

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. By C.L. Parker, W. H. Turner, and Others.

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These studies in this Appendix are not the work of C.L. Parker, though they contain many of his thoughts, they are the result of a great deal of study by myself and others. I am not a Greek scholar, so I am very grateful for the insights into the Greek text by leading Greek scholars, for to understand some of Paul's theology in Hebrews demands an insight into the original Greek Scriptures.

In this Appendix we deal with subjects that have an important relationship with both the book of Hebrews and our spiritual life as believers in Jesus. We also consider other important doctrinal matters that have a strong connection with Paul's epistle to the Hebrews. Some of these studies are extremely controversial, and I make no apology for this. The truths proclaimed in these studies are soul changing, for they reveal the real character of God, and are vital for a true knowledge of God, and a living relationship with God, and they give peace of mind and a sense of security to Christians. Read on and be challenged, enlightened, and blessed. **W.H. Turner. March 24th. 2008.**

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AN INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS BY W. H. TURNER AND OTHERS.

This commentary on Hebrews has been derived from the written notes and spoken comments of C.L. Parker, and from studies by myself, and from other sources. The notes in the appendices are not the work of C.L. Parker, though they contain many of his thoughts. They are gleaned from my own studies and the hard work of others Bible students. I pray that these notes will help Christians to get a new perception and vision of the Deity and humanity of Jesus, His great salvation, and His Great High Priestly Ministry. I pray too that these studies will open the eyes of Christians to realise what it means for them to be a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and to join with Jesus in His Great High Priestly Ministry, and manifest His glory and power to a needy Church and world. W. H. Turner. June 6th. 2007. My mother's birthday.

1. Paul's primary purpose was to reveal the truth about the person of Jesus.

Paul revealed vital truths about the person of Jesus in order to correct wrong ideas and dangerous error about Him. Paul, when writing to different Churches, to refute error within them, does not give elaborate details about what the error is, but simply states the truth on that particular issue. So in the first and second chapters of Hebrews, we are greeted with the greatest refutation, within the New Testament., of any error regarding the true deity and real humanity of the Lord Jesus. Even the very important passage in Phil.2v5-11., which deals with the "emptying," (Greek, "ekenosen") of the Lord Jesus at His Incarnation, does not have the same amount of detail. There can be no doubt that Hebrews 1 and 2, contain an outstanding revelation of the deity and humanity of the Lord Jesus, and God intended that they should have a special impact upon the soul, spirit and mind of the believer, and prepare them to enter their heavenly Canaan and to be priests after the order of Melchizedek.

Jesus fought through to total victory over evil from the level of our humanity.

In Hebrews Paul goes to great lengths to state again and again the likeness of the Lord's humanity to our own, collectively and individually. The NKJV translates **Heb.2v14,15.** "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." The RSV translates **Heb.2v14.** "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil." "Partook" is "meteschen," the aorist active indicative of "metecho," 3348, "to share or participate, to have with."

The Amplified Version translates Heb.2v17,18. "So it is evident that it was essential that He be made like His brethren in every respect ("kata panta), in order that He might become a merciful (sympathetic) and faithful High Priest in the things related to God, to make atonement and propitiation for the people's sins. v18 For because He Himself [in His humanity] has suffered in being tempted (tested and tried), He is able [immediately] to run to the cry of (assist, relieve) those who are being tempted and tested and tried [and who therefore are being exposed to suffering]."

The American Standard Version translates Heb.2v17. "Wherefore it behoved him in all things ("kata panta) to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." "It behoved him," is the Greek "opheilen," the imperfect active of "opheilo" 3784; to owe: money, service and love, to be under obligation, a moral necessity, a debt to be paid. Before the foundation of the world Jesus promised to redeem us by His own death, He came to fulfil His obligation, and pay the debt for our sins. This verse refers to the incarnation of Jesus. Before creation Jesus obligated Himself to be properly equipped for the work of Redeemer and High Priest, this meant that He had to fully take upon Him our humanity. So Jesus was made, "in all things ("kata panta") like unto us," and knew what real temptation was, but did not yield to it and sin.

Wuest translates Heb.2v17., "For this reason it was an obligation for Him in all things to be made like His brethren, in order that He might become a compassionate and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to

God."

In Heb.2v17. "to be made like unto his brethren," is "tois adelphois homiothenai," **the aorist passive of the verb "homoioo" 3666.** **Thayer** says the passive means, "to be, or to become like to one." See Mt.6v8. Acts.14v11. The humanity of Jesus was real. **Phil.2v7.** states that Jesus, "was made in the likeness of men," "en homiomati anthropon genomenos." Not "was," but literally "becoming in, became," Jesus entered into a new state at His incarnation.

In **Phil.2v6.**, "being," is "huparchon" 5226, **the present active participle of "huparcho," and should rather be translated as, "existing."** "Huparchon" emphasises the eternal existence of Jesus in the "morphe" of God, and "genomenos," the aorist participle of "ginomai" 1096, to become, i.e. to come into existence, begin to be; it speaks of the time when Jesus took upon Himself our humanity at His incarnation. Jesus was not a Docetic phantom, His likeness to humanity was real. The word "form," "morphe" 3444, in Phil.2v7., confirms the reality of our Lord's humanity, just as in Phil.2v6. it confirms His absolute deity.

Vincent makes the following excellent note on Phil.2v6. "Christ was in the form of God and did not think robbery to be equal with God, but" (instead) "emptied Himself." Christ held fast His assertion of divine dignity, but relinquished it. Taking the word "**harpagmon**" (the King James Version, "robbery") to mean "a highly prized possession," we understand Paul to say that Christ, being, before His incarnation, in the form of God, did not regard His divine equality as a prize which was to be grasped at and retained at all hazards, but, on the contrary, laid aside the form of God, and took upon Himself the nature of man. The emphasis in the passage is upon Christ's "humiliation." The fact of His equality with God is stated as a background, in order to throw the circumstances of His incarnation into stronger relief. Hence, the peculiar form of Paul's statement. Christ's great object was to identify Himself with humanity; not to appear to men as "divine" but as "human." Had He come into the world emphasizing His equality with God, the world would have been amazed, but not saved. He did not grasp at this. The rather He counted "humanity" His prize, and so laid aside the conditions of His pre-existent state, and became man." **End of quote.**

We read in 1Jn.3v2. that when we see Jesus we shall be "like Him," "homoioi auto," **the adjective "homoios" 3664,** from the base of "homou," 3674, which means, "the same." John reveals that seeing Jesus is the event that transfigures us into His likeness, "we shall see him even as he is," "opsometha auton kathos estin." The transforming power of this open revelation and vision of Jesus, will complete our sanctification and transform us into Christ's image and likeness. This conformity to the image of Jesus is the purpose of God. We read in **Rom.8v29.** "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." **NKJV.** Through our response to life's trials and difficulties, God is conforming us to the image of Jesus. When we face the fiery trials of life with God, it will bring us praise and glory at the appearing of Jesus. **1Pet.1v4-7.** This transfiguration is the consummation of our salvation, and the end of the transforming process which began at our new birth. **1Cor.13v12. 2Cor.3v18. Rom.12v1,2.**

In Heb.1v1-3. Paul declares the majesty and glory of Jesus and His superiority over even the greatest of the prophets by the following statement:- "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, v2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; v3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

N.B. Weust translates Heb.4v15., "For we do not have a High Priest who is not able to enter experientially into a fellow feeling with our infirmities, but one who has been tempted and tested in all points like as we are, without sin." **The KJV reads,** "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but **was in all points ("kata panta,") tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**" Jesus was truly the Son of Man, as well as the Son of God. The phrase, "Son of Man," was one of our Lord's favourite descriptions Christ's glorious victories over the World, the flesh and the Devil, fill Him with total understanding and sympathy towards us, not criticism. The sacrifices that He made for us, and the victories that He won for us are too wonderful for words, no praise can be too great for His matchless sacrificial love, and wonderful total victory. Jesus absolutely deserves all the glory and praise that He receives. Glory is something that is a reward for what we have done, it is something accomplished, it is merited favour, not unmerited favour. The Lord Jesus received the inheritance mentioned in Heb.1v4., because He fought for it; He had to fight all the way through intolerable emotional and physical suffering. Heb.2v8-11. Jesus did not fight through for personal prestige, He fought through for us, to save, redeem and bless us. Jesus is not ashamed to call us brother and sister, our faith binds us to Jesus and the Father. We believe the same things that Jesus believed, we are brethren, and we have the same Father. **John.20v17. Heb.2v9-18. Is.8v17,18. Ps.22v22,30.**

In Heb.2v17., "to be made like unto his brethren," is "tois adelphois homiothenai, the aorist passive of "homoioo." Christ, our Elder Brother, was made exactly like us in His humanity, this is also stated in Phil.2v7., Jesus was made "in the likeness of men." Jesus was the "first-born among many brethren." **Rom.8v29.** One day, when He returns, the transforming glory of our Lord's presence will transform us, and "we shall be like

him," "homoioi auto esometha." 1John.3v2.

In Phil.2v7., "the form of a servant," is "morphen doulou," Jesus took the attributes and form ("morphen" as in Phil.2v6., where it states that He was in the form of God) of a slave. His becoming a bond slave, and association with our humanity was as real as his pre-incarnate deity and eternal majesty. "In the likeness of men," is "en homoiomati anthropon." Jesus had a real likeness to us, He was really human, He was not a Docetic phantom, a spirit being with a false imitation humanity, which was what the Docetic Gnostics taught. Note the difference in tense between "huparchon," which states Christ's eternal existence in the form, "morphe," of God, and "genomenos," the aorist participle of "ginomai," becoming, which speaks of a definite entrance in time into his humanity. Jesus set aside His legitimate position and prerogatives as Deity and became a man.

In Phil.2v7., "morphe," translated as "form," in "form of a servant," is used in Phil.2v6. for "form of God."

The word "servant" is the translation of the word "bond slave," "doulou," which Paul used in Phil.1v1., to describe himself. **The word "took," "labon," is an aorist participle;** Greek grammar states that the action of an aorist participle precedes the action of the leading verb. The leading verb here is "emptied," so the act of taking preceded the act of emptying, and so the taking by Jesus of the form of a bond slave came before, and was the cause of His emptying. So the translation should read that Jesus, "emptied Himself, having taken the form of a bond slave." Jesus said that His ministry was that of a servant, He said, "The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Mt.20v28. Jesus girded Himself with a towel, knelt on the floor, and washed the feet of His disciples, this was the work of the lowest kind of slave, a bond slave.

