufferings and death, but they refused to listen to Him.

e. Adam Clarke's enlightening commentary on Mt.26v37,38.

"[Began to be sorrowful] "Lupeisthai"(grk 3076), from "luo" (grk 3089), to dissolve, (intense) sorrow, such as dissolves the natural vigour, and threatens to separate soul and body. [And very heavy.] Overwhelmed with anguish—"ademonein"(grk 85). **This word is used by the Greeks to denote the most extreme anguish which the soul can feel-- excruciating anxiety and torture of spirit.**" End of quote.

On Mt.26v38. Adam Clark writes. "[My soul is exceeding sorrowful (or, is surrounded with exceeding sorrow), even unto death.] This latter word explains the two former: My soul is so dissolved in sorrow, my spirit is filled with such agony and anguish, that, if speedy succour be not given to my body, death must be the speedy consequence."

"---Luke observes, Luke.22v43-44., that there appeared unto him an angel from heaven strengthening him; and that, being in an agony, his sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground. How (intense) must this anguish have been, when it forced the very blood through the coats of the veins, and enlarged the pores in such a preternatural manner as to cause them to empty it out in large successive drops! In my opinion, the principal part of the redemption price was paid in this unprecedented and indescribable agony."

"Bloody sweats are mentioned by many authors; but none was ever such as this -- where a person in perfect health ----, and in the full rigour of life, about thirty-three years of age, suddenly, through mental pressure, without any fear of death, sweat great drops of blood; and these continued, during his wrestling with God to fall to the ground. ---- His agony and distress can receive no consistent explanation but on this ground-- **He suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. O glorious truth! O infinitely meritorious suffering! And O! above all, the eternal love, that caused him to undergo such sufferings for the sake of sinners!**" End of Adam Clarke quote.

f. The sorrow, pain and anguish of Gethsemane were so severe that it nearly killed Jesus.

In Mk.14v34. (and Mt.26v38.) Jesus said to His apostles, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." "Exceeding sorrowful, is a translation of the adjective "perilupos" 4036, which literally means, encircled and surrounded with exceeding sorrows, deeply grieved all around, intensely sad. Thayer says it can mean, "overcome with sorrow so much as to cause one's death." Swete says, it is "a sorrow which well-nigh kills." "To death," is "heos thanatou," "to the point of dying." Perilupos is used 5 times in the following places in the New Testament: Mt.26v38., Mk 6v26., 14v34., Lk.8v23,24. "Perilupos" 4036," is used in

Mt.26v38. and Mk14v34., of Jesus being "exceeding sorrowful" in Gethsemane. Perilupos" is used in Mk.6v26. of wicked king Herod's extreme, but fruitless grief, over the execution of John the Baptist. See Mt.14v9. "Perilupos" is used in Lk.18v23,24. of the great sorrow of the rich young ruler, who was so dependant and emotionally attached to his wealth, that he felt unable to give his riches away and follow Jesus. In Mt.17v23, Perilupos is not used, but the Greek phrase "kai 2532) elupethesan 3076) sphodra 4970," is translated as "and they were exceeding sorry". The disciples were terribly grieved, when Jesus told them that He was to suffer and die, it appears that at last they believed Him, but the thought of it was too uncomfortable for them to retain, and they soon put it out of their minds again.

Here in Gethsemane Jesus Himself is assaulted by feelings of amazement and fear as He battles with the flesh and the Devil over the sufferings of the Cross, and in particular over His suffering the pains of Hades, when His soul was made an offering for our sins. Heb.5v7. Is.53v10. Acts.2v23-31. Rom.10v7. Eph.4v8-10. 1Pet.3v18-22. 4v6. Jesus triumphed gloriously over the terrible pressures that came against Him and won a total victory over the world, the flesh and the Devil, and despised the shame of the Cross. **Let no one be in any doubt, the battle over the Cross and Hades was fought and won in Gethsemane, but there could not have been a more severe test of our Lord's resolve and character. The horror of it all besieged and overwhelmed Him, and He was amazed at the severity of the spiritual assault upon Himself.** As Swete states, "Long as He had foreseen the Passion, when it came clearly into view its terror exceeded His anticipations." "He learned obedience from the things that He suffered." Heb.5v8. Peter was an eyewitness of the events in Gethsemane, and Mark's Gospel is, according to Papias 135 A.D., the recollections of the ministry of Jesus that Peter told to Mark. Peter saw the horrific pressures that were on Jesus, and used the strongest possible words to describe the horror of what he saw happening to his dear Lord.

8. IN HIS PASSION JESUS SUFFERED EXCRUCIATING PHYSICAL PAIN AND SUFFERING.

1. The torture that Jesus endured before His crucifixion was absolutely horrific.

Mel Gibson's moving film "The Passion of Christ," gives a graphic description of the sufferings of Jesus, and one has to thank God that a factual account of the sufferings of Jesus have at last been presented to the whole world. However, the sufferings of Jesus were actually worse than His sufferings portrayed in the film. Mel Gibson states that he had to hold back from the full facts because people would not be able bear it. Tender-hearted people have found it difficult to watch, and even non-Christians have been reduced to tears by it. The film gives the shocking and gruesome facts about our Lord's sufferings and death. The physical pain that Jesus suffered through His beating and crucifixion was horrendous. People often died through the beating that Jesus experienced. Crucifixion was also totally agonising, and was a prolonged torture. In addition to the unbearable pain, the person who was being crucified, was all the time fighting off asphyxia because of the position of the arms. However, this was not all the pain that Jesus suffered, He also endured an excruciating internal emotional pain and distress, and experienced a horrendous and agonizing fight of faith. Jesus bravely conquered a soul-destroying fight with fear, depression, and the hatred of men.

2.. Jesus bravely conquered the soul-destroying fights with evil men and evil angels.

A tremendous insight into the great inner grief and conflict that Jesus experienced is seen in Ps.22. The opening verse, Ps.22v1., is quoted in Mt.27v46., "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Why are You so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning? AMP. Jesus had read this psalm many times and knew well that it was describing His future crucifixion, and that when He took upon Him the sins of the world, He would experience being cut off from God the Father. Jesus "prayed with strong cryings and tears," Heb.5v7., in Gethsemane over this forsaking by the Father. The soul of Jesus was made an offering for sin, Is.53v10., and this forsaking by His Father was a major part of the price of the atonement for our sin.

3. Dying at any time can be a most soul-trying thing, crucifixion is about the worst way to die.

Just before my earthly father died he was in considerable distress, he said, "If this is dying, I only want to do it once." His doctors, kindly eased his suffering with morphine and he died peacefully in sleep. Jesus had no pain relief; He refused the drugged drink, and only had a vinegar drink just before He died, in order to fulfil the Scripture. Ps.69v21. with John.19v28-30. His suffering was quite appalling. To redeem us Jesus lost both His body and spirit at death. Lk.23v46. Eccles.12v7.

The horrors of crucifixion recorded in Psalm 22.

In Ps.22v6-8,12-18., this prophetic psalm graphically foretells the terrible physical sufferings, and the vicious verbal abuse that Jesus would have to endure during His crucifixion. The description of crucifixion is graphic and totally accurate, even though crucifixion was completely unknown at this time. The amazing accuracy of these prophecies cannot be denied or refuted; the casting of lots for Christ's garments is even foretold. **Ps.22v6.** But I am a worm, and no man; I am the scorn of men, and despised by the people. [Matt.27:39-44.] **v7.** All who see me laugh at me and mock me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, [Matt.27:43.] **v8.** He trusted and rolled himself on the Lord, that He would deliver him. Let Him deliver him, seeing that He delights in him! [Matt.27:39,43; Mark.15:29,30; Luke.23:35.] **v12.** Many [foes like] bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have hedged me in. [Ezek.39:18.] **v13.** Against me they opened their mouths wide, like a ravening and roaring lion. **v14.** I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax; it is softened [with anguish] and melted down within me. **v15.** My strength is dried up like a fragment of clay pottery; [with thirst] my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and You have brought me into the dust of death. [John.19:28.] **v16.** For [like a pack of] dogs they have encompassed me; a company of evildoers has encircled me, they pierced my hands and my feet. [Isa.53:7; John.19:37.] **v17.** I can count all my bones; [the evildoers]

gaze at me. [Luke.23:27,35.] **v18.** They part my clothing among them and cast lots for my raiment (a long, shirt like garment, a seamless under tunic). [John.19:23,24.] The Amplified Bible.

In Ps.22v22,25,27-31., the glorious victory of Jesus over this verbal abuse, pain and suffering is prophesied. **v22.** I will declare Your name to my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise You. [John.20:17; Rom.8:29; Heb.2:12.] **v25.** My praise shall be of You in the great congregation. I will pay to Him my vows [made in the time of trouble] before them who fear (revere and worship) Him. **v27.** All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow down and worship before You, **v28.** For the kingship and the kingdom are the Lord's, and He is the ruler over the nations. **v29.** All the mighty ones upon earth shall eat [in thanksgiving] and worship; all they that go down to the dust shall bow before Him, even he who cannot keep himself alive. **v30.** Posterity shall serve Him; they shall tell of the Lord to the next generation. **v31.** They shall come and shall declare His righteousness to a people yet to be born — that He has done it [that it is finished]! [John.19:30.] The Amplified Bible. These verses declare the fruits of Christ's redeeming love, salvation for multitudes of believers through faith in His Name and His atonement, and how Jesus will welcome the great congregation of the redeemed into His kingdom. He will surely see the fruit of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Is.53v11.

4. The Scriptures warned Jesus that He would be smitten "in the house of my friends." Zech.13v6-9.

We read in Zech.13v6-9. "And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds between thine arms? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded "'nakah" 5221, "smitten") in the house of my friends. **v7.** Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts: smite ("nakah" 5221, "smite") the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. **v8.** **And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. v9.** And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them, as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God. (ASV)

In Zech.13v8,9., the prophecy goes forward to Christ's return, and informs us that at His second coming Jesus will execute two out of every three Jews, because most of the godly Jews will be killed by Antichrist, and most of the remaining Jews will be corrupted by Antichrist.

5. The Jews erroneously thought that Jesus was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted for His own sins.

In Isaiah.53v10., "He hath put Him to grief," "grief," is "chalah," 2470, it is the same Hebrew word, which in another form occurs in Isa.53v4., "choly" 2483. sickness. "Chalah," means, "to be or become weak, to be sick or to become sick, to be diseased or to become diseased, to be grieved or to become grieved, to be sorry or become sorry." Keil & Delitzsch translate Is.53v4., "Verily He hath borne our diseases and our pains: He hath laden them upon Himself; but we regarded Him as one stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." The Jews erroneously thought that Jesus was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted for His own sins, when He was in fact paying the penalty and bearing the sins of the whole world. The Jews made this false belief the reason for their extreme hatred, contempt and rejection of Jesus, but the real reason was that Jesus had exposed their great and many sins and reproved them for their iniquitous lives. Jesus said they had sinned in the full light of the mighty divine miraculous, and ultimate divine truth, preached in an incomparable way by Jesus Himself. Jesus said that they had clearly and unmistakably seen and hated both Himself and the Father. John.15v22-25.

6. The Jews erroneously thought that Jesus was being judicially stricken and abandoned by God.

In, "yet we did esteem Him stricken," in Is.53v4., the Hebrew word for "stricken," is "naguwa" 5060, it means, "struck," or "smitten." The thought is, "yet we thought Him judicially stricken with great and severe punishment for His sins by God, smitten from the presence of God, and afflicted." The Jews felt that the terrible sufferings of Jesus meant that He had been abandoned by God, and was experiencing the divine judgement for His sins. We should particularly note that Isaiah does not say that Jesus would be smitten, accursed, and abandoned by God; but only that the Jews, who rejected Him and put Him to death, would think that this was so. Isaiah states that the Jews were badly mistaken and in great error, Jesus was bearing our sorrows, not suffering for His own sins. (The Hebrew "naguwa," which is translated as "stricken," is also used in the Scriptures to speak of someone who was afflicted with a horrible disease. Gen.12v17. 1Sam.6v9. Leprosy, was called "nega" 5061, see 2Kings15v5.)

7. The Jews erroneously thought that God was judicially smiting Jesus.

In Is.53v4., the Hebrew word for "smitten" is "nakah" 5221, it means, "to smite, to strike," it is used to speak of a person smiting by the sword, etc. It is even used of Balaam's Ass objecting to her master smiting and beating her in Numb22v28., "And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? However, it is also often used to speak of divine judgment. Of the people in Sodom being smitten with blindness in Gen.19v11., and with haemorrhoids in 1Sam.5v6.. Of divine judgement on Egypt by turning water and the river Nile to blood in Exod.7v25., the hail judgement on Egypt in Ex.9v25., the judgement on Egypt's firstborn in Ex.12v29., and judgement by pestilence in Numb.14v12.. God directed Saul to smite and destroy Amalek in 1Sam.15v2,3., and David to smite the Philistines in 1Sam.23v2.. In Mal.3v24. Elijah is sent before the Lord's coming to save the land from being smitten with divine judgement.