Peter tells us in 2Pet.1v15-21., that in the Mount of Transfiguration Jesus experienced for a short time, the glory He had left behind, and the glory He would have at His second coming. **See Mt17v2.** "And the mode of His outward expression was changed before them, and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." Jesus could have walked straight into Heaven, but He set His face like a flint and steadfastly walked on to rejection, abuse, beating, crucifixion, and Hades, out of pure love for us. Blessed, indeed, be His Holy Name!! Is.50v6,7. Luke.9v51

In Phil.2v7., "But made himself of no reputation," is "heauton ekenosen." "Ekenosen" is the aorist active indicative of the verb "kenoo," means literally, "to empty, to make empty, to make void." It is translated "made void" in Rom.4v14.; "made of none effect," in 1Cor.1v17.; "make void," in 1Cor.9v15.; and in 2Cor.9v3., it is rendered, "should be vain." "Kenoo" does not occur anywhere else in the New Testament, except in these places and here in Phil.2v7. "Kenoo" expresses the thought of bringing to emptiness, or nothingness; and it describes well how Jesus divested Himself of His heavenly rank, glory and abilities and changed the form of God for the form of a bond slave, "morphen doulou." The same word that is used for "form" in the phrase, "form of God," is used here with the same meaning. Jesus "counted not equality with God the Father a thing to be held on to, even though it was His by right. At His incarnation Jesus took hold of and grasped being a bond slave and servant, He did not grasp and hold on to His right of Divine equality and sovereignty with the Father. Jesus was made in the likeness of man, and took upon Him the form of a servant; He emptied himself and laid aside the effulgence of his glory, and the majesty of His position in Heaven as God the Word, and the Word became flesh. John.1v14.

Many theologians have erroneously said that the emptying mentioned in Phil.2v7., cannot mean that Jesus literally divested Himself of his divine nature and perfections. They say that this was impossible, for Jesus could not cease to be omnipotent, and omnipresent. Some have said Jesus could not cease to be most holy, and true, and good, implying that the babe in the manger had all the abilities and full perfected character of Godhead. This is exactly what the Gnostics taught, and the Apostle John said that those who did not accept the true humanity of Jesus were "not of God," and had "the spirit of Antichrist." 1Jn.4v2,3. **There can be no doubt that when Paul said that Jesus emptied Himself, he meant it.**

We read in Heb.2v18., "for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." "Hath suffered" is "peponthen," the perfect active indicative of "pascho," **the perfect tense shows this suffering was a permanent part of Christ's experience.** "Being tempted," is "peirastheis," the first aorist passive participle of "peirazo." The temptation for Jesus to escape the shame and suffering of the Cross and Hades, was repeatedly offered to Him by Satan in the wilderness, and many times afterwards, Mt.4v8-11. Lk.4v13.; by Peter acting under the inspiration of Satan, Mt.16v22.; by the emotional and physical shock of the continual ruthless, merciless, and vicious opposition of Christ's enemies, Heb.12v3.; and by the relentless and malicious spiritual attack by Satan and the powers of darkness during His ministry and in the intense emotional sufferings of Jesus in Gethsemane. Mt.26v39. Luke.22v44. Heb.5v7,8. **The Amplified Bible translates Ps.69v20,21.** "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. [Mt.27v34,48.]" The Hebrew states that continual reproach made Jesus physically ill.

In Phil.2v7., the fact of Jesus becoming man is expressed in the words, "and was made in the likeness of men." The words "was made" are the translation of a word meaning "to become." The text says, "He became in the likeness of men." Our Lord's humanity was a real likeness. He was not a Docetic phantom, nor was He a deceiving counterfeit and phoney copy of humanity. The true humanity of Jesus was authentic, irrefutable, and undeniable.

An Expanded Translation by Kenneth S. Wuest gives an excellent and meaningful translation of Heb.2v14-18.

v14 "Therefore, since the children share in common with one another blood and flesh, He himself also partook with them in the same, in order that through the aforementioned death He might render inoperative the one having the dominion of death, that is, the devil, **v15** and effect the release of those, as many as who by reason of fear of death through the entire course of their lives were held in bondage. **v16** For, as is well known, He does not take hold of angels for the purpose of helping them, but of the offspring of Abraham He takes hold, with a view to succouring them. **v17 For this reason it was an obligation for Him in all things to be made like His brethren**, in order that He might become a compassionate and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, with a view to offering that sacrifice for the sins of the people that would perfectly meet the demands of God's justice. **v18** For in that He suffered, having himself been tempted and put to the test, **He is able to run to the cry of those who are being tempted and put to the test, and bring them aid."** End of quote.

In Heb.2v17. "that he might be," is "hina genetai," the aorist subjunctive of ginomai, to become, "that he might become." For Jesus to become a merciful and faithful High Priest He had to be fully like his brethren in actual human nature, and fully tried and tested in all the trials and tests of life, and in the battlefield of destitution, privation, persecution and adversity. These two adjectives "eleemon" and "pistos" reveal the chief points in the function of His High Priestly ministry, compassionate sympathy and faithfulness to God and the people. These attributes of character were noticeably lacking in the characters and ministries of Israel's high priests. Hos.4v4-9. The Sadducean high priests, Annas and Caiaphas, were chosen by Rome, and were their political and ecclesiastical tools and puppets, and they were totally lacking in compassionate sympathy for the people, and in faithfulness to God and the people.

In Heb.2v17. "**faithful,**" is "**pistos,**" this attribute of a priest, is seen in 1Sam.2v35., a faithful priest that will do all that is in God's mind. Compare Heb.3v2. It includes not only "trustworthiness," but also a faithful representation of the true ideal of priesthood, not just carrying out the ceremonies of the Law, but a kind-hearted person, who has compassion on the ignorant and those who are out of the way. Heb.5v1,2. In Heb.2v17., "In things pertaining to God," "ta pros ton Theon," sums up the totally equipped High Priestly ministry of Jesus, our "compassionate" and "faithful high priest."

In Heb.2v18. "**He is able,**" is "**dunatai,**" the present passive indicative of "dunamai" 1410, "to be able, or possible, to have power." The power of Jesus to help us is derived not only from His Divine abilities, but also from the sympathy and understanding He obtained from His true humanity. Heb.4v15. "**To succour,**" is "**boethesai,**" the aorist active infinitive of the verb "boetheo," from "boe," a cry, and "theo," to run, and so means to run at a cry or call for help. See Mt.15v25.

"Them that are tempted," is "tois peirazomenois," the present passive participle of "peirazo." These Christian Jews were tempted to give up Jesus and apostatise from Christianity. Jesus understands their problem and enables them to be faithful.

We read in Rom.5v10. "For if, while we were enemies, **we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son**, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." "We were reconciled to God," is "katallagemen to Theo," the aorist passive indicative of "katallasso," 2644, literally means "to change, exchange" (especially of money); and of persons, "to change from enmity to friendship, to reconcile." In regard to the relationship between to God and man, "**reconciliation**" is **what God accomplishes** through His grace towards sinful man on the ground of the atoning sacrificial death of Christ. "Much more" we shall be saved "by his life," because Jesus is "ever living to intervene in our lives with His power and love." **Heb.7v25.**

We read in 2Cor.5v17-19. **v17** "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. **v18** Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, **v19** that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation." **NKJV.**

"Who reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ," is "tou katallaxantos hemas heauto dia Iesous Christou." Paul uses one of his great doctrinal words, "katallasso," 2644, an old word for exchanging coins. Rom.3v25. Col.1v20. 1Jn.2v2. 4v10. Paul states that God needs no reconciliation, but is engaged in the great business of reconciling us to himself through ("dia") Christ.

1Jn.4v16-19. **v16** "And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who

abides in love abides in God, and God in him. **v17** Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. **v18** There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. **v19** We love Him because He first loved us." NKJV.

In Heb.1v4-14. Paul shows Christ's superiority to angels by an exhaustive appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures. Paul was addressing Jewish Christians, who were familiar with the prominent part accredited to angels in the Old Testament, especially in the giving of the law. See Gal.3v9. For "being made," is "**genomenos**," the aorist participle of the verb "**ginomai**," 1096, to cause to be, to become, and is better translated "having become." After Jesus passed through the "emptying" and humiliation described in Phil.2v6-8., He sat down on the right hand of the Father's Throne, and so "became" again, what He had been from eternity, superior to the angels, though for a brief period, in His humanity, He had been lower than the angels. Heb.2v7. **In Heb.1v4.** "He hath by inheritance obtained," is "**kekleronomeken**," the perfect active indicative of "**kleronomeo**," from "**kleronomos**," a heir." Jesus "hath inherited," and still inherits a more excellent Name, "onoma," than either prophets or angels. Jesus has been appointed "heir of all things," because of His glorious victory over His humanity, Satan and sin, and the violent opposition and rejection by evil men, and His suffering, and death on our behalf. Heb.1v2. See Rom.8v17. 1Pet.1v4.

2. Paul stresses the superiority of the New Covenant of Grace over the Old Covenant of Law.

The purpose of this was twofold. firstly to try to restore Christian backsliders to Judaism to faith in Jesus; and **secondly** to try to prevent Christian believers from forsaking Jesus and going back into Judaism. **In Jn.6v53.**, Jesus told the Jews who believed in Him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you." **This offended many of His disciples, and we read in Jn.6v66.**, "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. **v67** Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" **v68** But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. **v69** Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." NKJV. Paul wrote Hebrews because some, or even many, of the Jewish Christians in Israel had backslidden and apostatised from Jesus, because of the great persecution that they had experienced. They had gone back into the unscriptural traditions of the Sadducees, and Scribes and Pharisee's version of Judaism, which **Gal.5v4.** tells us, made the Grace of God of no effect. 1Peter 1v18. To deal with this situation, and to prevent any more Christians from going back from Jesus. Paul, in Hebrews, shows conclusively the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant.

N.B. Paul stresses the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant by using certain keywords.

The first Keyword is "Better."

Paul resolves to help Jewish Christians, by emphasising how much better and superior the New Covenant is over the Old Covenant. **The word "better," "kreitton," 2909,** means, better, nobler, superior in dignity and power." It is one of the **keywords** of the book of Hebrews, it occurs fifteen times in the New Testament, and twelve of these are in Hebrews. **In Heb.1v4.**, Paul states of Jesus, "**Being made so much better than the angels,**" "tosouto kreitton genomenos ton angelon," to reveal how superior the Lord Jesus is to the angels. and then goes on to use different Old Testament Scriptures to support this reality in the most explicit and definite way. **In Heb.7v19.**, "**a better hope.**" **In Heb.7v22.**, "**a better covenant.**" **In Heb.8v6.**, "**a better covenant,**" and "**better promises.**" **In Heb.9v23.**, "**better sacrifices.**" **In Heb10v34.**, "**you have in Heaven a better and an enduring substance.**" **In Heb.11v16.** "**a better country.**" **In Heb 11v40.**, "**God having provided some better thing for us.**" **In Heb.12v24.**, "**the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel**". (See also Heb.7v7., "without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better." And **In Heb.11v35.** "**a better resurrection.**") **The other three occurrences are:- 1Cor.7v9.**, "for it is better to marry than to burn." And **1Pet.3v17.**, "For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil." And in **2Pet.2v21.**, a solemn warning. "For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them."