A common belief among the Jews was that great suffering meant that a person was guilty of great sin, and was

proof of divine judgement. This is the thought behind the phrase, "smitten of God," in Is.53v4. The Jews felt that the sufferings of Jesus proved that God had inflicted a curse on Jesus, and that He was suffering what His sins deserved. This was the very area of conflict and argument between Job and His "friends." The truth was that the Jews had concocted and twisted evidence to attempt to prove that Jesus was a blasphemer, and deserved to die. See Lk.23v34. Jn.16v3. Acts.3v17. 1Cor.2v8. Jesus was certainly not actually smitten of God, except for our sins. However, the Jews treated Him as such, and regarded Him as being under the judicial condemnation and judgement of God, and rejected and condemned Him.

8. The Jews thought that Jesus was being judged by God for His sins, but He was purchasing healing for us.

We read in Is.53v4., "Surely he hath borne our griefs ("choliy" 2483, sickness) and carried our sorrows ("mak'ob" 4341, pain): yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." The Hebrew for "borne" is "nasa" 5375, which means "to bear, to carry away," it carries the double thought, that Jesus took our sicknesses on Himself, and so took away our sicknesses. When Jesus died for us He personally bore in Himself all our spiritual and physical infirmities and sicknesses, as well as our sins. Is.53v5,6,8,12. Mt.20v28. John.1v29,35. Heb.9v28. 1Pet.2v24.

In Mt.8v17., this bearing and carrying away of our infirmities and sicknesses is given as the reason why Jesus healed all the sick that came to Him for healing. In Mt.8v17., the word "Himself," confirms this, Jesus took on Himself, and so took away our sicknesses and infirmities. Jesus lifted up and bore our sicknesses and infirmities away. This does not mean that Jesus became sick in the place of the sick, or that our sicknesses were transferred to Him, it means that His atonement made physical healing the natural attendant of healing of the soul. Jesus took sicknesses away by His atoning death and removed them.

"And carried," is "cabal" 5445; it means, to carry as a burden. The primary idea is undoubtedly that of lifting, bearing and carrying a burden. The verb with its derivative noun occurs in twenty-three places relating to the carrying of burdens, twice in relation to sins. "Cabal" 5445, speaks of the hard slog and grind that Jesus experienced in bearing the burden that He had taken up.

The Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament translates Is.53v4., "Verily He hath borne our diseases and our pains: He hath laden them upon Himself; but we regarded Him as one stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." Matthew translates Is.53v4., in Mt.8v17., "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying: Himself took ("elaben" 2983) our infirmities ("astheneias" 769) , and bare ("ebastasen" 941) our diseases ("nosous" 3554)."

When Is.53v12. declares that Jesus "bare the sins of many," it does not mean that when He took those sins on Himself, that He became a sinner, but that He took upon Himself the penalty for our sins through His atonement. The Hebrew construction of "nasa" 5375, shows that Jesus took the debt of sin upon Himself, and looked at it, and felt it, and carried it, as if it was His own.

The word translated as sorrows in Is.53v4., means "pain, sorrow, grief." It means that Jesus not only took our diseases, and bore them away, but he also took and carried away both our physical and mental pain and griefs. Jesus voluntarily subjected Himself to the mental and physical pain and distress, which was necessary to remove them from us. In Mt.8v17. Matthew uses the Greek word "nosos" 3554, which means properly sickness, disease, as in Mt.4v23,24. 9v35.. Matthew confirms the statement of Isa.53v4., that Jesus took upon Himself, and was afflicted with our sicknesses, sorrows, pains, and trials of life, and removed them by the sacrifice of Himself. Why, then, is the promise of healing not fulfilled, or regularly seen, in our Churches?

The major hindrances in our Churches that stop God from fulfilling His Word to heal us.

In Ps.90v10., Moses informs us that natural aging of the body cannot be avoided. Old age can be a burden to the godliest soul, however, God can heal us in our old age; God healed me of a tumour on the brain and blindness when I was 71. God can, and does, heal every kind of sickness, including simple sickness. Ps.103v3. But God often allows minor sickness, to be healed by the natural healing processes of the body. Simple sickness can often be cured by sufficient sleep, simple remedy, and correct diet. Ps.103v5. 127v2. However, severe sickness is another matter altogether, and this is what I am considering here.

1. The lack of full New Testament apostolic, prophetic and evangelistic ministry.

We read in Mt.9v35,36. that in His third tour of Galilee, Jesus was moved with compassion, when He saw the pitiable state of the multitudes. "Moved with compassion," is "esplangchnisthe," the aorist passive indicative of "splagchnizomai" 4697, to have the bowels yearn, so, to be moved with compassion, sympathy and pity. Jesus was, and is, deeply moved with compassion. Mt.14v14. 15v32. 20v34. Mk.1v41. 6v34. 8v2. Lk.7v13. 15v20. Jesus was deeply moved and grieved over the totally deprived and wretched state of the multitudes. They were "distressed," "eskulmenoi," the perfect passive participle of "skullo" 4660, to flay, to lacerate; they were flayed, rent and mangled as if by wild animals. "Scattered" is "errimmenoi," the perfect passive participle of "rhipto" 4496, to throw or cast down. The perfect tenses show this was their normal state and abiding condition, the multitudes were in a permanent state of mental and spiritual dejection. They were cast down, dejected, bewildered, harassed, wounded and prostrated by their religious teachers, who laid heavy burdens on them, and hindered them from entering into an experience of truth, and God's kingdom. Mt.23v3,13. Lk.11v45-54. N.B. 52. They were sheep without a caring shepherd, until Jesus came. **Jesus asked the apostles to pray for apostolic labourers, as the answer to this great need, and this is how we should pray, for when these**

ministries exist, the Church is revitalised, great needs are met, and great miracles occur.

2. Lack of healings in a Church is often due to lack of spiritual power or faith in the elders.

However, even if the poor spiritual condition of the elders stops them from being a channel of salvation, healing and blessing, it is still God's will to heal, as we can clearly see from the healing of the demoniac in Mk.9v14-29. Sin in the elders will also hinder and stop people from being healed. The list of sins can be long and range from immorality to prayerlessness.

James, in James.5v13-20., makes it quite clear that elders have the responsibility to pray the sick through, in the same manner that Elijah prayed for rain. This is not a two-minute prayer, but prolonged compassionate and dedicated praying. When the famous missionary William Burton was staying in our home, I asked him how they prayed for the severe sick in Congo. Willie told me, that if the sick were not healed on the first and second day, they would pray for a third day, until the person was healed, or they had a word from God. This is James 5v13-20., you pray until you have a positive answer from God.

3. Lack of healing is very often due to the fact that the Church is too spiritually lazy, or too worldly to defeat Satan.

The prayerlessness of the elders can often infect the rest of the Church, and the Church expects no miracles. When people are prayed for week after week, and nothing happens, the faith of everybody almost completely disappears; the people expect defeat, not victory. Their faith in the power of the Name of Jesus is badly shattered and they can be almost destroyed.

4. Serious unrepentant sin, or a sin like Achan's can stop people being healed. Josh.7v1-26. 8v1

Until Achan's sin was dealt with **all** the people of God were in defeat. In the Corinthian Church many were sick and many had died because they failed to examine their lives, and clean them up before they partook of the Lord's Supper. 1Cor.11v27-32. Paul told them in v30. "For this reason **many** "polus" 4183, are weak ("astheneis" 772) and sick ("arrostoi" 732), among you, and **many** ("hikanos" 2425) sleep. NKJ) Many Corinthians lost their health and lives by divine judgement through sickness.

5. Christians can be at sixes and sevens, and have a bitter spirit towards one another.

Wrongs should not be allowed to fester. Christ commanded us to put right any things that were wrong. If we want to move mountains we have to walk in forgiveness. N.B. Mt.18v15-35. Mk.11v22-26. Jn.13v34,35. 15v12-14. 1Cor.3v1-3. Very often the premature death of a Christian through sickness is not "God's will" at all, it is often due to the sin and spiritual poverty of Christ's Church. The phrase, "If it be thy will", is often quoted in direct contradiction to the clearly revealed will of God in the Scriptures. "If it be thy will", is very often used as a declaration of unbelief, and as a God limiting and faith destroying statement, instead of the positive affirmation and testimony that it is God's will to heal us if we will put our lives right with God. The phrase, "If it be thy will" has its place in prayer, but let us make sure that we use it within the confines of the Word of God. Doubtless, when a Christian dies because of the spiritual failure of the elders, or their own lack of faith, it is always "gain" for them, when they go to be with the Saviour they love. Jn.17v24. 2Cor.5v6-10. Phil.1v20-25. Thank God for His wonderful grace, power, love and wisdom, and for the immortality brought to us by our dear Lord Jesus. 2Tim.1v10. God is forever the same, and His promises are Yea and Amen in Jesus. Mal.3v6. Heb.13v8. 2Cor.1v20. **See my book, "God Our Healer," on www.theseecretofeternallife.com**

9. JESUS ENDURED THE AGONISING AND BRUISING BIRTH PAINS OF HADES.

The tragic failure of the Church to preach about and meditate upon our Lord's imprisonment in Hades for us.

Over fifty years ago, a young girl of about ten, named Margaret Birch, asked me deep theological questions about Hell, and Jesus going to Hades for us, for between one and two hours, she puts the modern Churches to shame. It is a tragedy that the events of Christ's life, between His Death on the cross and His Resurrection are seldom, and even never, considered, or meditated upon, by the modern Church. It is a seriously neglected area of vital Christian truth. Christ's descent into Hades and His imprisonment there for us, for our sins, reveals to us the astonishing evidence and undeniable proof of the willingness of divine love to sacrifice to the utmost limit for us. When Jesus was suffering the birth pangs of Hades, it was the time of heavens greatest anguish and agony, and the time of greatest admiration, praise and worship. All of Heaven saw that God considered no sacrifice was too great to make for His Creation, and that God would do everything that He could to redeem, save and bless His creation. They are amazed at His immense sacrificial love, which gave, and still gives, to the very uttermost. The Scriptures proclaim that Jesus loves us to the uttermost, and that God the Father loves imperfect Christians like ourselves, with the same great love that He loves His perfect only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus. Jn.15v9. 17v23. Eph.2v4. How wonderful!!!

Most Christians have never really thought about, or even know about, the descent of Jesus into Hades.

It is a complete mystery to me how almost all Christians have neglected this most marvellous and breathtaking truth about the life of Christ. The amazing fact that out of pure love for us, and to redeem us, Jesus took our place in Hades, God's prison. When Jesus took our place in Hades, He was cut off from His Father, because He was paying the penalty for our sins. Ps.22v1. Mt.27v46. Mk.15v34. This act of matchless love, is more significant and important than any of the great miracles our Lord performed, and no less important than His death on the cross. Our Lord's confinement in Hades was the most important part of His atoning work; this is where He paid

the penalty for our sin, when His soul was made an offering for our sins. Is.53v10.

The fact of our Lord's decent into Hades gives us a remarkable insight into the character of God.

It reveals the lengths to which God is prepared to go to save us, and bless us, and His amazing long-suffering and mercy to sinners. The revelation of the amazing longsuffering of God with the unsaved is revealed by Christ's remarkable efforts to influence and win them, by preaching to them even in Hades. This truth of the extent of divine mercy is of critical importance, or a cloud can come between ourselves and God, for we have to be able to say, with total confidence, "True and righteous are thy Judgements." Rev.16v7. 19v2. Total assurance and peace can only come, when we have complete confidence in God's justice and judgements. Satisfaction over God's justice is vital, for failure to see God's longsuffering character and perfect justice, obscures our vision of God, and hinders true fellowship and communion with Him.

The greatest bruising of the soul of Jesus took place in Hades.

This was what the conflict in Gethsemane was all about. In Acts.2v24., "the pains of death," is "odinas" 5604 "tou" 3588, "thanatou" 2288. The word translated "pains," "odinas," is used to describe the excruciating travailing pains of childbirth. The pains in the soul of Jesus were like the worst pains that a woman endures in childbirth. Women who have experienced childbirth will know how painful that can be, and almost certainly understand from the use of this word, far better than any man, the extent of Christ's suffering in Hades. (The pain that women endured during childbirth back in the times of the 1st Century A.D., would have been considerably greater than the pain that women today would suffer, due to the fact that today strong analgesics are administered to women before and during labour, in an attempt to reduce the severity of the pain, and so relieve the stress and anxiety caused by childbirth.) 1Pet.3v18-20. 4v6. Eph.4v8-10. Rom.10v5-9. "Oodinas," is also used to describe the intolerable anguish caused by the catastrophic calamities, which just precede the return of Jesus. Mt.24v8. Mk.13v8. 1Thes.5v3.

The bruising and burden that Jesus endured in Hades for us was even more excruciating, agonising, and unbearable than the pains of the cross. Atonement was not fully completed until Jesus had paid the penalty for our sin, by being imprisoned in Hades in our place, and was raised for our justification. Note well, Rom.4v25. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." See also Rom.10v7-9. 1Pet.1v3. We read in Lk.9v30,31., "And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: v31. Who appeared in glory, and spoke ('and were speaking') of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." KJV To correctly understand the Mount of Transfiguration, Gethsemane, and the Cross, we have to consider Christ's descent into the Abyss in Hades, in the lower parts of the earth. Rom.10v7. Eph.4v9,10. We need to realise that Jesus experienced the greatest extreme of pain and suffering in Hades, when He was made sin for us, and He also experienced His most exultant and greatest joy in Hades, when He personally proclaimed and brought release to His beloved Old Testament Saints, at the end of His imprisonment in Hades.

In Lk.9v31., "of his decease," is "ten exodon 1841, autou" 846, and literally means, "of His exodus."
On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah spoke with Jesus of the exodus of God's saints from Hades, that Jesus was going to accomplish through His atonement. Some expositors say that this is a softened expression for death. However, this is speaking of something that is much more than a softened expression for death. It is obviously speaking of the exodus of God's children from Hades, that Jesus was going to accomplish by His death, a far greater deliverance than the "exodus" of the children of Israel from Egypt. Who was better able to talk about this greater exodus from Hades than Moses, who led the exodus from Egypt? Peter, who witnessed the scene on the Mount of Transfiguration, uses "exodon" in 2Pet.1v15-18., to speak of his own exodus to glory at his martyrdom.

In Lk.9v31., "which he should accomplish," is "en emellen 3195 pleroun" 4137.

The 1885 English Revised Version, "which he was about to accomplish," is a better translation. However, when the verb "pleroo" is used in connection with prophecy, it means "to receive fulfilment," and since "pleroun," is the present active infinitive of "pleroo," the best translation must be, "which he was about to bring to fulfilment" at Jerusalem. This fulfilment was gruesome, the body of Jesus was cruelly beaten and brutally treated by evil men, but in Hades the soul of Jesus experienced something even more horrendous, when His soul was made an offering for sin. Is.53v10. Eccles.12v7. Rom.10v7. Mt.12v39,40. Jesus suffered in Hades for "three days" and "three nights," before the Father gave Him His spirit back. Eph.4v8,9. 1Pet.3v18-20. 4v6.

The creed states that Jesus did descend into Hell.

The word "hell" with its later meaning of the place of eternal punishment was not in the minds of the makers of the creed. They meant that Christ descended into the unseen world of the departed, into a place where those who had died awaited His coming to release them. Confusion has arisen because the Authorised Version has translated Sheol and Hades as "Hell." However in early English, "hell" meant, "unseen," or, "covered in." In an old game of English forfeits, "the hell" was the covered place where laughing girls hid themselves to pretend to escape being kissed, when playing a game of forfeits. To them it was heaven not a place of punishment. A Devon thatcher was in time passed called a "hellier" because he "covered in" a dwelling.

THE WORDS THAT ARE USED FOR THE PLACES TO WHICH THE UNSAVED DEAD GO.

There are two Greek words translated "hell" in the A.V. one is Hades, the temporary abode of the dead, corresponding to the Old Testament "Sheol," the other is "Gehenna," which is the eternal abode of the unrepentant wicked.

A. GEHENNA occurs 12 times in the New Testament.

It occurs in Mt.5v22,29,30. 10v28. 18v9. 23v15,33. Mk.9v43-47. Lk.12v5. James.3v6. "Gehenna" is from the Hebrew "Gay" i.e. gorge or valley and a Jebusite name, "Hinnom," for the valley outside of Jerusalem, whose perpetual fires were kept burning, to burn the dead bodies of animals and criminals, and the refuse of Jerusalem. Gehenna, was the place where the contaminated refuse of Jerusalem was cleansed by fire place of cleansing of the contaminated refuse of Jerusalem by fire, was used by the Jews, and the Lord Jesus, as a picture of the place of divine judgment.

Gehenna is also called "the lake of fire." Mt.8v12. 13v42,50. 22v13. 24v51. 25v30. See Lk.3v9,17. It is also the place of "fire and brimstone" Mt.25v41,46. Rev.14v9-11. 19v20. 20v10-15. 21v8. Is.66v22-24. The first casting into the lake of fire occurs at the start of the Millennium, at Christ's second coming, when the followers of Antichrist are eternally judged 1000 years before the last judgement. The wicked angels are also confined to Gehenna at this time. The people who refused to take their stand with Christians in the great tribulation are also sent to Gehenna, their love for evil being eternally fixed. Mt.25v30,41,46.

B. HADES is translated as "Hell" 10 times in the Authorised King James Version.

This occurs in Mt.11v23. 16v18. Lk.10v15. 16v23. Acts.2v27,31. Rev.1v18. 6v8. 20v13,14. It is incorrectly translated as "grave" in 1Cor.15v55. Hades is not the grave or tomb, the Greek, "Mnaimion," is never translated "hell." "Mnaimion" is quite clearly the place where bodies go to at death. "Hades is the place where unsaved souls go at death. Before Jesus died even the Old Testament saints went to "Abraham's bosom" in Hades, and received some measure of comfort from God. Lk.16v22,23,25.

The lower depths of Hades are also a prison for evil angels; we read in 1Sam3v9., that there, "the wicked are silent in darkness," and are "fearful" and "utterly consumed with terrors." Ps.73v19,20. They have "a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire, which will consume the adversaries." Heb.10v27. (NAS)

TWO WORDS ARE USED DESCRIBE THE PART OF HADES IN WHICH EVIL BEINGS ARE INCARCERATED.

This is where evil angels in particular, are kept in chains of darkness, and are reserved for the day of judgement.

1. THE ABYSS, or, THE DEEP. Greek. "Abussos," 12. The immeasurable depth, bottomless, the abyss, the pit. It occurs as "ten abusson," in Lk.8v31. Rom.10v7. Rev.20v3., as "tes abussou," in Rev.9v11. 11v7. 17v8. 20v1., and in Rev.9v1,2., as, "the pit of the abyss," "tou phreatos (5421) tes abussou." this shows that these wicked angels are in the lowest part of the Abyss. The Old Testament equivalent is "Abaddon," destruction." See Job.26v5,6. 28v22. 31v12. Ps.88v11. Prov.15v11. 27v20.

2. TARTAROS. The evil angels who left their first estate were confined to Tartaros awaiting eternal judgement.

We read in 2Pet.2v4., "For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartaros) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment." NKJV. In 2Pet.2v4., "cast them down to hell." "Hell" is "tartarosas," the aorist active participle of "tartaroo" 5020, from "tartaros." It is surprising to find Peter using this pagan term, which the Greeks used to speak of the place of eternal punishment. In Homer, "Tartarus" is the name given to a murky abyss beneath Hades in which the fallen immortals, Kronos, Japetos, and the Titans, are punished. It proves that even worldly people know that the darkness and judgement of Hades is a fact. The Scriptures say that Gehenna is the place of eternal judgement, not Tartaros, which Peter, quite correctly states is the temporary prison of the wicked. Tartaros is the deepest abyss of Hades, the dark subterranean region where wicked beings suffer incarceration until they stand before God at the Great White Throne Judgement.

"Delivered," is "paredoken" the aorist active indicative of "paradidomi" 3860, the very form that Paul uses in Rom.1v21,26,28., to describe people being given over by God to a destructive sinful life when they love evil. These people will be delivered; "into chains of darkness." is "seirais" 4577, "zophou" 2217. "Zophos," 2217, only occurs in Heb.12v18. 2Pet.2v4,17. and Jude.v6,13.

The manuscripts Aleph, A, B, and C read, "seirois," from "seiros," a pit, 2 Peter 2:4., the Amplified Bible follows this reading, "For God did not [even] spare angels that sinned, but cast them into hell, delivering them to be kept there in pits of gloom till the judgment and their doom." Both readings are true to the facts, these evil angels are confined in chains, Rev.20v1-3., and they are imprisoned in pits of darkness. In the parallel passage in Judev6., "desmois 1199, aidois 126," "in everlasting bonds," is used." The Abyss and "Tartaros" were on the other side of the great gulf where Lazarus was comforted. Lk.16v19-31. Is.14v9. Ez.32v17-32. Out of pure love for us Jesus allowed Himself to be imprisoned with the wicked angels in Tartaros, in the pit of the Abyss, in our place, to pay the penalty for our sins. Rom.10v7. He is a wonderful Saviour.

The wicked are "reserved for judgment," "eis" 1519, "krisin" 2920, "teroumenous," the (continuous) present passive participle of "tereo" 5083, to keep, to guard, the wicked are, "kept and guarded for judgment." The same word "tereo" is used to speak of God guarding our heavenly inheritance. In 1Peter.1v4., "reserved," is "teteremenen," the perfect passive participle of "tereo" 5083, to carefully take care of, to guard. No thieves can break into our heavenly inheritance. See Mt.6v19-21.

In Jn.17v11,12., Jesus asks the Father to keep the disciples in His care, "keep them" is "tereson 5083, autous, 846." "Tereson" is the aorist active imperative of "tereo" 5083. This was so, "that they may keep on being one as we are." In John.17v12., Jesus also states, how He had kept, "eteroun," the imperfect active of "tereo," "I continually kept," and guarded "ephulaxa," the aorist active of "phulasso" 5442, Jesus was the sentinel ("phulax" 5441) who watched over and guarded them. In 1Pet.1v5., we read that God guards us every second of every day. "Are guarded," is "phrouroumenous," the (continuous) present passive participle of "phroureo" 5432, to garrison, from "phrouros," a sentinel, a military term. It is also used of God's guarding peace in Phil.4v7.

Why have I gone on at such length talking about God's protective love? Because in this dark world, we need to be fully assured that our Almighty Heavenly Father guards and protects us in the same way that He guards our heavenly inheritance. We also need to fully grasp how we have been delivered from being prisoners who would have been guarded in God's prison, to Sons of God who are co-heirs with Jesus in a glorious heavenly Kingdom. **The price for our blessing was our dear Lord's horrific suffering in Tartaros, in the depths of the Abyss, in Hades. Jesus bravely endured all this terrible suffering and bruising, out of pure love for us, to open Heaven to us.**

C. PARADISE. The place in Heaven where Christians go to at death.

Paradise, Greek, "paradeisos" 3857, occurs Lk.23v43. 2Cor.12v1-4. Rev.2v7. It is the abode of the righteous in heaven; it indicates a park, pleasure ground, forest, or orchard. In the Septuagint it is used of the Garden of Eden. The Hebrew 1588 "gan," from 1598; a fenced and protected garden enclosure is used to describe Eden, in Gen.2v8,9,10,15,16. 3v1,2,3,8,10,23,24. Ezek.36v35. Joel2v3. In Neh.3v15., it is used for "the garden 1588, of the King," that is King Zedekiah, who tried to escape from Nebuchadnezzar through this garden. 2Kings.25v4. It is also used to describe the magnificent gardens of the Babylonian and Persian kings, the hanging gardens of Babylon were one of the seven wonders of the world. It is used to describe the glorious garden of God in Paradise in heaven, in which Satan walked before he fell, in Ezek.28v13. In Is.58v11., God promises us that with correct praying, loving living, and caring giving, our souls can be like a watered garden, a veritable Eden.

(See also the Hebrew, "pardec" which is translated as "orchard" in Song of Solomon.4v13. Ecc.2v5. Neh.2v8., 6508, "pardec," describes a park, a preserve, an enclosed garden, and a forest.)

The gates of Hades do not prevail against the Church; Christians go to the heavenly paradise. Mt.16v18. Lk.23v43. 2Cor.12v4. Rev.2v7.Phil.1v20-24. 2Cor.5v6-10. Heb.12v18-24.

N.B. THE HUGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN OLD TESTAMENT AND A NEW TESTAMENT SAINT AT DEATH.

1. The Old Testament saint's fear and dread of death.

We read in Eccles.12v7. "Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it." (NKJ) The Old Testament saints lost their body and spirit at death, and they went to Hades. This made them very apprehensive, and as a result, they were in lifelong bondage through fear of death, the death of Jesus brought them deliverance. Heb.2v14,15. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins, only the redeeming death and shed blood of Jesus can take away our sins, and give us access, and boldness to enter the presence of God our Father. Eph.1v7. Heb.10v4,19. Rom.5v1,2,20,21.