Another keyword is "Great."

We read in Heb.2v3. "How shall we escape, if we neglect **so great salvation**; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." KJV. So great salvation is "**telikautes 5082, soterias 4992,**" a salvation, which is so vast, so great, so mighty. "**Telikoutos,**" 5082, "so great," is used here in Heb.2v3. of so great a salvation; in 2Cor.1v10., of so great a death; in James.3v4., of great ships; and in Rev.16v18., of so great an earthquake.

We read in Heb.4v14. **that Jesus is a great high priest.** "Seeing then that we have a **great high priest**, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." KJV. **In Heb 4v14,** "**a great high priest,**" is "**archierea megan,**" from "**megas**" **3173,** great, the word which is used most in the New Testament for great. Christ's great High Priestly ministry is the main theme and emphasis of the Epistle to the Hebrews. See Hebrews.1v3. 2v17. 3v1. 4v14-16. 7v25,26. 8v1-3. 9v11-28. 10v19-31.12v22-29. 13v11-15. The priestly work of Jesus is greater and superior to that of the Levitical priesthood. Jesus is superior to the prophets, Heb.1v1-3., to angels, Heb.1v4 to 2v18., and to Moses. Heb.3v1-4v16.

We read in Heb.10v32., of "a great fight of afflictions." "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a **great fight of afflictions.**" "A great fight of afflictions," is "pollen athlesin hupemeneinate pathematon." A great struggle or conflict of sufferings. "**Great,**" is "**polus,**" **4183**, it means much, many, numerous, great.

"**Afflictions,**" is "**pathema**" **3804**, it speaks of something which one has undergone, such as hardship, pain, affliction, suffering, calamity, and evil. Rom.7v5. 8v18. 2Cor.1v5,6,7. Gal.1v24. Phil.3v10. Col.1v24. 2Tim.3v11. Heb.10v32. 1Pet.1v11. 4v13. The word "fight," is "**athlesin**" 119, from "athleo", to engage in a public contest, and it seems is likened to the contests and combat that occurred in the Grecian games, or to the public exhibitions of gladiators. Paul's language here reveals that these Hebrew Christians had a great struggle to maintain their faith without wavering, against those who would have led them to apostatize from faith in Jesus. 2Tim2v5. "Athleo," only occurs here in the New Testament. It is a glorious privilege to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and to testify and overcome all our foes through the blood of the Lamb. Rev.12v10-12.

In Heb.10v32., "Endured," is "hupemeneinate," the aorist active indicative of "**hupomeno,**" **5278**, to stay under, to undergo and. bravely endure, to have fortitude, to persevere. **In Heb.2v9,10. 5v8-10. and 12v2,3.,** we read that Jesus bravely endured horrendous suffering in order to become our perfect Saviour and High Priest.

We read in Heb.10v35., a "great recompense of reward." "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath **great,**" "**mezas**" **3173**, **recompense of reward.**" "**Recompense of reward,**" is "**misthapodosian,**" from "**misthos**" (reward) **3408**, and "**apodidomi**" **591**, **to give back, to pay for services, good or bad.** "Misthapodosian" only occurs in the New Testament here in Heb.10v35., 11v26. and 2v2. **God is going to greatly reward His saints for their godly lives.** Moses looked ahead to the goal of life and His heavenly reward. In **Heb.11v26.,** "For he looked unto the recompense of reward," is "apeblepen gar eis ten misthapodosian," the imperfect active of "apoblepo," "for he was looking away, or better, **kept on looking away,**" Moses continually viewed and considered the reward awaiting him in heaven, and esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.

We read in Heb.2v2., that the wicked are going to receive a just recompense for their evil deeds. "For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; v3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." **KJV.** Again, "recompense of reward," is "misthapodosian;" a double compound, like "misthapodotes" 3406, in Heb 11:6, from "misthos," reward, and "apodidomi," to give back, to pay for services, good or bad. Here we are told that the wicked are going to receive a just pay back and reward for their wickedness.

We read in Heb.12v1., of "a great cloud of witnesses." "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with **so great a cloud of witnesses,** let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." **KJV.** "With **so great,**" is "**tosoutos,**" **5118**, **so much, so vast as this,** in quantity, amount, and number. **Literally,** "having so great a cloud of witnesses lying around us." "**Having is "echontes,"** the present active participle of "**echo,**" **to have, to hold, to possess.**" "**Lying around us**" is "**perikeimenon,**" the present middle participle of "**perikeimai,**" **to lie all around,** i.e. enclose, encircle. See Luke.17v2. "**Witnesses**" "**marturon,**" does not just mean "spectators," ("theatai"), but witnesses, who testify out of their own experiences, how God has fulfilled His promises to them. Heb.11v2,4-5,33,39. "**Nephos,**" "cloud," only occurs here in the New Testament, **it speaks of a vast mass of cloud covering the entire heavens,** and is to be distinguished from "nephele," which is a single cloud.

We read in Heb.13v20,21., of "Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep." "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. v21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." **KJV.**

In Heb 13v20, "that great shepherd of the sheep," is, "ton poimena ton probaton ton megan." **Literally,** "**The shepherd of the sheep, the great one.**" "Megan," is from "mezas" 3173. Paul also adds "ton megan" in Heb.4v14. and 10v21.

The phrase, "the shepherd of His flock," occurs in **Is.63v11,12.,** "Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with **the shepherd of his flock?** Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? **v12** That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, **to make himself an everlasting name?" KJV.** The passage lacks the description "the great," however, Is.63v11-14., truly reveals the majestic greatness of Yahweh, and "the arm of His majesty."

God is holy dedicated love, 1John.4v8,16. and He demands respect and recognition of His position as God and Judge of the whole earth. **God is selflessly striving to bring about the salvation and wellbeing of His creatures, and judgement day will abundantly manifest this.** God makes to Himself an "everlasting name," by revealing His wonderful character and glorifying Himself in such unforgettable miracles of love and redemption, as He achieved in the deliverance of His people from Egypt, and in our much greater act of deliverance through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Yet another keyword is "New."

"Neos," 3501, occurs 23 times in the "Received Text" in the New Testament. It is translated in the KJV, as "new wine," in Mt.9v17.; Mk.2v22. twice; Lk.5v37., twice; Lk.5v38.; and Lk5v39.. "Neos," is translated as "younger," in Lk.15v12,13.; Lk.22v26. 1Tim.5v1,2,11,14.; 1Pet.5v5. "Neos," is translated as "young," in Jn.21v18.; Acts.5v6.; Titus.2v4,6.. "Neos," is translated in the KJV as "new lump," in 1Cor.5v7.; as "new man," in Col.3v10.; and as "New Covenant," in Heb.12v24.

"Kainos," 2537, occurs 45 times in the "Received Text" in the New Testament. It is translated in the KJV, in Mt.9v17., as, "new ("neos") wine into new ("kainos") bottles." In Mt.13v52., "things new." **In.Mt.26v28., "this is My blood of the New Covenant."** In Mt.26v29., "drink it new." In Mt.27v60., "new tomb." In Mk.1v27., "new doctrine." In Mk.2v21., "new cloth." In Mk2v22., "new ("neos") wine must be put into new ("kainos") bottles." In Mk.14v25., "I drink it new." In Mk.16v17., "they shall speak with new tongues." In Lk.5v36., "a new garment--- the new maketh a rent,--- the new agrees not with the old." In Lk.5v38., "new ("neos") wine must be put into new ("kainos") bottles." In Lk.22v20., "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." In Jn.13v34., "A new commandment I give unto you." In Jn.19v41., "a new sepulchre." In Acts.17v9., "what this new doctrine is." In Acts.17v21., "some new thing." In 1Cor.11v25., "This cup is the new testament in my blood." In 2Cor.3v6., "This cup is the new testament in my blood." In 2Cor.3v6., "Who also hath made us able ministers of the **New Testament**; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." In 2Cor.5v17., "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." "Kainos," twice. In Gal.6v15., "a new creature." In Eph.2v15., "for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." In Eph.4v24., "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." In Heb.8v8., "I will make a new covenant." In Heb.8v13., "A new covenant." In Heb.9v15., "He is the mediator of the new covenant." In 2Pet.3v13., "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth." "Kainos," twice. In 1Jn.2v7., "no new commandment." In 1Jn.2v8., "a new commandment." In 2Jn.1v5., "a new commandment." In Rev.2v17., "a new name written."

The "new tongues," "kainos," in Mk.16v17., are the "other tongues," "heteros," of Acts.2v4. These languages were both 'new' and 'different,' they were new languages to the speakers, and different from those which they usually spoke.

The new things that the Gospel brings to us are: a new covenant, Mt.26v28., in most texts; a new commandment, Jn.13v34.; salvation in Jesus makes us a new creation, 2Cor.5v17. Gal.6v15.; we are to be renewed in our minds and put on the new man, which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness, Eph.4v24.; In Eph.2v15. "Having abolished," (is "katargeo," to make null and void) in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." KJV. Through His redeeming death, Jesus has broken down the divisions and conflicts between nations, and in particular between Jew and Gentile.

The new things that are to be received and enjoyed in Heaven are: the believer's new name, Rev.2v17.; Christ's new name, Rev.3v12.; the angelic elders new song about the saints, Rev.5v9.; a new Heaven and a new Earth, Rev.21v1.; the New Jerusalem, Rev.3v12. 21v2.; We read that God the Father speaks directly to all creation in Rev.21v5., "And He that sitteth on the Throne said, "Idou kaina poio panta," Behold, I make all things new." All the elements of festivity in the heavenly kingdom will be of a new and higher quality.

THE NEW COVENANT.

We read in Heb 8v8,13., of "a new covenant." "Covenant," 1242., means "a disposition, a covenant, a contract, especially a will. "New" is "kainen" from "kainos" 2537, new (and fresh), of better quality. In Heb.8v8., "a new covenant," is "diatheken kainen." In Heb.12v24., we have "diathekes neas," "neos," is young or not yet old. However, "kaines," is used in 1Cor.11v25. "Kainos" is fresh, on new lines as opposed to the old "palaios." See 2Cor.3v6,14.; where in v6 "As ministers of a new covenant," is "diakonous" 1249, "kaines" 2537, "diathekes" 1242. The adjective "kaines," means fresh and effective, only God can make this a reality in our ministries. in verse 14, "of the old covenant," is "tes palaias diathekes," "palaios" means ancient, in contrast to "kainos," new, fresh and effective.

We read in Mt.26v28., "For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." "For this is my blood of the covenant," is "touto gar estin to haima mou tes kaines diathekes." The adjective "kaines" is excluded in the Critical Texts, and Aleph, B, L, and Theta. However it is included in the received Text, Hodges and Farstad, A, C, D, K, W, Delta, Pi, The massive Byzantine majority, the Byzantine

lectures, the Latin, the Vulgate, the Syriac, the Coptic, the Armenian, the Ethiopic, and Georgian, the Diatessaron, Irenaeus, Origen, Cyprian, Basil, and Chrysostom. **Weighty evidence indeed!**

The covenant is an agreement or contract between two "dia," two, and "theke." It is also used for a will, which comes into operation at death. See Heb.9v15-17. So in our New Testament, either covenant or will are appropriate. Heb.7v22. 8v8. etc. Among the Hebrews, when they made a covenant they cut up a sacrifice to ratify an agreement just as Abraham did in Gen.15v9-18. In Mt.26v28., Jesus takes the solemn words spoken at Sinai in Ex.24v8., "**the blood** of the covenant," and changes it to "**My blood** of the covenant." This is the New Covenant of Jer.31. Heb 8:1.

In Mt.26v28., "for the remission of sins," is "eis aphasis hamartion." This clause is only found in Matthew's Gospel; but it reveals that Jesus had the definite understanding that His death on the cross was the basis of forgiveness of sin. The purpose of the shedding of his blood of the New Covenant was precisely to remove and forgive sins.

The Greek word for "covenant" is lacking in Heb.8v13., but most translators add covenant in brackets in order to enable readers to understand the sentence more easily. **The American Standard Version reads**, "In that he saith, A new (covenant) he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away." **Young's Literal reads**, v13 "In the saying 'new,' He hath made the first old, and what doth become obsolete and is old [is] nigh disappearing." **Wuest translates Heb.8v13.**, "In the fact that He says, New in quality, He has permanently antiquated the first. Now, that which is being antiquated and is waning in strength, is near to the point of vanishing away."

Paul affirms that the New Covenant carries with it the promise of the abolition and closure of the Old Covenant.

The KJV translates Heb.8v13., "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." In that he saith a new covenant, is, "en to legein kainen," literally, "in his saying new." "He hath made the first old," is "pepalaioken ten proten." "**Pepalaioken**," is the perfect active indicative of "palaioo," 3822, to declare or treat as old, worn out, or obsolete. "**Decayeth**," is "palaioumenon," the present passive participle of "palaioo," 3822, to become old or obsolete. "Waxeth old," is "**geraskon**," the present active participle of gerasko," 1095, to grow old, (it only occurs here and in Jn.21v18.) it refers to the decay and infirmity of old age. "Ready to vanish away," is "**engus**" 1451, "**aphanismou**" 854, which literally means, "is nigh unto vanishing;" to disappearance, to utter destruction and abolition. "Aphanismos," 854, "vanishing," is only found here in the New Testament.

Paul could not have been more forthright and candid, he unequivocally set the record straight. His words were designed to destroy any emotional attachment that the readers had towards the Old Covenant. He proclaimed that God was instituting a new and much better covenant, and that God regarded the Old Covenant, as obsolete, and about to pass away. The New Covenant avoids the imperfections and shortcomings of the Old Covenant. In 2Cor.3v6-11., Paul affirms that the ministration of the Law had a glory, but the ministration of the Spirit has a glory that excels. **The following are its superior provisions:**

1. The law will no more be merely external, a ministration of the letter of the Law, but it will be a ministration of the Holy Spirit, and His ministries and gifts are available to all, and God's Law is written in the heart. See 2Cor.3v3. Heb.8v9-11.

2. This ministration of the Spirit brings an intimate and affectionate relationship with God for all believers, that deals thoroughly, powerfully, and effectively with sin. N.B. Heb.8v11,12., "None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. v12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." **NKJV**. See Jer.31v31-34., where the quotation of Heb.8v8 to 12., is taken from.

We read in Heb.9v15. "Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant ("diathekes kaines mesites"), so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death (Christ's death) has occurred which redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant. **RSV**

Paul informs us that it is the atoning sacrifice of Jesus that is the basis of salvation for all who were saved before Jesus died on the Cross-; as well as for all who have been saved since His atoning death. "Under the first covenant," is "epi te prote diatheke." Paul definitely states that the real value of the typical sacrifices in the Old Testament system was in their fulfilment in the death of Christ Jesus. It is the death of Jesus that gives worth and meaning to the types that pointed to him.

"For the redemption of the transgressions." To make atonement for the transgressions which were committed under the Old Covenant, which the blood of bulls and calves could not do; **so the death of Jesus had respect to all the time before His death, as well as to all the time after His death, and even to the end of the world.**

In Heb.9v15. Scholars say there is no good reason why translators should translate "diatheke" by "Testament" here, when in almost every other case they render it "Covenant," which is its proper Scriptural meaning. It is essential to translate it Covenant.

"They which are called," the Gentiles, might receive the promise, by being brought into a covenant with God, and have an equal right with the Jews, not merely to an inheritance such as the promised land, but to an eternal inheritance, and consequently infinitely superior to that of the Jews, because the new covenant is superior in every point of view to the old.

In Heb.10v20, "a new and living way." "new" is "prosphaton" from "prosphatos" 4372, pertaining to what is new and recent, in the sense of not previously existing - 'new, recent, new and different; very lately made."

In Heb 12v24. "mediator of the new covenant", "new" is "neas" from "neos" 3501, new, in respect of time, young, youthful. **However, scholars say "that it is better not to press the distinction, since "neos," in certain cases, clearly has the sense of quality rather than of time, as 1Cor.5v7. Col.3v10., to confine the sense to recent would seem to limit it unduly."** Again scholars say, **"The distinction cannot be pressed in all cases.** So in 1Cor.5v7., "Purge out the old leaven that ye may be a new, "neon," lump;" and Col 3:10, "Put on the new, "neon" man," clearly carry the sense of quality. In our Lord's expression, "drink it new," the idea of quality is dominant."

The "New" Covenant in Heb.12v24., is "new" (neos) compared with the Mosaic, nearly fifteen hundred years before; it is "new" (kainos) compared with the Mosaic, which is old in character, but now obsolete and ineffective. See Heb.8v8,13. 9v15. Jesus said, in Mt.22v29. Mk.12v24. **"You know not the Scriptures nor the power of God." The Jews had a "morphosin" an empty outline of religion. In Rom.2v20., "the form," is "ten morphosin." In the New Testament it only occurs here in Rom.2v20. and in 2Tim.3v5. Lightfoot regards "morphosis," as "the rough-sketch, the pencilling of the morphe." In other words, in both Rom.2v20., and 2Tim.3v5., it describes, "the outline or framework, without the substance."**

The "new" wine of Mt.9v17; Mark.2v22; Luke.5v37-39, **is neos,** as being of recent production; the "new" wine of the kingdom, Mt.26v29. and Mark.4v25,, **is kainos,** since it will be of a different character from that of this world.

We read in Mt. 26v28. "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." NKJV. In Mt.26v28., "the new Covenant, is "tes kaines diathekes. The adjective "kaines" is lacking in the critical texts, Aleph, B, L, Theta, **but "kaines," is included in A, C, D, K, W, Delta, Pi, f1, f13,** the vast Byzantine majority, the Byzantine Lectures, the Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Georgian, the Diatessaron, Irenaeus, Origen, Cyprian, Basil, and Chrysostom. To say "kaines" should not be included ignores the vast evidence for its inclusion, and again looks like an acceptance of the authority of Aleph and B, which Burgon said were the two most corrupt manuscripts. The fact that Jesus said "kaine" cannot be denied, for the adjective "kaine" is included in both Luke's and Paul's account of our Lord's institution of the bread and wine at the Last Supper. Lk.20v22. and 1Cor.11v25.

The covenant is an agreement or contract between two "dia," two, and "theke," from tithemi. It is used also for a will, which becomes operative at death (Heb. 9v15-17.). In the Hebrew to make a covenant was to cut up a sacrifice and so ratify an agreement (Gen.15v9-18.). Jesus here uses the solemn words of Ex.24v8., "the blood of the covenant" at Sinai, and changes it to, "My blood of the covenant." This is the New Covenant of Jer.31. Heb.8v1.

Another keyword is propitiation.

We read in 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, [The NIV reads, "that he might make atonement for the sins of the people." The NRSV reads, "to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people." The RSV reads, "to make expiation 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." NKJV.

In Heb.2v17., "to make propitiation for," is "eis to hilaskesthai," the present tense of the verb "hilaskomai," 2433, to appease, to expiate, make propitiation for, (from "hilaos," gracious, gentle); only here and Luke.18-v13., where "hilastheti," the passive form of the verb occurs.

Scholars say that "Hilaskomai," 2433, is never used of any act by man, which causes God to have a favourable attitude or gracious disposition towards man. It is God who is "propitiated" **through the provision He has made in the vicarious and atoning sacrifice of Christ Jesus,** and so He can show mercy to the believing sinner in the removal of his guilt and the remission of his sins. **The reading of The New American Standard Bible's, "to make propitiation" is an important correction of the King James Version's, "to make reconciliation." The enmity exists on man's side alone, it is man who needs to be reconciled to**

God, and not God to man. God so loved the whole wicked world that He gave His only beloved Son to die for it. John.3v16,17.

The noun "hilasmos," 2434, which is akin to "hileos," and means "merciful," and "propitious," and signifies "an expiation, a means whereby sin is covered and cancelled." "Hilasmos" occurs twice, in 1Jn.2v2. and 1Jn.4v10., and in the KJV both cases are translated "propitiation." **"Hilasmos" is used of Jesus in 1Jn.2v2. The NRSV reads, "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." The RSV reads, "and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." The Amplified Version reads, "And He [that same Jesus Himself] is the propitiation (the atoning sacrifice) for our sins, and not for ours alone but also for [the sins of] the whole world."**

In the New Testament the adjective "hilasterion" 2435, only occurs in Heb.9v5. and Rom.3v25. It is a most important word, and is a key to the correct understanding of Christ's atoning work. The adjective "hilasterion," 2434, is derived from the verb "hilaskomai," to make propitiation, as in Heb.2v17., and is related to the noun "hilasmos," "propitiation," in 1Jn.2v2. and 1Jn.4v10.. Besides Rom.3v25., the only other New Testament instance of the adjective "hilasterion," is in Heb.9v5., where we have the "cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat," the "to hilasterion." God gave his Son as the means of propitiation and reconciliation. The adjective "hilasterion" should be studied in connection with the verb, "hilaskomai," which occurs in the New Testament in Lk.18v13. and Heb.2v17.. The passive form "hilastheti," only occurs in Luke.18v13., and reads, "God be merciful," and signifies "to be propitious" or "merciful to," the person being the object of the verb. In Heb.2v17., "to make propitiation for," is "eis to hilastesthai," the present indirect middle of "hilaskomai," "to render propitious to oneself, to make atonement, to expiate, to make propitiation for," the sins being the object of the verb. Through the "propitiatory" sacrifice of Christ, those who believe on Jesus are delivered from the justly deserved wrath of God, and come under the covenant of grace.