Job, one of the godliest and greatest of God's saints, was fearful of death, he said in Job.10v21,22., "I go to the land of darkness and the shadow of death. A land of darkness, as darkness itself, and the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." See also Gen.37v35. 42v38. 44v29,31. Jacob dreaded going down to "Sheol" Ps.16v10,11. "My flesh also will rest on hope v10. For you will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption v11. You will show me the path of life." This was a prophecy about our Lord, but resting in hope was the experience of the Old Testament saints in Hades, and it was painful and trying, they were all their lifetime in bondage through fear of death. Heb.2v14,15.

We read in Lk.16v22,25., that Lazarus was carried to Abraham's bosom, and Abraham said to the selfish rich man, now Lazarus is comforted and you are tormented. The Old Testament saints were Comforted in Hades, the wicked were tormented by their sins and confinement in the Abyss, and by fear of future judgement. Heb.10v26,27.

2. The New Testament Christian's victory over Hades, and joy in death.

We read in Mt.16v18., "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against the Church." "Hades" is not Satan's kingdom; it is God's prison for the wicked and unrepentant dead. In vivid contrast Christians joyfully look forward to being in Heaven with their Lord.

In Lk.23v43., Jesus promise the dying thief, "You shall be with me in paradise." See 2Cor.12v1-4.

In Jn.11v25,26., Jesus said, "He that believes in me shall never die." **In Jn.14v3.** Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also." **In Jn.17v24.**, Jesus said, "Father I desire that they also whom you gave me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory which you have given me."

In Phil.1v21,23. Paul said, "For me to live is Christ, and to die gain v23. having a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far, far, far better." **2Cor.5v8.** "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord."

In 2Tim1v10., "Our Saviour Jesus Christ has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

In Heb.12v22-24., "You may come to Mount Zion, and the city of the living God - and the Church of the first born in heaven."

D. JESUS SUFFERED THE PAINS OF HADES TO REDEEM HIS DEARLY LOVED SAINTS.

a. Christ's descent into Hades was the only way that the Old Testament saints could be released from Hades.

Jesus had not only to teach about Hades and judgement; He had to take our place in the Abyss to open Heaven to us. This is why Moses and Elijah came to encourage our Lord to press on, and they spoke of His "decease," Greek "exodus," 1841, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. Lk.9v31. This encouragement caused Him to "set His face LIKE A FLINT." We read in Is.50v6,7., "Therefore have I set my face like a flint." "I give my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who plucked out the hair, I hid not my face from shame and spitting." We read in Lk.9v51. that Jesus, "steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem."

b. The agonies of Gethsemane were an anticipation and result of the agonies of Hades.

The most awful words describe the conflict, emotional turmoil, and horrific internal pain that Jesus experienced in Gethsemane. We read in Mt.26v37., that Jesus "began to be sorrowful and very heavy." Great sorrow and heavy depression. We read in Mk.14v33. that Jesus was, "sore amazed," amazement to the edge of horror. In Mt.26v38. "perilupus," signifies that Jesus was surrounded by sorrows. In Lk.22v44., we read that Jesus was in an "agony," a horrendous conflict with the powers of darkness. Jesus found the pains of Hades more trying than the pains of the Cross. Heb.5v7,8. Who in the days of this flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cryings and tears unto Him that was able to save him not from, but "ek," "out of" death, and was heard in that He feared v8. Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things that He suffered." Jesus prayed with fervent prayers and, heavy sobbing, for God to deliver Him, not from death, but **out of death**, i.e. Hades.

WHAT WERE THE BIRTH PAINS OF HADES?

1. The soul-agony of being separated from the Father.

We read in Mk.15v34., "Jesus cried with a loud voice saying, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The pain of the Cross; the mocking and abuse, had not caused Jesus to cry out in anguish, but when He was made

sin for us, and forsaken by God for us, it brought forth a cry of unutterable soul agony. This was the first time Father and Son had not been in fellowship together, from eternity past. This cry of anguish reveals the great hurt and pain in the soul of Jesus, when He was made sin for us, and the Father forsook Him. Moses and Paul had wished themselves accused for their people's sake. "I could wish myself accused from Christ." Rom.9v3. If thou wilt forgive their sin - and if not, blot me I pray thee out of thy book which thou hast written." Exod.32v32. But only one person could make atonement for sin, Jesus, the sinless Lamb of God.

2. The soul-agony of being made sin for us.

Jesus alone could be God's perfect Lamb. Christ alone was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Thou shall make His soul an offering for sin. Is53v5,10. Jesus experienced the soul agonies of bearing the judgement by God, by being treated as a sinner, and by being isolated with the evil angels in Tartaros. The Light of the World endured the chains of darkness for us. 2Pet.2v4,17,18. Judev13. God forsook Jesus for our sins. The Father put Him in the depths of the Abyss, the place of imprisonment for the wicked fallen angels. Jesus was treated as a sinner, and isolated in Tartaros, with the most evil beings there has ever been, but Jesus overcame this greatest trial of all, and triumphed over this environment of total evil.

3. The soul-anguish of trusting God without His spirit and God's presence.

We see that when our Lord said, "It is finished." He was stating that He had fulfilled every type and prophecy that was written about Him in the Scriptures, and every task that the Father had asked Him to do. Nearly all Christians believe that everything concerning our salvation was completed at this point in time, and that our redemption had been purchased. They are ignorant of the fact that the Father had still to make the soul of Jesus "an offering for sin," and that our salvation was not purchased until His resurrection. Is.53v10. Rom.4v25. John.19v30. The worst suffering of Jesus had yet to come in Hades, when He was surrounded and imprisoned with evil angels. Ps.69v20-22. We read in Jn.19v28., "After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished "tetelestai" 5055, said, I thirst." Jesus asked for a drink, because, "They gave me vinegar to drink," in Ps.69v21., was the last prophecy that Jesus had to fulfil before He died, and then He could say "It is finished." "It is finished," is "tetelestai" 5055, exactly as in Jn.19v28. It is the perfect passive indicative of "teleo" 5055, to bring perfectly to the intended goal, to carry through completely, to accomplish, to finish perfectly without a fault. Jesus had accomplished and perfectly fulfilled all that the Father had asked and desired Him to do. What a stupendous achievement! He then "gave up "paredoken," His spirit," Jn.19v30. Luke records it in Luke.23v46., as, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," the last of the seven sayings of Jesus on the Cross.

When Jesus said "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit," it was the greatest act of courage there has been, no V.C. can match this for courage. Jesus was without His Spirit, the mighty instrument that had channelled the Father's healing power and love to the multitudes, it had gone and He had to trust God without it, and the communion with His Father that it gave Him.

In Heb.13v5., the Greek text contains five negatives to drive home to our minds the promise that God our Father, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will never, never, never, never, never forsake their own or fail them. Jesus experienced a forsaking that His own will never know. In this most appalling and devastating of circumstances Jesus manifested perfect faith in the Father. Going as a prisoner to Hades in our place, took a gigantic act of faith, and involved the very worst kind of spiritual trial. What this cost the Father is not difficult to imagine, the great earthquake, the darkness at midday, the rending of the three inch thick solid veil of the Temple, give a revelation of the agonizing and distressing feelings of God the Father. Mt.27v45-55.

4. The soul anguish Jesus suffered in Hades was the greatest that He suffered.

Jesus endured a pain of soul, which was longer in duration, and was more intense, than his anguish in Gethsemane, and His agonies on the cross. When the Lord Jesus spoke about the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and the sufferings of Dives (Latin, rich man) on the other side of the great gulf, in the bad part of Hades; Jesus knew our sins were going to confine Him in the abyss, in the part of Hades where the wicked were imprisoned, with a great gulf between Him and the saints. Luke.16v19-31.

Jesus was forsaken by God, so that we might never be forsaken. As He suffered, He said, "I am the atoning Lamb, I am their sacrifice, I must go through for them." He suffered it all for us. Jesus was also in soul anguish in Hades in order to rescue all the Old Testament saints who rested in hope in Hades awaiting the coming of the Saviour. Acts.2v26. Heb.2v14,15.

E. THE GREAT JOY OF JESUS AFTER HIS GLORIOUS TRIUMPH OVER DEATH AND HADES.

1. Jesus had the supreme joy of restored fellowship and communion with the Father.

Christ's agonising cry on the Cross-; "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Mt.27v46. Mk.15v34., reveals the pain that Jesus felt when He was cut off from the Father because of our sins. After His three days and nights in Hades we read in 1Pet.3v18., that Jesus was quickened, or made alive, in the spirit, "zopoiethis" 2227 "de" 1161, "pneumati" 4151. "Zopoiethis" is the aorist passive participle of the verb "zopoieo," to make alive, to revitalise, to quicken. "Pneumati," should be translated as, "in spirit;" not as in the King James Version, "by the Spirit," as the verse is referring to Christ's own spirit, which He gave back to the Father, when He said in His death-cry on the cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Lk.23v46. When Jesus was quickened in spirit, the Father's presence filled and surrounded Him. Ps.16v11. The shared glory and fellowship that they had enjoyed from before the foundation of the world was renewed. Heaven rejoiced as the Father proclaimed with

great joy, "My Son has made atonement for sin, Heaven is now opened to all believers.

2. Jesus had the great joy of knowing that atonement had been made.

The Father said, "you have conquered, the sacrifice is accepted, you are indeed, My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." You have established the Law and made forgiveness possible. Here our dear Lord Jesus truly cried, "tetelestai," 5055, which means, "It is finished, accomplished and perfectly brought to the goal. In Jn.19v30., when Jesus cried out, "It is finished," He was speaking about His life, His atonement was not finished until He had died, and was risen from the dead. Jesus was stating the wonderful fact that He had perfectly fulfilled every prophecy that was written in God's word about Him, and perfectly fulfilled everything that the Father had asked Him to do, and perfectly fulfilled every directive vision that the Father had given Him. Jesus was God's truly obedient Son in everything. Phil.2v8. This took astonishing courage, determination, staying power, and absolute and total love for us. Wonderful Jesus. David had said in Ps.139., "If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there."

3. Jesus had the great joy of taking the multitudes of His beloved captive saints from Hades into Heaven.

When God gave Jesus His spirit back, He proclaimed His victory in Hades. Jesus had the great joy of releasing the saints, and telling them that they were justified in Him. The King of Glory, victorious in the greatest battle of all, and possessing all power and authority, comes to set free all the captive Old Testaments saints in Hades. Ps.24v7-10. Heb.2v14,15. The blood of bulls and goats could never atone for sin; Christ came to proclaim His victory and atonement. The rejoicing and praise from the saints was greater than words can tell. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Daniel, all God's great Old Testament saints. The Saviour had great joy in their release. The saints greatly rejoice in their Saviour, knowing that their eternal salvation was both prepared and won by Jesus. Worthy is the Lamb they cry with all their redeemed being. Christ had been the comfort of the Old Testament saints in Hades, now He comes to release them. Their long wait was over; the Lord had come for His own. Heb10v4. Ps.139v8. Lk.16v25.

N.B. Jesus leaves the great multitude ascending to Heaven out of Hades, to reveal Himself to, Mary Magdalene and the women. He really cares. He was more interested in ministering to them, than He was of receiving the adulation and praise that was waiting for Him in Heaven.

3. Jesus had the great joy of taking the Gentiles, who had repented at His preaching in Hades, into Heaven.

This was one of the great purposes of our Lord's redeeming work; Jesus corrected the failures in the witness of the Old Testament saints, and brought all those who responded to His preaching in Hades, into Heaven. Until Augustine's disastrous attack on Church theology in about 400 A.D., almost everybody believed that Jesus took the Gentiles who responded to His preaching in Hades, to Heaven with the redeemed Old Testament saints.

N.B. Cornelius, the God-fearing true worshipper of God, was acceptable to God before he became a Christian.

We read in Acts.10v1-8., v1 Now [living] at Caesarea there was a man whose name was Cornelius, a centurion (captain) of what was known as the Italian Regiment, **v2** A devout man who venerated God and treated Him with reverential obedience, as did all his household; and he gave much alms to the people and prayed continually to God. **v3** About the ninth hour (about 3:00 p.m.) of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God entering and saying to him, Cornelius! **v4** And he, gazing intently at him, became frightened and said, What is it, Lord? And the angel said to him, Your prayers and your [generous] gifts to the poor have come up [as a sacrifice] to God and have been remembered by Him. **v5** And now send men to Joppa and have them call for and invite here a certain Simon whose surname is Peter; **v6** He is lodging with Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside. **v7** When the angel who spoke to him had left, Cornelius called two of his servants and a God-fearing soldier from among his own personal attendants. **v8** And having rehearsed everything to them, he sent them to Joppa. Amplified version.

"Devout," is "eusebes" 2152, which is derived from "eu" 2095, "well," and "sebomai" 4576, "to worship, to reverence." Cornelius was a good worshipper of God, like Lydia, Acts.16v14., and the devout Greeks, Acts.13v43. 17v4., and Justus, Acts.18v17. This is in sharp contrast to the false and polluted worship of Jewish hypocrites, Mt.15v9. Mk.7v7., and the idol worshippers. Acts.17v23. 18v13., 19v27. It is an shocking fact that, "the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women," as well as, "the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their district." Acts.13v50.