The expiatory death of Jesus is the means by which the barrier which sin interposes between God and man is broken down. It is the means by which God demonstrates His righteousness and upholds the Law, and yet is able to justify the ungodly. We read in Rom.3v23-31., v23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, v24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, v25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, v26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. v27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. v28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. v29 Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, v30 since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. v31 **Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law."** NKJV.

In Rom 3:25. "propitiation," "hilasterion" 2435, is used of Christ Himself. The NKJV text and punctuation in this verse are important: "whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith." The phrase "by His blood" is to be taken in relation with "propitiation." Through faith in Christ's atoning blood, we receive God's mercy, forgiving love and justifying grace, and we are saved from the divine judgment righteously due to us as sinners.

The noun "hilasmos," 2434, is akin to "hileos," which means "merciful, and propitious." It signifies "an expiation, a means whereby sin is covered and remitted." It is used in 1Jn.2v20. and 1Jn.4v10. of Christ Himself as "the propitiation." In 1Jn.4:10., John states that God "sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins," and reveals the expression of God's great love toward man, and the reason why Christians should love one another. Jesus, through the expiatory sacrifice of His death, is the means by whom God shows mercy to the sinner who believes on Jesus. In 1Jn.2v20., Jesus is described as "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." **God makes provision for the whole world, no one is excluded from His great love and mercy. Eph.2v4.; However, the "propitiation" and atoning sacrifice of Jesus, is only available for those who repent of their sins, and believe and trust in Jesus, and follow Him.**

Paul also gives five separate very strong warnings against "departing from the living God," i.e. apostasy. Heb.3v12.

Heb.2v1-4, 3v1-4v11, 6v4-8, 10v26-31, 12v25-29. These five warnings by Paul, in this Epistle to the Jewish believers, are in the strongest possible terms, and indeed, probably no stronger warnings occur in the whole of the Scriptures. This would clearly indicate that the spiritual condition of many of the Christians in Palestine at the time of writing, was critical, spiritual death was very close for many of them, and if they did not take radical action they would become "twice dead." Jude.v12.

Paul writes in Heb.5v12-14. "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." NKJV.

Many of them had to learn again "the first principles of the oracles of God", the Foundation Truths of Christianity. Which are detailed in **Heb.6v1,2**. "Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." **NKJV**.

They were in grave spiritual danger for when they should have been teachers, because of the extent of time that they had been under instruction and been believers, they had not grown spiritually, or in knowledge, and were still babes on milk. Of them, like many today, it can be said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Hos.4v6. **KJV**.

These five warnings in **Heb.2v1-4, 3v1-4v11, 6v4-8, 10v26-31, 12v25-29**. clearly refute the false doctrine of, "once saved, always saved," and show that whether a person is saved or lost depends entirely upon their response to the Gospel message, not only just at the time of hearing, but also in their walk with the Lord after accepting Him as Lord and Saviour. We need to take note of the words of Peter in 2Pet.1v10., "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble." See 2Pet.1v5-11. We also need to listen to the words of Paul in Phil.2v12,13., "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; v13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. **NKJV**. See also 2Cor.5v8-11., "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. v9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. v10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. v11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. **NKJV**. See 2Cor.5v14., "For the love of Christ constrains us and urges us on."

NOTES ON HEBREWS BY C.L. PARKER, W. TURNER AND OTHERS.

Paul's Reason For Writing The Epistle to the Hebrews.

It was written to awaken a sleeping company of Heavenly Pilgrims to the great issues at stake in their pilgrimage. Like Paul in 1Cor.10., the writer uses the Old Testament experiences of Israel passing from Egypt to Canaan to drive home his lessons. Although probably written primarily to Hebrew Christians familiar with the Old Testament, and Temple worship, it is equally applicable to all who have a knowledge of the Old Testament.

The word Hebrews was probably used to draw attention to the fact that Abraham was an immigrant from Mesopotamia into Canaan, and his descendants also moved from Egypt to Canaan, and were pilgrims and strangers. The epistle should be read in conjunction with the prison epistles of Paul, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, which deal especially with the heavenly places, which the Christian is called to enter by conflict with the powers of darkness.

N.B. Heb.2v5-18. The great things to which we are called make a correct response from us absolutely vital.

God is not taking hold of angels, He is taking hold of men and women, so Jesus had to take upon Him a human body and human flesh, He had to be made in all points like unto us, His brethren. Jesus "took on Him the seed Abraham," and "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." Heb.2v16. Rom.1v3. We can only properly use the gifts of the Holy Spirit, if we are constrained and dominated by the love of Christ in our hearts, indeed, the loveless use of even God's great and good gifts can be hazardous and unprofitable, when they are manifested by a carnal Christian. Paul's overwhelming desire and aim in life was to get to know Jesus and God the Father. **See Phil.3v7-14**. N.B. v10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. **NKJV**. Christ's life and ministry was very costly and totally sacrificial, He has earned and deserved His exalted position in Heaven. Mt.8v20. 2Cor.8v9. Rev.5v11-14. 14v1-5.

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S MESSENGER, CHRIST JESUS, GOD THE SON. Heb.1v1 to 2v4.

In the Old Testament God gave His Word through prophets, who received them from angels. Gal.3v19. In the New Testament God has spoken in the person of His Son. Mt.21v37. John.2v49,50. Neglect of angels proved to be expensive; how much worse the consequences are if we disregard God's Son! Heb.12v25. The relative importance of God's Son and His angels is illustrated in a series of quotations from the Old Testament.

The superior position and supreme status of God's Son is clearly stated. Jesus is the one through whom, and for whom, the Father created all things, and which the Son inherited, because by His amazing sacrificial love, and willingness to die for our sins, the Creation became possible, for without His atonement for sin Creation would not have been possible. The whole Creation depended on the willingness of Jesus to die. The exact likeness of the Son to the Father is clearly stated. See John.14v9. The whole passage should be read in conjunction with the following Scriptures. Jesus has won His position absolutely, and beyond any doubt, through merit. Phil.2v4-11. Col.1v14-23. Mt.28v18. Acts.1v3. 7v55,56. 2Pet.1v16,17.

N.B.1. A Message can be sent in a very dramatic way.

God hurled His Son's dead body into the world. See Judges.20v4-10

N.B.2. Note on Primogeniture, i.e. the position of the Firstborn.

It is clear that the firstborn had an advantage; (it is not quite clear how far it went, or whether it was always the same), however, it seems to have included:-

a. Some control over the rest of the family.

See Gen. 25v23., where God gave Jacob Esau's position. We read in Rom.9v12,13., "It was said to her (Rebecca), "The older will serve the younger." v13 Just as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." A quote from Mal.1v2,3. The reason for this choice is quite obvious, Esau was a carnal worldly person who was quite unfit to be the spiritual leader of God's people. See Heb.12v16,17., which states that Esau was "bebelos," that is, profane, irreligious, and godless, It has the opposite meaning to "hagios," which means, "holy, set apart, and consecrated." Esau despised his spiritual heritage. We also read in Gen.26v34,35. that Esau married two Hittite women, and that "they were a source of grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah."

Adam Clarke's Commentary, states of Gen.25v27. "Jacob was a plain man," 'iysh taam," "a perfect or upright man." The Commentary by Keil and Delitzsch, states, "But Jacob was "taam 'iysh," "a pious man" (Luther)." Jacob found pleasure in a quiet righteous life at home, he was quite different from the wild and Godless Esau. Jacob is said in Gen.25v27., to be "tam" ("tawm") 8535, from 8552; complete; it describes someone who is morally pious, an upright person, a person of integrity, and reveals a gentle and good character, a man content with a simple righteous life. God said that Jacob was a good living righteous man in His eyes. Jacob has been badly slandered by many preachers.

The adjectival form "tam" is used to describe Job as "perfect" in Job.1v1,8. and 2v3..

God is not saying that Job was "perfect" in the ultimate sense of absolute or faultless perfection, but rather that he was "upright," "blameless" (RSV), "undefiled," or "had integrity." "Tam" is translated as "perfect" in Job.8v20. 9v20,21,22. Ps.37v37.and Ps.64v4.: and as "upright" in Prov.29v10.: and in Song.5v2 and 6v9., describes an "undefiled" good woman.

Barnes makes the following excellent note on "tam." "The Septuagint has greatly expanded this statement, by giving a paraphrase instead of a translation. "He was a man who was true "alethinos;" blameless "amemptos;" just "dikaios;" pious "theosebēs." abstaining from every evil deed." (Septuagint). Jerome renders it, "simplex-simple," or "sincere." The Chaldee, "shaliym," "complete, finished, perfect." The idea seems to be that his piety, or moral character, was "proportionate" and was "complete in all its parts." He was a man of integrity in all the relations of life-as an Emir, a father, a husband, a worshipper of God. Such is properly the meaning of the word "tam" as derived from "taamam," "to complete, to make full, perfect" or "entire," or "to finish." It denotes that in which there is no part lacking to complete the whole, as in a watch in which no wheel is missing. Thus, he was not merely upright as an Emir, but he was pious toward God; he was not merely kind to his family, but he was just to his neighbours and benevolent to the poor. The word is used to denote integrity as applied to the heart." -----.

[And upright] The word "yaashaar" (3477), from "yaashar" (3474), to be straight, is applied often to a road, which is straight, or to a path which is level or even. As used here it means upright or righteous; compare Ps 11:7; 37:14; Deut 32:4; Ps 33:4.

[And one that feared God] Religion in the Scriptures is often represented as the fear of God; Prov.1:7,29; 2:5; 8:13; 14:26-27; Isa.11:2; Acts 9:31, "et soepe al."

[And eschewed evil] "And departed from "caar" (5493) evil." Septuagint, "Abstaining from every evil thing." These then are the four characteristics of Job's piety-he was sincere; upright; a worshipper of God; and one who abstained from all wrong. These are the essential elements of true religion everywhere; and the whole statement in the book of Job shows Job was ----eminent in each of these things. **End of Barnes quote.**

The Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament states about Job. "The writer intentionally uses four synonyms together, in order to describe as strongly as possible Job's piety, the reality and purity of which is the fundamental assumption of the history; "taam," with the whole heart disposed towards God and what is good, and also well-disposed toward mankind; "yaashaar," in thought and action without deviation conformed to that which is right; "elohiym y'aree", fearing God, and consequently being actuated by the fear of God, which is the beginning (i.e., principle) of wisdom; "meeraa` caar," keeping aloof from evil, which is opposed to God. The first predicate recalls Gen.25v27., the fourth the proverbial Psalms, Ps.34v15. 37v27., and Prov.14v16." **End of quote from Keil and Delitzsch.**

The use of the word "tam" in connection with Jacob puts him in the exalted company of Job, which shows that many preachers have badly slandered this godly man. God said that Jacob was, "A prince with God." God chose Jacob because of his integrity, and the Lord Jesus was chosen and anointed by God the Father, because He

"loved righteousness and hated evil. We read in Heb.1v9. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

b. The Firstborn belonged to God, and had to be redeemed.

Hence he had a kind of priesthood. Lk.2v24. Reuben, because of sexual sin, lost his position to Levi.Gen.35v22. 49v3,4. Numb.8v14-19. The tribe of Levi stood for all the firstborn.

The Firstborn had a larger inheritance than his brethren, a double portion. Deut.21v16,17.

When, in 2Kings.2v9., Elisha asked for a "double portion," he was asking for an anointing that made it clear to all that he was Elijah's successor. Compare the difference between the blessings of Jacob and Esau in Gen.27. Esau only had what was left. Cf. Gen.25v5,7. **Jacob's blessing was a spiritual impartation, it was not just words.** Gen.27v33. Jacob and Rebecca had no need for deception, God said that the blessing was Jacob's by right, He would have stepped in, as He did with Balaam, and would have made Isaac pronounce it so. It was a great pity that Isaac's love of venison, so perverted his judgement that he rejected the word of God through his wife, Rebecca; Rom.9v11-13. "Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad — in order that God's purpose in election might stand: v12 not by works but by him who calls — she (Rebecca) was told, "The older will serve the younger." v13 Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." **NIV.**

See Mal.1v2-4., v2 "I have loved you," says the LORD. "But you ask, 'How have you loved us?' "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" the LORD says. "Yet I have loved Jacob, v3 but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his mountains into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals." v4 Edom may say, "Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins." **But this is what the LORD Almighty says: "They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people always under the wrath of the LORD."** **NIV.**

Note on "Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite." It appears that out of the tribe of Esau came one of the greatest men of God in the Scriptures, "Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite," who had another spirit within him, and he wholly followed the Lord. Num.14v6,24,30,38. 32v12. Deut.1v36. We read in Josh.15v13,14. "And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua, even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron. v14 **And Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak.**" **Caleb drove out three tribes of Goliath sized giants from the city of Arba, which city became Hebron, the city of the priests.** Arba is said to be the father of Anak in Josh.15v13,14. and 21v11., and a great man among the Anakims in, Josh.14v15.

In Gen.15v18-21. in God's covenant with Abraham, the Kenizzites are named among the nations to be driven out by Israel. This implies that these tribes then occupied the land. However, we see that in Exod.3v8. and Josh.3v10., the Kenizzites are not mentioned among the original inhabitants of Canaan. Some think that they could have inhabited some part of Arabia, in the confines of Syria. Other scholars think that Caleb was descended from the Edomite Kenaz, the son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau. Gen.36v10,11,15. In Gen.36v42,43., Kenaz appears among the "chiefs" of Edom, so this could mean that the Kenizzites here referred to were an Edomite tribe. Though Kenaz, the grandson of Esau, was not born for a century and a half after the Kenizzites were mentioned in Gen.15v19., some think that it is still quite probable that Caleb was a descendent of Kenaz and Esau. It is quite clear that Caleb was not an Israelite, but was adopted into the tribe of Judah because of his remarkable walk with God, and became one of its leaders, and one of the twelve spies who were sent to spy out Canaan.

N.B. It is clear, therefore that mere sonship did not necessarily carry with it the right of inheritance.

This right could be forfeited through bad behaviour, e.g. Reuben, Ishmael, and Esau. Gen.21v10. 25v3. 35v22. 1Chron.5v1.

What was true in the case of Jacob, is also true of the Church, the primogeniture carries with it a heavenly portion, "names written in Heaven." Lk.10v20. Jacob wanted the blessing of God above all things, and a heavenly inheritance. Esau received what he wanted, Earth first, Heaven second, he despised his heavenly blessing. We see from **Prov.17v2. and 29v21.**, that a faithful servant might share the inheritance with a son, if by their conduct they won their master's love and approval, and were worthy and faithful. The following Scriptures, **Eph.5v5. Gal.5v21. Rev.3v2.**, warn us that evil conduct will disqualify us from receiving our inheritance. God desires all His sons, not only to have an inheritance, but also to have the glorious inheritance of an eldest son. **John.17v23-26.**

N.B.3. The Position of Angels.

This epistle makes it clear that the present position of angels is above that of men. Heb.1v6,7. However, the Sons of God, His Royal Family, are to rule the world with Jesus in the Millennial age to come, not the angels. Heb.2v5. **In Luke.20v34-36.** "Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. v35 But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; v36 nor can they die anymore, ("dunantai," means that dying has become impossible) for they are equal to the angels and are sons ("huiioi" 5207) of God, being sons ("huiioi"

5207) of the resurrection." **NKJV.** "Equal to the angels" is "isangeloi," it only occurs here in the New Testament. Mark and Matthew read, "as angels," "hos angeloi." Jesus says that angels do not marry, and that there is no marriage in heaven, and so He refuted and opposed the theology of the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead.

Overcoming Christians will even judge fallen angels. 1Cor.6v1-3. However, we read in Rev.14v9-12., that it is Jesus and the holy angels who test and examine the reaction of the evil angels and evil men to confinement in Gehenna. In Rev.14v10., "tormented," is the future passive indicative of basanizo" 928 which means literally "to test." See Rev.11v10. In Rev.14v11. and 9v5, "torment" is the noun "basanismos." In Mt.4v23,24., we read of some grievous testing physical illnesses being called "torments," "basanois." The Greek word is derived from "basanos," which originally meant the "Lydian stone," or touchstone, on which pure gold, when rubbed, leaves a distinctive mark, and so it naturally came to mean, a test, or a trial, we read in Mk.6v48. of the disciples "toiling" and being "tested," "basanizo," as they rowed in the storm. In Rev.14v11., the A.V. "the smoke of their torment," "torment," is the noun "basanismos," it only occurs in Rev.9v5. 14v11. 18v7,10,15.; most translators follow the A.V. and render it as "torment," **however, Robert Young, in his "Concise Critical Comments," always renders it as "trial," which is its literal meaning. See my much more detailed study, "The Issues of Death and Judgement."**

N.B.4. PAUL AFFIRMS THAT THE GOSPEL IS ATTESTED BY THE SUPERNATURAL. Heb.2v4.

It is a gospel, which is worthy of such mighty supernatural evidence. See Jn.15v22-25. 1Pet.1v12. Mt.11v1-24. Rom.15v18-21. Rejection of the truth after such divinely confirmed preaching is final and irremediable. Heb.6v4-8. 10v26-31. To have been convinced, and after that throw it all up, leaves the Almighty with no further argument to bring. Such people have announced their preference for evil See John.15v22-25. Acts.4v14-22. 5v33-39.

N.B. 5. The descriptions of Christ in Heb.1v3., seem to draw attention to the fact that the glory of God's character, though visible in Heaven, was not visible on earth, until His Son, who was exactly like Him, came down to earth and lived amongst men, so that they would know how His Father lived in Heaven. Cf. John.1v4, 9,14,18. 14v6-15. 1John.1v1-3.

We are told in Heb.1v1-3., that Jesus is the supreme revelation of God the Father.

We read in Heb.1v1-3. v1 "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, v2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; v3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." NKJV

God spoke through the prophets at "various times;" the adverb, "**polumeros,**" means, "in various times and many separate revelations;" and in "various ways," the adverb, "**polutropos,**" means, "in many different ways." God spoke through His Divine covenants to selected godly prophets. God spoke by dreams and visions, by direct voice, by signs, and sometimes communicated His revelations to the people by symbolic acts, as with Ezekiel, Ezek.4v1-17., and Jeremiah. Jer.13v1-27. Hosea was told to go and marry a prostitute, in order that through experiencing the great pain and anguish his wife's unfaithfulness caused him, Hosea might feel and proclaim with feeling how God felt about Israel. Hosea.11. with Lk.19v41-44. God spoke in many different ways to different prophets. Numbers.12v6-8. Moses, the supreme prophet, spoke with Jesus face to face. Deut.18v15-22. However, the truth conveyed by most prophets was fragmentary and never gave a complete picture of the nature and heart of God, until Jesus came, then God spoke "in his Son," "en huio," literally "in Son." **The introductory verses of Heb.1v1-3. reveal the purpose of the epistle to the Hebrews, through God the Son, we have the full revelation of God the Father.** The clarity of this revelation contrasted sharply with the dark saying and enigmas of the prophets, "en tois prophetais." Numb.12v8. We read in John.14v8,9., "Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." v9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" NRSV

The different states of men's hearts, demanded different ways of speaking, from conciliatory encouraging words, to words of judgement and even threats of captivity. The prophetic revelation that God gave varied according to the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of the God's covenant people. See Eph.3v10., which speaks of "the many-coloured wisdom of God." Jesus came to reveal fully the mercy and love of God to mankind.

We read in Eph.3v10,11., "To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, v11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord." NKJV. **The Amplified version** gives the following excellent translation. v10 "[The purpose is] that through the church the complicated, many-sided wisdom of God in all its infinite variety and innumerable aspects might now be made known to the angelic rulers and authorities (principalities and powers) in the heavenly sphere. v11 This is in accordance with the terms of the eternal and timeless purpose which He has realized and carried into effect in [the person of] Christ Jesus our Lord." AMP

In Eph.3v10., "Manifold wisdom" is the remarkable phrase, "polupoikilos sophia." "Manifold" is the adjective "polupoikilos," which literally means, "much variegated, with a great variety of colours." The adjective only occurs here. It is applied to pictures, flowers, tapestry and even music. The Sept. uses "poikilon" for Joseph's coat of many colours. Gen.37v3.

In Eph.3v10., "By" is "dia." God's wisdom is manifest through His dealings with the Church. God's dealings with the Church manifest His amazing grace and wisdom, and through these God educates the angels, and causes them to comprehend the greatness of His mercy and grace. Angels look at the Church to examine and evaluate the wonders and mysteries of redemption. 1Peter.1v12. The immeasurable and boundless wisdom of God; makes great and infinite plans, and accomplishes them by infinite means, through many ages; and so fulfils the purposes of his infinite mercy and goodness. God's compassionate desire to save a lost world through our dear Lord Jesus, cannot be defeated by the cunning schemes, or malice, of men or Devils. No matter how wicked angels and evil men try to hinder God's Divine purposes, His infinite wisdom and power will ultimately bring to pass all His gracious designs and purposes.