Note well Acts.17v17., where Paul, with his spirit stirred by the idolatry at Athens; "reasoned ("dielegeto," the imperfect of "dialegomai" 1256, to say thoroughly, to reason and discuss. It is the same verb used in Acts.17v2.) in the synagogue with the Jews, **and with the devout persons**, and in the market place daily with them that met with him." Even these devout people needed to be persuaded, they did not have the same prepared hearts as Cornelius and his friends. We need to take note of this important lesson that even good people will vary greatly in their response to the truths of the Scripture that we tell them, tradition binds very tenaciously! Paul's dialogue and interchange of ideas was similar to the Socratic method of question and answer. However, Paul's dialogue was not based on human wisdom, its foundation was the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture, and he did his utmost to proclaim and reveal Jesus in the Scriptures, and confirm the Gospel he preached with mighty signs and wonders. Rom.15v17-22. Sadly; too few imitate the Bereans, and really want to search and truly know the Scriptures, or really want to truly know and love Jesus. Acts.17v10-13.

Cornelius was a just man and "one that feared God," "phoboumenos" 5399) "ton" 3588, "Theon" 2316. Acts.10v22,35. This is the usual expression to describe the Gentile seekers after God. Acts.13v16,16,26,43. 17v4,17. However, it is clear that Cornelius and his family were still looked upon as outsiders by the Jews. They had seats in the synagogue, but they were not Jews. They were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise." Eph.2v12. Acts.10v28,34. 11v1,8. 15v7. However, God looked upon their hearts and righteous lives and accepted them, just as He had accepted Abraham.

God gave Peter a vision, accompanied by a three times repeated stern command not to call unclean what He had cleansed. Peter got the message and sums it up in **Acts 10v34,35.**, "Then Peter opened his mouth and said: In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. **v35** But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him." (NKJ). God's vivid pictorial words and warnings to Peter concerning the Gentile Cornelius, prove and confirm that God accepts good-living and God-fearing Gentiles, **before** they know Jesus as their Saviour. On this very same basis God had accepted Abraham, and the other Old Testament saints, because they believed in, and loved God, and lived godly lives. As Acts.10v35. states; it has always been true, that, "Whoever fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him, no matter what race he belongs to."

Why was Cornelius acceptable to God, when God did not accept thousands of his countrymen? The answer is that Cornelius did not receive the grace of God in vain; he fasted, prayed, gave alms, and lived a righteous, godly and unselfish life, which they certainly did not do. These good works were a proof that Cornelius feared and loved God, and were a sure proof of the true integrity and goodness of his heart. God had been working in the heart and life of Cornelius long before Peter told him about salvation in Jesus. Like Enoch, Cornelius had been walking with God for many years before Peter told him the Gospel. The heart of Cornelius was fully open to God, and he loved the light and truth about God that he possessed, and when he heard about Jesus, he instantly accepted Jesus as his Saviour. The Holy Spirit confirmed that Cornelius and his friends had received Jesus as their Saviour in their hearts; by giving them a Pentecostal baptism in the Spirit, exactly like that which He gave to the apostles, and the other disciples, on the day of Pentecost.

We read in Acts.10v35., "Whoever fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him, no matter what race he belongs to." "Fears," is "phobeo" 5399; to fear, to be afraid, to be in awe of, to reverence, to venerate: Luke.12v5. Barnes states on Acts.10v35., "'He that feareth him.'" This is put for piety toward God in general. It means that he who honours God and keeps His Law; he who is a true worshipper of God, according to the light and privileges which he has, is approved by him, as giving evidence that he is his friend. Acceptance with God does not depend on the fact of being descended from Abraham, but on the state of the heart." **End of quote.** We read in Acts.9v31., that walking in a reverential fear of God is a Christian necessity too.

We read in Acts.10v22., that Cornelius was, "a just ("dikaios" 1342, observing divine laws, possessing integrity, virtue, purity of life, a righteous) man, one who fears God." The same was said of Zachariah and Elizabeth, and Simeon. Lk.1v6. 2v25.

Through the vision on the housetop of the house of Simon the tanner, God had completely convinced, and thoroughly warned Peter, that His favours were not just confined to the Jewish people, but that God-fearing, good-living Gentiles, were acceptable to Him, **and that He had already cleansed their hearts**, just as He had all the Old Testament believers who loved Him and trusted in Him, and lived godly lives. Peter proclaims this in Acts.10:35., "Whoever fears him and does what is right is acceptable to Him, no matter what race he belongs to." ("Acceptable to Him," is "dektos 1184, auto" 846: "Dektos," means accepted, acceptable; an adjective from "dechomai" 1209, to receive, to accept.)

"God is no respecter of persons," is "ouk estin prosopoleptes ho Theos." "Prosopoleptes" 4381, is derived from "prosopon" 4383, the face, countenance; by implication, presence, person; and "lambano" 2983, to take, to get hold of. In other words, God is not someone who shows partiality, and perverts justice because of a person's face, position, or nationality. God is totally just and quite impartial in His judgements, and assessment of people. **God taught Peter that He accepted good living Gentiles even before they became Christians.** This was totally against the teaching of the Jews, however, through this three times repeated vision; God had totally transformed Peter's narrow-minded and prejudiced theology.

In Romans.2v6-15., Paul confirms that God accepts good-living and God-fearing Gentiles.

Paul informs us in Rom.2v6-15., "v6 God "will give to each person according to what he has done".**v7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honour and immortality, he will give eternal life. v8** But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. **v9** There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; **v10 but glory, honour and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. v11 For God does not show favouritism. v12** All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. **v13** For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. **v14 Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, v15** since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. (NIV)

Paul states that Gentiles who did not even have the Law, never mind the Gospel, who persist in doing good, and seek for glory honour and immortality, will be rewarded with eternal life, "for God does not show favouritism." v11. We know that Abraham was justified by believing that God would give him a son. However, it was the future death of Jesus that purchased his salvation, and brought about this acceptance by God. No matter what the grounds of faith were under the Old Covenant, that brought about the acceptance of God; it was, and is, the acceptance of Jesus, His death, and His atoning blood, that procures salvation for everyone, whether they are a Jew, or a Gentile. When Jesus went to Hades and preached His atoning death to the Jews and Gentiles there, **it was THEN in Hades**, when they accepted Christ's atoning death, that they were forgiven.

F. JESUS PREACHED LIKE A HERALD TO THE IGNORANT AND WICKED DEAD IN HADES.

N.B. The words used for Jesus preaching to the dead are the normal words for preaching the Gospel. "Kerusso." 2784. Robertson says "kerusso" is, "the normal word for Christ's preaching." So to say "Kerusso" excludes good news is ridiculous. See Mt.3v1. Jn.4v17,23. 9v35. 10v7,27. 11v1. 24v14. 26v13. Mk.1v4,7,14,38,39. 3v14. 6v12. 14v9. 16v15,20. Lk.3v3. 4v18,19. 8v1. 9v2. 24v47. Paul was appointed by God to be a divine herald, a "kerux." to preach, "kerusso," the Gospel. 1Tim.2v7. 2Tim.1v11. Noah. 2Pet.2v5. See, Acts.8v5. 9v20. 10v37,42. 15v21. 19v13. 20v25. 28v31. Etc.

Jesus first preaching in Hades was to the evil spirits that were imprisoned there.

These were the disobedient angels who left their first estate. Gen.6v4. 2Pet.2v4. Jude.v6. In 1Pet.3v19., "He went and preached," is "poreutheis ekeruxen." "Poreutheis," is the aorist passive participle of "poreuomai," 4198, "Ekeruxen," is the aorist active indicative of "kerusso" 2784, which means, to proclaim after the manner of a herald, and as Thayer says, "always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed." The verb "kerusso" is frequently used to describe the preaching of Jesus in the Gospels. Here in 1Pet.3v19., "kerusso is used to show how in Hades, Jesus heralded His victory over the world, the flesh, the Devil, Death and Hades, to the spirits in Hades. This Scripture describes, beyond any doubt, the supreme and unprecedented personal triumph and mighty preaching of Jesus in the place of the dead. It cannot be at any other time than when He was "quickened in spirit," while He was in Hades. 1Pet.3v18.

Jesus preached, "to the spirits in prison" "tois en phulake pneumasin." "Phulake" 5438, "is a guard, watch, sentinels, it is also used of a place where captives are kept, a prison. "Spirits," "pneumasin" 4151, is used of God, the Holy Spirit, good angels, and good men. Heb.12v23. However, here in 1Pet.3v19., "pneumasin" refers to the fallen angels referred to in Gen.6v4. 2Pet.2v4. Jude.v6. The language is clear, Jesus did preach to the spirits in prison, when God the Father gave Him His spirit back.

What was the attitude of Christ to the evil spirits in prison?

Jesus did not go to gloat; He could never be like that. We read in Col.1v20., "He had made peace with the blood of the cross, by Him to reconcile all things; whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." But these evil angels were beyond repentance, for Peter and Jude tell us that they are still in chains of darkness. 2Pet.2v4. Jude.v13. Jesus preached like a herald of His atonement for sin, and gave the full revelation of God's amazing love, but it failed with these evil beings.

G. JESUS ALSO PREACHED GOOD NEWS TO THE REST OF THE DEAD.

Euangelizo," 2097. Is used in 1Pet.4v6., it means, to tell, or announce, good news. ("evangelise") especially the gospel.

It only occurs in Matthew's Gospel in Mt. 11v5. We read in Mt.11v4,5. **v4** Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: **v5**. "The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." (NKJ) Jesus made it quite clear that healing is a natural and expected companion of true preaching of the Gospel, it is an essential part of God's good news." Euangelizo" does not occur in Mark's Gospel. However, Luke uses it often in His Gospel and Acts. Lk.1v19. 2v10. 3v18. 4v18,43. 7v22. 8v1. 9v6. 16v16. 20v1. In Acts "Euangelizo". Acts.5v42. 8v4,12,25,35,40. 10v36. 11v20. 13v32. 14v7,15,21. 15v35. 16v10. 17v18. Paul also uses it a lot in his writings. Rom.1v15. 10v15. 15v20. 1Cor.1v17. 9v16,18. 1Cor.15v1,2. 2Cor.10v16. 2Cor.11v7. Gal.1v8,9,11,16,23. 4v13. Eph.2v17. 3v8. 1Thes.3v6. Heb.4v2,6. See also. 1Pet.1v12,25. 4v6. In Rev.10v7., "declared," is "euangelizo." 14v6.

We read in 1Pet.4v5,6., "They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. v6. For to this end was the gospel preached **even to the dead**, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." The phrase, "was the gospel preached," is the translation of the Greek word, "euangelisthe" the aorist passive indicative of "euangelizo" 2097, which means, to announce glad tidings like a herald, to bring good news, and particularly the good news of the gospel, we get our word evangelise from it. This was the greatest and most awe-inspiring evangelistic crusade that has ever taken place. Jesus evangelised Hades, and told the wonderful news, that through His atonement all the dead saints could now leave the darkness of Hades, and go into the bliss, fullness and light of Heaven. This was, indeed, the most supreme good news. It was the glad tidings that they had all been waiting and longing to hear for many centuries, and how they welcomed and praised the Saviour who had come to release them from the darkness of Hades, and take them to His kingdom. What amazing immeasurable sacrificial love! Hallelujah! Blessed be His wonderful Name.

It cannot be clearer; Jesus preached, "to them that are dead," "nekrois" 3498. This means the physically dead, for this cannot refer to spiritual death, as in Col.2v13. and Eph.2v1.. For Peter cannot speak of physical death in 1Peter.4v5., and then speak of spiritual death in the next sentence. Peter states that all who do not hear the gospel in this life, will hear it in the next, before the final judgment. With this I heartily and completely agree. Paul states in Rom.2v24., that the heathen have rejected God, and blasphemed His Name, because of the bad lives of believers. Rom.2v24. God, the just and righteous judge of all the earth, will correct the wrong ideas that people have of Him, because of bad living believers. Gen.18v25. Mt.11v20-24. Lk.10v13,14.

H. IS THERE A CHANCE OF SALVATION AFTER DEATH?

In 2Pet.3v9., Peter declares, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." God is not slack, powerless, or unwilling to bring His promises to us to fruition. "Not willing," is, "me boulomenos," the present middle participle of "boulomai," 1014, "to will deliberately, to wish, to desire," it usually expresses the deliberate exercise of the will more strongly than "thelo." So God strongly and definitely wills and desires that no one should perish, but people's wills frustrate His divine will and desire, just as Jesus said when He wept over Jerusalem, in Mt.23v37., "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!" See Lk.13v34.. In 2Pet.3v9., "Perish, is "apolesthai," the aorist infinitive of "apollumi," and sadly, as 2Pet.3v7., states, some will perish, but that is not God's desire. It is God's will and desire for "all" ("pantas," all, everyone) to come to repentance. "Come," is "choresai," the aorist active infinitive of "choreo," to make room, to have room for, that is, have opportunity for repentance and salvation. Jn.1v7. 12v32. Rom.4v16. Eph.2v4-9. 1Tim.2v4-6. 1Jn.2v2. Rev.5v9.