The diversity of God's answers by His manifold wisdom will vary according to the variety of circumstances, places, times, and persons. God has a lot of arrows in His quiver. God's higher ways and thoughts are sometimes even beyond the comprehension of angels, never mind men. Isa.55v8,9. The full knowledge of God's purposes will be revealed to us by God in Heaven. 1Cor.13v12. The Church age is not a corrective afterthought, but part of God's eternal plan.

N.B. 6. Love of righteousness is not enough in itself. We also need, "hatred of lawlessness," Heb.1v9., and God designs to give us this hatred of evil through living with rebels. We, however, are continuously deceived and learn the hard way. The experience of the terrible effects of evil is meant to make us all hate it.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S MESSAGE. Heb.2v5. to 3v6.

The angels, to whom the Pre-Adamic world was subjected, though not yet thrown out of the first Heaven, have been sentenced to deprivation of their position, and eternal punishment. Their place is to be taken by Christ and His brethren, who have all had to win their glorious position, by coming to full growth, and proving their worth under trial. This is to ensure that in the future eternal ages, there shall be no chance of another disastrous failure through sin. In their tests of faith and obedience Christ's brethren are to keep their eyes on their Great High Priest, who is not ashamed to call them "brethren." When their number is completed, Christ Jesus will return to take them to Himself, and place them in their positions of authority in His kingdom. They are the seed of Abraham, that is, believers. Gal.3v26-29. Rom.4v9-25.

N.B. 1. THE TESTING.

This can be so severe, that help from Heaven is sometimes needed to help us to get through.

We see that in Mt.16v21-28, the warnings about Christ's suffering and death is followed by Mt.17v1-13., Christ's glorification in the Mount of Transfiguration. Satan's attack upon the Lord Jesus through Peter, and the rest of the unbelieving apostles, was so severe (see Mk.16v9-14.), that to counter the strong unbelief of all around Him, God the Father sent Jesus two men, Moses and Elijah, who were willing to discuss His sacrificial death with Jesus. Lk.9v28-36. Moses had lost his body and received it back. Jude.v9. Elijah had been caught up from earth to Heaven. 2Kings.2v11. These two men discussed Christ's "decease"(A.V.), in Luke.9v31.

"Decease" is the Greek noun, "exodos" 1841, from which we get our English "exodus."

In Lk.9v31., "of his decease," is "ten exodon 1841, autou" 846, and means, "of His exodus." "Exodos," literally means, "a way out," from "ex" "out," and "hodos" "a way." 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. It is used in Heb.11v22., speak of the faith that Joseph had that Israel that would exodus from Egypt. In Luke.9v31., there is the double implication, first of our Lord's death, and secondly, that He would bring about the release and exodus of all the redeemed Old Testament saints from Hades, "**which He was about to accomplish**" through His atoning death. 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 that. It is clearly 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, however, 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.

In Luke.9v31. "Who appeared in glory and spake," "spake," is the imperfect active, "elegon," which shows the prolonged nature of their conversation about Christ's exodus; so a better translation of "elegon ten exodon autou," is, "and were speaking of His exodus." Moses and Elijah talked at length with Jesus about His atoning death, the very subject which Peter had rebuked Jesus for mentioning. Mark.8v32. Mt.16v22. In 2Pet.1v15-19., Peter uses the word exodus about his own death, and follows it with a brief and beautiful description of Christ's Transfiguration glory. Luke does not use the other words for death which are used in the New Testament; "thanatos," "death;" "ekbasis," going out as departure Heb.13v7.; "afixis," departing, Acts.20v29.; "analysis," loosening anchor, 2Tim.4v6.; and to depart in Phil.1v23., "analusai," the aorist active infinitive of "analuo" 360, to unloose, break up, i.e. depart, it is used of a ship being loosed from its moorings, or of the breaking up a camp.

The transfiguration of Jesus for a short time into the glory, which should afterwards be His, showed Him, and the disciples, what would be the majestic result of His obedience to the death of the Cross. Thus fortified by the grace of God, Jesus went forward in faith to face His sacrificial death and His glorious resurrection. **Note well 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, might taste death for everyone." NKJV. The grace that Jesus received at the transfiguration gave Him the strength to go on and face the horrific sufferings He endured, and His confinement with the most evil beings in Tartarus, the deepest and darkest depth of Hades. Jesus was, however, to the day of His death surrounded by the unbelief and lack of comprehension of His disciples, who, however loving, totally misunderstood His purpose, and would gladly have prevented that sacrifice, which was their only hope of salvation! They were arguing over which of them should be the greatest in the kingdom; Jesus knew that unless He died a substitutionary death upon the Cross; they would not be in the kingdom at all. Lk.18v31-34. 22v21-29.

N.B. 2. PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING. Heb.2v10. 5v8-10.

Heb.2v10. Amplified Version. v10 "For it was an act worthy [of God] and fitting [to the divine nature] that He, for Whose sake and by Whom all things have their existence, in bringing many sons into glory, should make the Pioneer of their salvation perfect [should bring to maturity the human experience necessary to be perfectly equipped for His office as High Priest] through suffering." The Son, unlike Lucifer, had always obeyed His Father in Heaven; but in Heaven in the presence of God His Father obedience was easy. Jesus came down to live the same life of perfect obedience upon earth, in the midst of universal disobedience of all around. Thus He learned by hard experience, how very hard and costly obedience could be. Through His sufferings He learned and manifested His perfection of obedience, which has won Him the Name, which is above every name. He can only save the obedient. Phil.2v5-11. 1John.1v1-7.

The Amplified Version of Heb. 5v8-10. "Although He was a Son, He learned [active, special] obedience through what He suffered. v9 And, [His completed experience] making Him perfectly [equipped], He became the Author and Source of eternal salvation to all those who give heed and obey Him, [Isa.45v17.] v10 Being designated and recognized and saluted by God as High Priest after the order (with the rank) of Melchizedek. [Ps.110v4.]"

In Heb.5v9. "To make perfect," is "teleiosai," the aorist active infinitive of the verb "teleioo," 5048, "to bring to an end by completing or perfecting," akin to the adjective "teleios," "complete, perfect, having reached its end." In Heb.4v15., Paul states that Jesus never sinned, and here in Heb.5v9., he is not suggesting that there was anything wrong with the character of Jesus. Paul is simply stating, that "by means of sufferings," God perfected Jesus through his human life and death for his task as Redeemer, Saviour and High Priest. Jesus experienced the worst trials of human life and overcame them. The ghastly soul-destroying trials of life that Jesus endured, failed to reveal any moral flaw in Him. Under the most terrible pressures of life, the like of which no one else has experienced, he lived a perfect human life in order to be able to be our sympathetic and perfect Saviour and High Priest.

In Heb.5v9. "the author of eternal salvation," A.V.; "author," is the adjective "aitios, which means "causing." Except for Heb.5v9., only Luke uses the adjective "aitios." Luke23v4,14,22. Acts.19v40. "Aitios" speaks of someone one who is the cause and author; the one who is responsible for anything. Jesus is the First Cause and Author of our salvation. Scholars say that "aitios" has the same idea as "archegon" in Acts.3v15. 5v31. Heb.2v10. 12v2. See Isa.45v17. Jesus is the author of our salvation, the leader of the sons of God, our glorious and wonderful Elder Brother. Rom.8v29.

N.B. 3. I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM. Heb.2v13.

It is one thing to have confidence in a God whom you can see and touch; it is quite another thing to trust in a God whom you have never seen and live by faith in His Word. This Christ did, so that He might be able to sympathise with our difficulties, and help us in our times of testing.

We 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, "choliy," that is used in Is.53v4., "He has borne our griefs." "Choliy," 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.

N.B. 4. MANY SONS TO GLORY. Heb.2v10. Rom.8v15-21.

As unbelievers we led a shameful and selfish life, our faith in the blood of Jesus washed this away; but it did not give us the satisfaction of having lived a righteous and glorious life. Although God would not say anything against us, neither could He say anything for us. He, therefore, gives us the remainder of this life in which, under His guidance, we can do glorious things and thus enable Him to say, "Well done." It is possible for a Christian to be ashamed before Jesus at His Coming, if a person has hidden their talent, and avoided the shame and trials that attend the open confession of Christ's name. We read in 1Jn.2v28., "And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." NKJV. See 1Pet.4v16. The glory of God, Rom.3v23.; of Christ Jesus, Heb.2v9.; of Christians, Heb.2v10.; is a loving unselfish life.

"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.

N.B.5. FEAR OF DEATH.

Not fear of dying the act, but of death the condition. It was not just the pain of the cross, but "the pains of death" that Christ feared. Acts.2v24. Lk.16v23. Even the Old Testament saint went, not to Paradise and the presence of Christ, Phil.1v23., but to Hades and Abraham's bosom. Job.10v21,22. Christians, like Old Testament saints sleep so far as the body is concerned, but while the Old Testament saint gave up his spirit and so was cut off from God's presence. Lk.23v46., the New Testament believer retains his spirit and abides in God's presence forever in spirit. Jn.8v35.

Satan has the power of spiritual death by leading us to commit sin whose wages is spiritual death. Rom.8v13. He has no such power over Christians. Mt.16v18. It must be remembered that Christ's death, unlike the Old Testament saint was voluntary, He could at any time have given up, His battle was to endure without calling upon His right and power to escape. Not only this but Christ had a tremendous fight of faith with the powers of darkness in Gethsemane but He overcame and went to the cross and Hades in faith in His Father.

3. THE DANGER OF FAILING TO ENTER OUR SPIRITUAL CANAAN. Heb.3v7 to 4v13.

The way into the Promised Land Canaan was difficult and dangerous, and in the final event all the first generation, which had failed to trust God and discipline themselves, refused to take the risk of battle with the inhabitants of Canaan. So with the Christian Church the way into the Heavenly Places and a supernatural life is difficult and often dangerous even to death, and **there is a real danger that Christians may fail, as did the Israelites, to enter into their spiritual inheritance, their spiritual Canaan.** The result of fighting our way into Heavenly Places is that the sight of God upon His throne, such as Isaiah or Ezekiel had, enables us to rely upon the miraculous intervention of an almighty God. Dan.3v16-18. 6v10-22. Acts.7v55-60 This gives us perfect rest and confidence in what HE will do. The Christian life is the rest of perfect confidence in the Lord in all circumstances. e.g. Rom.8v35-39.

A unity of heart and mind is the basis of true renewal and revival, and a conquest of our heavenly Canaan.

In Acts.1v14., "of one accord," is the adverb "homothumadon," from the adjective "homothumos," which is derived from "homos," "same," and "thumos," "mind or spirit, with the same mind or spirit." Including Acts 2v1., it occurs twelve times in Acts, and nowhere else except Rom.15v6.. **The promise in Mt.18v19., came into operation when the disciples of Jesus were of "one accord."** "Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree (harmonize together, make a symphony together) about whatever [anything and everything] they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven." Amp.