The evil enemies of God, like Jezebel, Antichrist, and Satan and his angels, will not enter the kingdom of God, for they have refused to repent of their wickedness. However, Augustine taught that those who have never heard the Gospel will go to Hell forever. He also proclaimed the monstrous doctrine that babies who die unbaptised, go to Hell forever, like the very worst sinner.

The Dean of Wells, E. H. Plumptre D.D., writes on pages 152 and 153 of his book, "The Spirit's in Prison:-

"And so the dark shadow of Augustine fell on the theology of the Western Church, and condemned its thoughts of the love of God to many centuries of disastrous twilight. It started from the assumption that the whole human race was, through the sin of Adam, 'one mass of perdition.' From this Divine grace elected some to salvation. But none are elected outside the range of those who believe and are baptised. The whole heathen world, therefore, was left to eternal torments: its virtues were but 'glittering vices {de Civ. Dei, 19.25}}. Even for unbaptised infants dying before they had done good or evil there was but the 'levissima damnatio' of the alienation from the life of God, which was the common lot of all the lost, and compared with the eternity of which, any torments enduring for ages and then ceasing, would be a light thing to bear {Enchirid. C. 29}. And baptism, though indispensable, was yet not sufficient. To hold the true faith, to live a holy life, these he rightly saw were conditions of eternal blessedness, and these were possible only for those who came under the decree of God's electing grace. The narrowness of mediaeval scholasticism, the hardness of Calvinistic Protestantism are each of them traceable to the influence of the great bishop of Hippo. And to that influence also, it must be added, is traceable the whole scholastic and Tridentine doctrine of purgatory with all its practical corruptions. The instincts of mankind led them to turn to the one mitigating feature in the terrible theology that shut out ninety-nine hundredths of mankind from all hope of escaping hell." **End of quote from Dean Plumptre.**

1. Peter states that Jesus has ALREADY preached to the dead in Hades. 1Pet.3v18-20. 4v6.

All the Old Testament saints were saved after they died, when Jesus preached the good news of His atonement to them in Hades. If they had been saved before Jesus preached to them, and went to rescue them, they would not have been in Hades. It is difficult to understand why Christians refuse to accept that there will be a chance of salvation after death, when Peter, in 1Pet.3v18-20. and 4v6., declares that Jesus has ALREADY preached the Gospel to the dead. Jesus did this preaching after His soul was made an offering for sin in Hades, and He had won salvation for us. Is.53v10. Mt.12v40. Acts.2v24,31. Rom.10v7. Eph.4v8-10. In 1Pet.4v6., Peter uses "euangelizo" to state that Jesus preached the good news of the Gospel to the dead, that is human beings who had died. We read in 1Pet.4v5,6., "They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. v6 For this reason the Gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." "Euangelizo" is always used of the preaching of the good news concerning Jesus. Mt.11v5. Lk.3v18. 4v18,43. Acts.8v4,12,25,35,40. 17v18. Rom.10v15. Gal.1v8,9. 1Pet.1v12,25. Rev.10v7. 14v6. **Jesus had the great joy of taking the Gentiles into Heaven who had repented at His preaching in Hades.**

Peter also informs us in 1Pet.3v19., that Jesus preached to the wicked angels imprisoned in the Abyss by God, who had taken upon them human flesh in the time of Noah. Gen.6v1-7. Jude.v6. Here "preached," is "kerusso," to publish, to proclaim, to preach the Gospel as a herald, a "kerux." For "kerusso," see Mt.3v1. 4v17,23. 10v7. 11v1. 24v14. Acts.8v5. 9v20. 28v31. 1Cor.1v23. 2Cor.4v5. 2Tim.4v2. etc. Jesus proclaimed like a herald His great victory to the wickedest beings that have ever lived, the evil angels who were expelled from Heaven with Satan for choosing evil while living with God in Heaven. We know from 2Pet.2v4,17. and Jude.v6,12., that they are so hardened by evil, that they are beyond repentance and redemption, and are "reserved in everlasting

chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day." Some say these sons of God who were disobedient in Noah's time, were the sons of Seth, however, the whole tone of Gen.6v1-7., is of angelic beings who came to live as men. "Sons of God," not sons of men, are married to "daughters of men," the result was "giants," and great wickedness. Job.38v4,7. Jude.v6. It is foolish to say that men only began to realise that women were good looking well over 1,000 years after the creation. Peter says that these beings that were in prison were "spirits," and only an angel could be imprisoned as a spirit in Hades, for when a man dies who is unsaved, his spirit goes back to God who gave it. Eccles.12v7. It is the souls of men that are in Hades, not spirits. Christians retain their spirit, and go into God's presence at death. Mt.16v18. Jn.11v24-26. Phil.1v21-23.

We know that angels are sexless, but God appears to have allowed these evil angels to take upon themselves human bodies, they certainly have the power to do this, for we see that the magicians of Egypt were able to change matter and create physical bodies by the power of evil spirits. Exod.7v11,12,22. 8v6,7,18,19. One thing cannot be disputed, these beings lived, and then died like men, and then after death Christ personally preached to them. Ps.82v6,7. We know that they are so hardened in evil that they did not respond to Christ's message, and that they are beyond repentance, and so they are still imprisoned in Hades in chains of darkness. 2Pet.2v4,17. Jude.v6,13. In Col.1v20., Paul tells us that Christ's blood bought the opportunity for salvation for "all on earth and all in Heaven alike," however, whether people repent and accept His sacrifice is another matter, both angels and men can refuse to repent and accept the Divine mercy.

2. The early Church fathers also proclaim that Jesus preached to the dead.

In 1Pet.3v19. and 4v6., Peter gives sufficient proof for an honest person, that the early Church believed and preached that Jesus proclaimed His glorious atonement and victory to the dead in Hades. There are, however, other reliable witnesses that testify that this was the widespread belief of the Church until around 400 A.D., when Augustine changed the doctrine of the Church on this and other important subjects. Luther, being an Augustinian monk, unfortunately brought Augustine's new theology into the Reformation. The great spiritual leaders of the early centuries of Church history, many of whom were martyrs for Christ's sake, proclaim with one voice that Jesus preached to the dead. We will now give a synopsis of some of the evidence given by the Dean of Wells, E. H. Plumptre D.D., in the 1886 edition of his, "The Spirits In Prison," from page 83 onward. Plumptre states that the evidence of our Lord's descent into Hades and His preaching to the dead includes all the leading familiar names, which are consulted when the early faith and practice of the Church are examined. The weight and authenticity that is attributed these witnesses on vital truths such as the Incarnation, baptism, the Eucharist, and the authenticity of the Gospels, must also be granted to the evidence they give on the doctrine of our Lord's preaching to the dead.

1. Irenaeus. Bishop of Lyons, explicitly states how Jesus, "descended into the regions beneath the earth, preaching His advent there also, and the remission of sins for those who believe in Him," and he also states that remission of sins was received by, "all who had hopes towards Him, who proclaimed His advent and submitted to His dispensations." Irenaeus 4.27,2.

2. Justin. accused the Jews of mutilating a prophecy of Jeremiah's, which had read, "The Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, remembered those His dead who slept in the dust of the grave, and descended to them to proclaim to them His salvation."

3. Clement of Alexander. About 50 years after John's death says that the Scripture teaches that Jesus preached the Gospel to the dead. Clement preached that the souls of the Heathen as well as Jews benefited from the revelation of Christ to them in Hades. The Jews being in bonds to the burden of the Law, and the Heathen being "those in darkness," received the proclamation of the truth of the Gospel from Jesus. This proclamation involved the offer of salvation, and the possibility of repentance and forgiveness of all the sins that a man had committed in ignorance, when not clearly knowing God.

4. Origen, answers the taunting comment of the infidel Celsus. Origen was Clement's pupil, who, as we have already stated, believed that Jesus preached to the dead. A famous infidel named Celsus was speaking with Origen and ridiculed this widespread belief of the Church, he said, "I suppose Christ, when He failed to persuade the living, went down to Hades to persuade those who live there?" Origen answered him, "Whether it please Celsus or no, we of the Church assert that the soul of our Lord, stripped of its body, did there hold converse with other souls, that were in like manner stripped, that He might there convert those who were capable of instruction, or were otherwise in ways known to Him fit for it." Origen c. Celsus, 2.43.

5. Tertullian also stated that the belief that Jesus descended into Hades and preached there, had been held in the Church since the days of the apostles, his testimony is of great value since Tertullian censured anything that was new.

6. Cyril of Jerusalem. He states, in beautiful picturesque language, that: "The holy prophets ran unto Him {Jesus}, and Moses the lawgiver, and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; David also and Samuel, and Isaiah and John the Baptist, who bore witness when he asked, Art thou He that should come, or look we for another? All the just were ransomed whom death had devoured, for it behoved the King who had been heralded to become the redeemer of His noble heralds. Then each of the just said, O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? For the Conqueror hath redeemed us." Cyril Hieros., Catech. 14. 9,10. Cyril also sees Christ conversing with "strugglers after right who had never seen His face on earth," as well as the disobedient.

7. Athanasius. He said that more than the Patriarchs and prophets were delivered from Hades, he extended the circle of those who Jesus delivered from Hades through His preaching, "and thinks of the souls of Adam as held fast under sentence of death, and crying to his Lord ever more, and of those who had pleased God, and had been justified by the law of nature, as mourning and crying with Him till the mercy of God revealed to them the mystery of redemption." More evidence could be given, but these quotes will suffice to show that the early Church believed that Jesus preached to the dead.

3. Seven further Scriptural proofs that salvation and forgiveness is possible after death.

1. In Rev.20v15., "And whosoever," "kai ei tis," should be translated, "And if anyone."

We read in Rev.20v15., "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." As someone has said, if there was a crowd at a railway barrier, and it was said that those who had no ticket would not be allowed to pass, it would be taken for granted that some would have tickets. So Rev.20v15., strongly infers that some who are raised at the second resurrection are saved. If Rev.20v15., meant that none of those who were raised at this resurrection were saved, it would have to read, "since none of them were found written in the book of life, they were all cast into the lake of fire." The people in Rom.2v6-16., are judged at this resurrection, the Gentiles who have tried to live righteously even without having the Law or the Gospel, and so Rom.2v 7., promises them eternal life.

2. In 2Cor.6v2., Paul is addressing the Corinthians, who have had their opportunity of salvation.

These people were already saved, they had received the grace of God, and in 2Cor.6v1., Paul implored them not to receive the grace of God in vain. Paul does not use the definite article in 2Cor.6v2., when he writes, "in a time acceptable," "kairo dektos;" and "in a day of salvation," "en emera soterias." There is also no definite article in, "Behold, now a time acceptable," "idou nun kairos euprosdektos," and "Behold, now a day of salvation," "idou nun emera soterias." Paul quotes 2Cor.6v2., from Is.49v8., which reads, "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee." As there is no definite article either in the original Scripture in Is.49v8., or in Paul's Greek quotation, we should accept the translations of Young and Rotheram, and others, who read, "now a day of salvation.

For those who have the opportunity of salvation, like the Corinthians, it is indeed the day of salvation for them. However, one cannot make this Scripture mean that there is no opportunity of salvation after death for those who have never had an opportunity of salvation. The whole age of grace is a day of salvation, but it is not the only time of salvation, and there is no Scriptural evidence to limit the day of salvation to this life, for those who have had no opportunity of salvation. Jesus Himself said that there is forgiveness in the world and age to come for all sin, except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Mt.12v31,32.

3. In Heb.9v27.. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement."

Paul is not teaching that there will be no opportunity or day of salvation after death, and no second probation for those who have had no real opportunity of hearing and perceiving the fullness of the Gospel. All that Heb.9v27. teaches, is that there will be judgement after death, but this is just as true for Christians, as it is for unbelievers. 1Cor.3v10-15. 2Cor.5v8-11. The whole context of this verse teaches that Jesus died to save mankind; it is certainly not teaching that death closes the door of salvation. There is judgement after death, but the final judgement takes place at the end of the Millennium, and 1Pet.3v18-20. and 4v6., state that Jesus has already preached the Gospel to the dead after death.

4. In 1Tim.2v5,6.,

Paul tells us that the Christ who died for all, will give the testimony to all in due times. The Revised Version reads, "the testimony to be borne in its own times." Rotheram reads, "The testimony in its own fit times." They correctly render "kairois," in the plural as "times." "Kairois," is used in the Scriptures in the sense of divinely ordained epochs, times, and appointments. The vast majority of people who have lived on the earth, have known little or nothing about either the Law or the Gospel, and those who have, have often been put off by the disgraceful lives of Israelites and Christians, who did not obey the Word of God that they preached. Rom.2v17-24.

The God who so loved the world will make sure that everyone will hear the good news about His Son's atoning death. How could the Christ who died on Calvary to redeem mankind, conceal from people the fact that He died to save them, or tell them that His death no longer availed for them? Jesus will never cast out those who come to Him in repentance, sincerity and truth. Jn.6v37. God's mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. Ps.103v8,17. Paul declares that God will give a full opportunity of salvation to all, for He has no pleasure in the death of anyone. It is inconceivable and unscriptural to say that a God of love will put people into an eternal Hell without a chance of salvation, because, due to no fault of their own, they were not fortunate enough to hear the Gospel. Ez.18v32. 1Tim. 2v4.

5. The Judge of the whole earth will do right. Gen.18v25. Rev.6v10. 15v3. 19v2.

No one will be able to point an accusing finger at God, and every mouth will be stopped. Rom.3v19.

The ways of God are far higher and much better than our ways, not far worse; God abundantly pardons the repentant sinner. Is.55v7-9. It is very wicked to attribute to God what we would condemn in a man as injustice, cruelty, hardness of heart, and lack of love. Some people take great interest in human welfare, they have laboured to abolish slavery, others care for the sick and old; it cannot be true that the creature pursues such

things with greater zeal than God pursues the more important eternal salvation of the souls of men. Therefore, how can a person's salvation depend on whether they are lucky enough to hear the Gospel? Job.4v17-19. 33v12. The only thing that makes Hell tolerable at all, is the fact that it is unavoidable, because the wicked love evil and resist all of God's attempts to save them. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, He desires all to come to repentance and be saved. Ezek.18v23,30-32. 2Pet.3v9. "His mercy endures for ever." Ps.136v10-26. Jer.33v11..

6. In Mt.12v31,32., Jesus said all sin can be forgiven in the next age but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit..

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the unrepentant hardness of heart that rejects Jesus and ascribes the mighty works of the Holy Spirit to Satan. The Judge of the whole earth will do right concerning those who have not heard the Gospel.

7. In Mt.11v20-24. Jesus said there was hope for those who in limited light had come under Divine judgement.

Jesus said that the people of the cities of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom, which had come under Divine judgement, would have repented if they had seen the mighty miracles that were seen by the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, who had refused to repent, and had rejected Jesus, in spite of His mighty works, and so were doomed to Hell. Jesus was saying, therefore, that on judgement day God will take into account the limited light that the people of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom had received in their lifetime, and also how they would have responded to His ministry; and because of this it will be more tolerable for the people of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom on judgement day, than for the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. Mt.10v15. Mk.6v11. Lk.10v12-15. This must mean that some of them will be saved, as there are no degrees of tolerability in Hell.

The principle of judgement according to light is a fact of Scripture. Lk.12v47,48. As Paul states in Acts.17v30., "Therefore having winked at and overlooked {"hupereido"} the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent." God has overlooked and taken no notice of the times of ignorance until the full light of the Gospel was revealed. Jesus Himself gave this full light when He preached the Gospel to the dead in Hades, this must have included the people of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom. 1Pet.3v18-20. 4v6.

CONCLUSION. "BEHOLD THE MAN." "BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD.

We read in Zech.6v12., "Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH!" In Jn.19v6., Pilate desiring to excite sympathy in the crowd for Jesus, presented the brutalised and mutilated body of Jesus to them, and said "Behold the man," but the envious Jewish religious leaders were ferociously determined that Jesus should die, and demanded that Jesus should be crucified. John the Baptist, directed by the Holy Spirit, urged the first disciples of Jesus to, "Behold the Lamb of God! Jn.1v29,36. Let us also take heed to His words. The Church has largely failed to obey the command of Heb.3v1. and 12v3., to "Consider Jesus," and dwell on the glory and wonder of His victory over His humanity, and against implacable spiritual and human foes, and against great odds. Let us obey the command, and truly "consider Jesus," and behold the dreadful bruising of the Lamb of God.

THE GLORY AND VICTORY OF OUR LORD'S HUMANITY.

The old Docetic Gnostic heresy, that Christ's body was not human but a phantom composed of celestial substance, is very present in the Church today in a new garb. Augustine's doctrine of "Original Sin" is responsible for this! When a person accepts and believes the lie that they "have been born in sin," this automatically darkens the mind and creates the mindset that if they have been born in sin, then the Lord Jesus can't have had a "like humanity" because He was without sin. The fact is, that He was sinless is simply because He did not yield to the temptations of sin, no matter where they came from, and for no other reason. On the other hand, the rest of mankind have ALL yielded to the temptation of sin, so that Paul could write to the Romans, 3v23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God".

Some theologians state that Jesus was never really tempted like we are, in spite of the fact that Heb.4v15., definitely states that Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are." They feel and teach that all Jesus had to do to solve His problems and do His miracles, was turn on His divine power and deity. This is a travesty of the truth, and completely hides the real Jesus from us. Jesus entered fully into the reality and limitations our humanity. This is beyond any contradiction, undeniably confirmed by **Heb.4v15.**, "For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, **but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.**" When people say that Jesus was made differently to us, and His flesh and blood was different from ours, they contradict the Scriptures, which state that Jesus was made in all points like us. **Heb.2v17,18.** "Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. v18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted." (NKJ)

a. The apostle John tells us in 1John.4v2,3., that if we deny Christ's humanity we "are not of God."

We are told in 1Jn.4v2,3., that those who confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh are of God, but those who deny the humanity of Christ, and do not confess that Christ is come in the flesh are not of God, and, indeed, goes on to add that "this is the spirit of antichrist." This is much more than someone saying, "I believe that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." It is a confession that Jesus is the Christ who fulfils the Old Testament prophecies. That is, Christ is Emmanuel, born of a virgin, He is God with us. Is.7v14. Jesus is "The Mighty God," who has existed from all eternity, and whose reign will be forever. Is.9v6,7. 10v21. Micah.5v2., He is God the Word

manifested in human flesh. Jn.1v14. He is the Yahweh, the Great I Am, who John Baptist prepared the way for. Is.40v3-5. Christ is the Lord of our righteousness, the Saviour of the world. Jer.23v5,6. Christ is the God who is to come again, and His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. Zech.14v3,4. Mal.3v1-3. Acts.1v11,12.

The person who is a true Christian and, "is of God," accept what the Scriptures teach concerning the person of Christ, His humanity and deity, and accept what He taught concerning eternal life, salvation, Heaven and Hell, and love and healing, etc. John tells us that those who deny the vital Scriptural truths concerning Christ, are "antichrist," and "not of God". There are many false teachers about today, and Christians, particularly those who are young in the faith, need to store in their minds the truths of the Scriptures about Jesus, so that they can give an answer to the active and ardent servants of the Devil. Those who know the Scriptures will be able to answer these false teachers, and may, with love, tact, and prayer, win them over to the truth. I pray that my studies will not only inform and teach Christians the vital truths in God's Word about our dear Lord Jesus, but that they also may save many from the snares of false devilish doctrines, which damn and destroy the soul. 2Pet.2v1.

b. A. T. Robertson states that Heb.2v17,18., teaches the true sympathetic humanity of Jesus.

{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 6:8., 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 Heb.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 (Heb.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 Exod.18:19; Rom.15:17.. 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 LXX (Ps 65:3.), but only here in N.T., though in Luke.18:13. the passive form "hilasthêti" occurs as in 2Kings.5:18.. In 1John.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 LXX.

2:18 {In that} "en hôi." Literally, "In which" "=en toutôi en hôi," in that in which), a causal idea, though in Rom.14:22. "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 4:8-11.), by Peter in the spirit of Satan (Mt 16:22f.), in Gethsemane (Mt 26:39.), 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 from A.T. Robertson.**

c. 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.1v3,4. 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.)

d. 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 "homoioima" 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." **End of quote from the Expositors Greek Testament.**

e. 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." End of quote from Alford.

I have quoted from these leading Greek scholars to confirm the truth of what I say about Christ's true humanity, and to verify that the original Greek Scriptures teach that Jesus was tempted in all points exactly like we are, but without ever giving away to temptation and sin. Jesus conquered the flesh that has corrupted and led all mankind into sin, in a body exactly like our own. Rom.8v3. Heb.2v17,18. 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.8v1-4. 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 to 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, and the dreadful bruising of His body, soul, and spirit, and won healing for our bodies, souls and spirits. Blessed be His Name!

The Scriptures could not be clearer, or more emphatic, "by His bruise we are healed," Is.53v5.

In 1Pet.2v24., Peter, looking back at the Cross-; affirms the prophetic fulfilment and truth of Isaiah.53v5.; he proclaims with tearful and heartfelt joy; "By His bruise you were healed." Peter remembered with great emotion, tears and love, the horrific suffering and bruising of His Lord. He knew from a deep personal experience how Jesus had purchased, forgiveness and healing, for himself and all mankind. Those who deny this great truth, of the healing for body, soul and spirit, that flows from the Cross and death of Jesus, do so at their own great spiritual peril. Christ's bruised humanity, and His bruised life and death, are the foundation and cornerstone of the creation, and of all our Christian experience. You are healed by the awful bruising of His body, soul and spirit. Claim it, and proclaim it, with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Appendix. The Catastrophic Effects Of The Doctrine Of "Original Sin."

Augustine's doctrine of "Original Sin" has concealed from the Church, a great deal of Christ's great sufferings for us. Many who believe in Augustine's doctrine of "Original Sin" do not realise the disastrous effects that it has had on the doctrine of the Church. I am sure that most Christians will strongly disagree with Augustine's monstrous doctrine that every child is "born in sin" and spiritually depraved, and will go to Hell forever, like the very worst sinner, if they are not baptised. This contradicts the Scriptures, which state that God creates our souls and spirits; how could God create something sinful? Is.57v16. "For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made." In Heb.12v9. God is called "the Father of our spirits." (NIV and Robertson)

Augustine's theology also does away with free will; his theology can be briefly summed up as follows.

We read on page 317, of "God's Strategy in Human History," by Paul Marston and Roger Forster. "Augustine taught that when Adam sinned, all his descendants sinned "*in*" him and so shared in and inherited the guilt of the act." End of quote.

Some one else has said: "The only way any are saved is by God intervening and choosing some, whom He calls His elect, to be saved. This choosing is totally arbitrary and independent of those chosen. Those thus chosen cannot ever be lost or fall from grace. To the converse, those not arbitrarily chosen before the foundation of the World to everlasting life, are irrevocably doomed to Hell, having absolutely no hope of salvation, regardless of what they do, or do not do." End of quote.

We read on page 307 of "God's Strategy in Human History by Paul Marston and Roger Forster.

"Augustine also said that, "Faith itself was an irresistible gift given by God to a few people, whom he had selected on some basis known only to Himself. God could have given it to others had He so chosen. Without God's irresistible gift of faith, no man could perform any good, whether in thought, will, affection, or action." End of quote.

By the introduction of this lie, Augustine removes the whole truth and concept that man possesses a freewill and is individually responsible for their own individual actions. It has the effect of removing personal responsibility for one's actions and sins.

Augustine's doctrine of "Original Sin" has also produced two more major errors in theology.

1. Augustine's doctrine of "Original Sin" directly contradicts the truth about repentance.

When God tells us to repent, it means that we are responsible, and can be blamed for the wrong that we do. The doctrine of "Original Sin" **denies that people have the ability to repent**, or that they possess free will. It has made people feel that they are not personally responsible for their sins, and that they cannot help sinning, because they were born sinners. People say that they have inherited a sin nature from Adam, and cannot live right because of that. **However, this is not what God says; God commands us to repent of our sins, and tells us that we can help sinning**, and need not have committed any sins. God does not say that we cannot help sinning, He says that repentance that brings forth the fruit of a holy life, is the way to obtain forgiveness, and acceptance with Him. Those who hide behind the bush of "Original Sin" as an excuse for their sins, are in reality blaming God for making them so. The theme of repentance is seen in all the Scriptures. 2Kings.8v47. Ezek.18v30.

In Rom.1v18-32., Paul castigates the holding down of the truth revealed in creation, which has resulted in the most deplorable wickedness and immorality. Paul states that mankind is **without an excuse**, for they have rejected both the revelation of God's eternal power and deity in Creation and the light of their own conscience. God has manifested Himself **to and in mankind**, but mankind's determined wickedness has meant that God has had to give them up to their evil ways. **Mankind does not have any excuse for their sin, and that includes the excuse of the doctrine of "Original Sin."** Rom.1v19,20,24,26,28.

Paul tells us in Acts.17v30,31., that **God commands everyone to repent, this means that everyone could have lived righteous lives, even with the limited light that they had.** We read, "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but **now commands all men everywhere to repent**, v31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

In John.1v9., we read that **Jesus illumines every child that is born.** "Illumines," is "photizein" the present active indicative of "photizo" 5461; which means, to shed rays, to light up, to illumine, Thayer adds, "to enlighten, spiritually, to imbue with saving knowledge." The present tense shows that this is a continuous present tense action, and not a brief or temporary act. We read in Mt.18v1-10. and 19v14., that Jesus said that children are fit for Heaven, and are like the inhabitants of Heaven, accept it.

We read in Isaiah.53v6., that **mankind is not "born astray" but "goes astray."** Paul confirms this in **Rom.7v9.**, where he states that he was born spiritually alive to God, and that he died spiritually when he personally sinned. Paul again states this fact in **Rom.3v12.**, **"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."** **Note well. In Ps.51v5., it is David's mother who is the sinner, not David. "In sin did my mother conceive me."**

John the Baptist preached Repentance. Mark.1v4. "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Mt.3v8. "Therefore produce fruits worthy of repentance." See also Luke.3v3. and Acts.13v24

Repentance was a vital part of Christ's Gospel preaching. **Mk1v14,15.** v14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, v15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: **repent ye**, and believe the gospel. We read in **Mt.9v13.**, "But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." See **Luke.5v32.**

In Luke.24v46,47., the risen Saviour states that repentance and remission of sins was to be preached to all nations. v46 "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: v47 And **that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."**

The early Church preached that repentance was an vital prerequisite before people could know forgiveness of sins.

We read in **Acts.2v38.**, "Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." **See also Acts.3v19,20.** v19 **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; v20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you."** **And again in Acts.20v21.** "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, **repentance toward God**, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." **Note Acts.11v18.** "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, **Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."**

Paul witnesses to King Agrippa in Acts.26v19,20., v19 "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, v20 but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, **that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting**

repentance.”

We read in 2Pet.3v9., “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**” **Paul writes in 2Tim.2v25,26.** v25 “In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; v26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

Paul states in 2 Cor.7v9,10., v9 “Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to **repentance.** For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. v10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”

Mankind often despises and rejects God’s great mercy with fearful consequences. Rom.2v3-6. v3 “And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? v4 **Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?** v5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, v6 who “will render to each one according to his deeds.”

Jesus comes to His Churches and demands repentance where it is necessary.

The Churches at Ephesus and Pergamos are told to repent. Rev.2v5,16. “The Church at Thyatira is told that death awaits them if they fail to repent of their terrible sins. Rev.2v21-23., v21 The Church at Sardis is told to repent. Rev.3v2,3. The Church at Laodicea is told to repent. Rev.3v19,20.

In James.5v14-18., we see that repentance and confession of sin and persistent prolonged prayer may often be necessary to experience Divine healing in the Churches. v14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. v15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. v16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. v17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. v18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.” Elijah’s persistent prolonged prayer is our example.

2. The doctrine of “Original Sin” attacks the character of God, and denies the true humanity of Christ.

The second attack of the doctrine of “Original Sin” is even more serious, for it attacks the character of God and the person and humanity of Jesus Christ our Lord, and brings Docetic Gnosticism back into Church doctrine. This has disastrous effects on a Christian’s perception of God, and their walk with God. Augustine’s doctrine of “Original Sin” is responsible for a great deal of the darkness in the minds of both believers and unbelievers about God, and has greatly hindered the knowledge of the truth about God’s wonderful character. **God is Love, His first name is “Compassion,” but Augustine’s doctrine of Original Sin has made God to be an evil despot, for Augustine said that God sends innocent babies, who have not been baptised, into Hell forever, to share the same fate as the very worst sinner.** 1John.4v8. Ex.34v6,7. When the Christian accepts Augustine’s doctrine of “Original Sin” as truth, it destroys their ability to perceive the truth about Our Lord being a compassionate, sympathetic and faithful Great High Priest, who is the “Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith”. Christians who believe in “Original Sin,” assume that; if we have been “born in sin,” and have sinful flesh; then, obviously, as our Lord was without sin, then he MUST have had a different kind of flesh and “humanity” to us. This doctrine that Our Lord’s humanity was different from ours, destroys any thought that Jesus can be our example, or a compassionate, sympathetic and faithful Great High Priest.

Many preachers have repeatedly said that our Lord’s flesh and blood was different to that of normal humanity. I have heard them say, on the basis of Acts.20v28., that the blood of Jesus was the blood of God and not human blood. This is a total denial of the humanity of Christ, and in a very subtle and cunning disguise, is the destructive heresy of Docetic Gnosticism. This heresy arose in the Church in the later half of the 1st Century AD, and indeed Paul, in his letters to the Philippians, Colossians and 1Timothy and John in his Gospel, 1st and 2nd John, write very strongly against this heresy. The doctrine of “Original Sin,” revives, in a very subtle way, the Docetic Gnostic heresy of the early Church. However, from the time of Augustine it has arisen in the minds of believers in an undetected manner, so that believers do not recognise it for what it is, a destructive heresy! John says that those who deny the true humanity of Jesus are “Not of God.” They deny our Lord’s victory over the flesh and the Devil.

In 1John.4v2., “That Jesus Christ is come in the flesh,” is “Iesoun 2424, Christon 5547, en 1722, sarki 4561 “el eluthota,” 2064. El eluthota,” is the perfect active participle of “erchomai,” 2064, to come; to appear. The perfect tense indicates that Christ’s coming in the flesh was a well known established fact, and that the effects of Christ’s incarnation are an abiding reality. Jesus was not a Docetic phantom, He had a human body, and as Paul states in Rom.1v3., “Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh.” Those who believe this are, “out of God,” “ek tou Theou estin.”

The same words, “en” 1722, “sarki” 4561, “el eluthota” 2064, “is come in the flesh,” occur again in 1Jn.4v3., and the apostle John declares that everyone who states that Jesus has not come in the

flesh, "is not out of God," "ek tou Theou ouk estin." The apostle John goes on to state that those who deny the humanity of Jesus have the spirit of Antichrist, and are influenced by super-human evil angelic spirits. Some reject, "is come in the flesh," here in 1Jn.4v3., because these words are omitted by A, B, and a few cursives, However they are included in Aleph, G, K, Phi, and most cursives, and the following versions, the Syriac, the Polyglot Arabic, Aethiopic, Coptic, Armenian, and Vulgate; and are recognised by Polycarp, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Ambrose, Ps-Oecumenius, Theophylact, and Augustine. The opponents of Christ's incarnation, and his passion, would be delighted to see these words omitted from the Scriptures.

Many of the truths contained in two of the most important books of the New Testament, Romans and Hebrews, are impossible to comprehend, by those who believe in "Original Sin. Understanding Paul's letter to the Hebrews in based upon a correct knowledge of our Lord's true humanity, and that our Lord and the believer share exactly the same kind of humanity. Failure to grasp this means that the believer cannot comprehend our Lord as their sympathetic Great High Priest. This truth is part of the doctrine of "repentance from dead works," which is found in the "first principles of the oracles of God...the principles of the doctrine of Christ," Heb 5v12 to 6v12., and is dealt with by Paul in Romans 6 to 8.

A correct knowledge of this truth, along with others, is vital for the Christian in the last days of this age, the Age of Grace. We will need to know our Lord as our Great High Priest as well as our Saviour, to enable us to overcome the appalling evil conditions that will come upon the world during the last three and a half years of this age, known as The Great Tribulation. We need to know that our Lord has indeed, "been tempted in ALL points like as we are, yet without sin" during His hidden years at Nazareth, and during His Ministry, in a humanity exactly like our own. The knowledge of His tried humanity will strengthen and equip us for the evil last days. This is vital truth. Through His Intercessions and High Priestly ministry, Jesus will keep, guard, protect and strengthen us "in soul" and give us victory and bring us through this terrible time. We shall rise to meet Him in the air at His Second Advent, immediately after the tribulation of those days, at the sounding of the last trumpet.

Paul, in writing to Timothy in 1Timothy 3v16., states the vital truth that, "God was manifest in the flesh," and then immediately in the next verse, 1Timothy.4v1., goes on to state; "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils!" Paul knew that the destructive heresy of Docetic Gnosticism would still be in the Church in the last days and so he warns us against it, by stating that our Lord Jesus did indeed, "come in the flesh," and had a humanity like our own. The doctrine of "Original Sin" attacks the humanity of Christ, and the end result of this attack, in the days of The Great Tribulation, will be apostasy, Paul says, the effect will be that "some will depart from the faith."

"The Contrast Between Adam and Christ in Their Effect Upon Humanity. Rom.5v12-21.

Some say these verses mean that men are forced into sin, and cannot help sinning, because of the sin of Adam. Those who insist that these verses teach that all mankind is forced into evil by Adam's sin, must accept that this would make these verses teach ultimate reconciliation for all mankind. The key verses are verses 17,18, and 19; Adam's sin did not force men to be sinners, no more than Christ's atonement forces men to be justified; in both cases the free will of man is the determining factor. Rom.5v12,17. The result of following Adam is spiritual death; the result of following Christ is justification and spiritual life. Is.53v6.

Paul compares the severity of God in condemning Adam after one sin, with God's mercy to the Christian after a multitude of sins. Rom.5v16. James.5v19,20. Adam's first sin, the first step away from God, was the beginning of many steps away from God. God dealt immediately with Adam's sin, both for Adam's and the Creation's sake, lest he continued to live forever by partaking continually of the tree of life. Notice the kind and gentle attempts to make Adam and Eve confess their sin, and the thoughtful provision of God, even after their rebellion. The physical death which fell upon the human race after Adam's sin, is not the result of any person's sin, for children still die who have not sinned, Rom.5v14., physical death is the result of the withdrawal of the tree of life. Had not this been done, Adam would have lived in sin forever. Gen.3v22-24.

The secret of Paul's prayer life. Rom.8v26.

The Holy Spirit always makes His unlimited abilities available to us when we pray. Paul states, in Rom.8v26., "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (NKJ) "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought," "katho dei," "as it is necessary." Rom.8v26. After about 25 years of Christian experience, Paul states that it was only the Holy Spirit's aid that prevented him from making mistakes over what to pray for. Note Jn.14v16,17,26. 15v26,27. Jn.16v6,16,17.

In the light of this intercession by the Holy Spirit, we can well understand why Paul thanked God in 1Cor.14v18., that he spoke in tongues more than any of the verbose tongue speaking Corinthians. Praying in tongues releases the Holy Spirit's power gifts, and prayer for the saints according to the will and desires of God. We do not know how to pray "as we ought," "katho dei," "as it is necessary," but the Holy Spirit, "maketh intercession for us;" "huperentungchanei," 5241, which only occurs here in the New Testament. It is derived from the verb "entungchano," 1793," which means "to light upon or fall in with; to go to meet," and signifies to intercede or negotiate for another. **A. T. Robertson** says "It is a picturesque word of rescue by one who "happens on,"

"entungchanei" 1793, one who is in trouble and "in his behalf," "huper," 5228, pleads "with unuttered groanings" (instrumental case) or with "sighs that baffle words" (Denney)." **End of quote.** Compare Acts.25v24. Rom.8v34. 11v2. Heb.7v25.

Paul tells us in Rom.8v26,27., that the Holy Spirit is always available to us, to take hold with us against our infirmities, weakness, and limitations. "Helps," poorly expresses the thought in "sunantilambanetai," the present indicative of "sunantilambanomai," 4878, "to lend a hand together with, at the same time with one." It is a compound of "sun," 4862, "with," or "together," and "anti," 473, "against," and "lambanomai," 2983. "to take and get hold of," and so, "to actively support and help." The Holy Spirit comes to enable us to pray, and mightily supplement our weakness and limitations with His infinite abilities, grace and love. The Holy Spirit comes to make the promise real to us that "by His bruise we are healed," and to reveal to us the ghastly bruising of our Lord's emotions and body, soul, and spirit, that bought healing for our bodies, souls and spirits.

Final Conclusion.

God states through the prophet Hosea, in Hosea.4v6., "My people are destroyed (perish) for lack of the knowledge (of ME)." Lack of the correct knowledge about Jesus and the Father. It is vitally important to have a correct interpretation of the Scriptures about the true humanity of Jesus, or we fail to have the true and deep relationship with Jesus and the Father that they, and we, desire. **If we fail to understand our Lord's humanity, we will not realise the extent of the sufferings of Jesus for us. A correct knowledge about Christ's humanity sets us spiritually free, it enables us to see the full horrendous nature of His sufferings for us, and His matchless dedicated love for us. It enables us to see His great desire to make us whole in body, soul, and spirit, and to experience healing and wholeness through His great power and love.**

See John.17v17. "Sanctify them through ("en" 1722, in, by, with, through) Your truth. Your word is truth."

See John.8v31,32. "Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. v32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (NKJ)

NOTE:

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