Before the initial Pentecostal outpouring, the 120 disciples "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication;" and after Pentecost, "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul, -- they had all things in common." Acts.1v14. 4v32. There is a rich blessing where "brethren (and sisters) dwell together in unity." Ps.133v1-3. Churches that lack this unity and love can be miserable and discouraging places, and the faith and spiritual progress of the Christians in them will certainly suffer. Gal.5v13-26. 1Cor.1v5-11. 1John.4v7-16. This love and unity is the acid test of a genuine revival. John.13v34,35. The unity of the early Church at Jerusalem shames denominational pride, and condemns it for the disgrace that it is.

We read in Acts.2v1., "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. KJV. In Acts.2v1., the Majority Text is not the adverb "homou," "together," but the much more meaningful adverb "homothumadon" 3661, "of one accord," from "homos" 3674, "same;" and "thumos" 2372, "mind," so "with the same mind or spirit." **Counting Acts.2v1., "homothumadon" occurs twelve times, eleven in the Acts.1v14; 2v1,46; 4v24; 5v12; 7v57; 8v6; 12v20; 15v25; 18v12; 19v29, and nowhere else except Rom 15:6, where the KJV translates it "with one mind;" the RV translates it "with one accord," as it does throughout Acts.**

A.T. Robertson follows the reading of Aleph, A,B,C, the Vulgate, and Critical Texts and states that in Acts.2v1., "homou," "together," is the correct text; however, Hodges and Farstad C3, E, Phi, and the massive Byzantine Majority, read, "homothumadon," "of one accord." Robertson admits that the modern translation, "All together in the same place," "pantes homou epi to auto." is "a bit of tautology." Luke was the best Greek writer in the New Testament, and it is unlikely that he would make this kind of error.

In any case it cannot be disputed that the Christians in Acts.2v1., were gathered "with one accord," for we are told several times in Acts that these earnest Christians were "of one accord," "homothumadon" 3661. See the following Scriptures where "homothumadon" is used. See Acts.1v14. "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." See Acts.2v46. "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." See Acts.4v24,29,30. "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: v29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, v30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." KJV. See Acts.5v12. "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch." KJV. **A good many years later they were still "with one accord" for we read in Acts.15v25. "It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, ("homothumadon," 3661) to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul." KJV. The "one accord" of the Church brought a "one accord" response in evangelism, we read in Acts.8v6. "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did."**

However, as a result of the success of Gospel preaching, there was a "one accord" opposition to the Gospel. Acts.7v57. "Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him (Stephen) with one accord." KJV. See Acts.18v12. "And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat." KJV. See Acts.19v29. "And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre." KJV.

Note well Joshua.9v1,2. where the nations of Canaan came against Joshua "with one accord." See Acts.12v20., where the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon came "with one accord" to appeal to Herod. If worldly people can be united in their efforts to promote their own interests, how much more should the Church of Jesus be united to promote Jesus and His Gospel.

Adam Clarke has the following excellent note in his commentary on Acts.2v1., "They were all with one accord in one place." "It is probable that the ALL here mentioned means the one hundred and twenty spoken of Acts.1v15., who were all together at the election of Matthias. "With one accord," "homothumadon;" this word is very expressive; it signifies that all their minds, affections, desires, and wishes, were concentrated on one object, every man buying the same end in view; and, having but one desire, they had but one prayer to God, and every heart uttered it. There was no person uninterested, none unconcerned, none lukewarm; all were in earnest; and the Spirit of God came down to meet their united faith and prayer. When any Assembly of God's people meet in the same spirit they may expect every blessing they need." **End of quote.**

Adam Clark thinks that the room "was probably in the temple," however, Acts.1v13,14., says that it was **in the house**, "oikos" 3624, where they were sitting. Barnes writes on "all the house." "Some have supposed that this was a room in or near the temple. **But as the temple is not expressly mentioned, this is improbable.** It was probably the private dwelling mentioned in Acts.1v13." End of quote.

In Phil.2v2., Paul expresses his strong desire for an outstanding unity of heart, mind and purpose among Christians.

The Amplified Bible. "Fill up and complete my joy by living in harmony and being of the same mind and one in purpose, having the same love, being in full accord and of one harmonious mind and intention." **NKJV.** "Fulfil my joy by being like-minded ("to auto phronete," literally, "think the same thing"), having the same love ("ten auton agapen," the same divine self-sacrificial love), being of one accord ("sumpsuchoi," from "sun" and "psuche," of one soul; having your souls joined together, being in heart-agreement, harmonious in soul, souls that beat together, in tune with Christ and with each other), of one mind," ("to hen phronountes," "thinking the

one thing," one in plans and purposes and total harmony of feelings.)."

Paul concludes his exhortation in Phil.2., with the supreme example of the Lord Jesus in Phil.2v3-8..

"v3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or empty conceit and pride, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. v4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. v5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, v6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, v7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. v8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." This kind of heart unity can only be accomplished by united prolonged prayer and communion with God, and by contemplation of Jesus and His sacrificial love and death. It means a union of soul and purpose; and an acting together as if but one soul and mind motivated and inspired them.

Paul uses a telling variety of expressions to speak of the same thing. He strongly desires and advocates a blending of heart love, of feeling, of plans and purposes, which would avoid all divisions and strife; and would demonstrate to the world how Christians love each other. Pride, bigotry, and competition are seen in their true light. **Jesus said in John.3v35..** "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Probably there is no single thing so much insisted on in the New Testament as the importance of genuine love and harmony among Christians. Now, this is very often lacking and is the major reason why the world does not believe the Gospel. However, if genuine love and unity triumphed, the Gospel would soon transform the world. **See Jn.17v20, 21.** "v20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; v21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: **that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**" KJV

N.B. HEB. 3 AND 4. WE HAVE TO FOLLOW JESUS AND FIGHT TO GET INTO OUR SPIRITUAL CANAAN.

We have to fight to get into our spiritual Canaan, for the glorious spiritual heavenly blessings and spiritual gifts that are ours in Christ Jesus. Eph.1v1-3. The Old Testament Canaan has its New Testament counterpart in the Heavenly Places in Christ. The New Testament Church like Israel, can only conquer Canaan when it is united, obedient to God, and conformed to His Word. The Divine order is love, wisdom, and then power. The fruit of the Spirit is an essential partner to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Holiness is giving yourself to God, to fight His battles, and launching out on God's objectives and business, it is separation to God with a reason. Every Church should be perfect before God, and be reaching for the Heavenly Places in Christ. However, the vast majority of Christians are not even trying to get into Canaan, and are building houses in the wilderness.

The first few chapters of Hebrews are an exhortation on the importance looking to and following Jesus, and the necessity of feeding on Him, and dwelling on and beholding His Divine majesty and victorious humanity. This is the only way that we will enter and possess our spiritual Canaan, and win our battles with the powers of darkness. There is a warning with these great revelations, we may fail to enter our Heavenly Canaan and so not receive God's exceeding great and precious promises and magnificent spiritual gifts. 2Pet.1v4.

See Heb.2v1-3. "Since all this is true, we ought to pay much closer attention than ever to the truths that we have heard, lest in any way we drift past [them] and slip away. v2 For if the message given through angels [the Law spoken by them to Moses] was authentic and proved sure, and every violation and disobedience received an appropriate (just and adequate) penalty, v3 How shall we escape [appropriate retribution] if we neglect and refuse to pay attention to such a great salvation [as is now offered to us, letting it drift past us forever]? For it was declared at first by the Lord [Himself], and it was confirmed to us and proved to be real and genuine by those who personally heard [Him speak]." AMP.

Grace enables us to reap an harvest even when we sow seed with poor or wrong motives, but it does not exclude us from reaping the consequences of breaking God's Law. God forgave David because He knew Jesus was going to die for him, but the sword did not depart from his house because of his sin. 2Sam12v9-14. If we do wrong we pay for it, even though we may be forgiven, we should have a right attitude of mind towards evil. The Law was given to keep out sin so that people could be happy, it was given to protect people from the consequences of evil. God is angry when His Law is broken, because innocent people suffer, His anger is an expression of His love for those who suffer at the hands of the wicked. The Israelites failed in the wilderness, and this was written for our learning and warning. **1Cor.10v11.** "Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come. RSV. Read 1Cor.10v1-14. God is looking for faithful messengers. **Prov.25v13.** "Like the coolness of snow at harvest time is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him; he refreshes the spirit of his masters. NIV.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are part of our Canaan Inheritance, and we have to fight through for them.

We have to fight through into the heavenly places in Christ, if the Church is to experience all of God's spiritual gifts. These gifts bring victory and healing to the Church, and confirm the Gospel, and give a mighty witness to the world that Jesus is alive.

Conquering Canaan by faith in God and His Word. We read in Heb.4v12. "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." NKJV. The Word of God is full of divine energy, and it is true and works, and discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. God stands behind His Word and confirms it.

We read in Heb.4v14-16. that we have a great High Priest who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, for He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. We have boldness to come before God's throne to receive mercy and grace "in time of need," "eis eukairon boetheian," ("boetheia," 996, only occurs here and Acts.27v17., it is from "boetheo," 997, **see Heb.2v18.**, where "succour," is "boethesai," the aorist active infinitive of "boetheo" 997, from "boe," a cry, and "theo," to run, and so, to run at a cry or call for help. See Mt.15v25. "Eukairos," 2121, is from "eu," well, and "kairos," 2540, a divinely appointed time, only here in the New Testament, "for well-timed divine help," that comes "in the nick of time." The throne of grace is a place where you are certain to be answered. Heb.4v16. You pray to a God who has revealed Himself to you, and who you have the utmost faith in. This is not an intellectual exercise, for the visions of God of, the elders of Israel, Exod.24v9-11.; Isaiah, Is.6v1-13.; Ezekiel, Ez.1v1-28. 8v1,2. 10v1-22.; Daniel, Dan.7v9-28.; and Micaiah, 2Chron.18v11-22., gave them boldness. We have boldness because of our Saviour's death and atoning blood, and His and the Holy Spirit's continual interventions in our lives, and a heavenly Father who loves us like He loves His only begotten Son. Heb.7v25. 10v19-23. Jn.15v9. 17v23.

The children of Israel did not enter into their Canaan rest because they did not believe what God said. If we do not believe what Jesus said, we shall not enter into our Canaan rest. God wants to do great things, but He only does what we believe for, Jesus said in Mk.9v23., "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." NKJV. And again in Mark.11v24., "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." NKJV. **In Mk.5v35,36.**, when Jairus was told that his daughter was dead, Jesus said to Jairus, "Do not be afraid; only believe." In Luke's record of the same event we read in Lk.8v49,50., "While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. v50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole." KJV. The Greek tenses in the Gospels are most instructive, Jesus said to Jairus, stop the fearing you are doing all the time, (present imperative), at this point of time believe, (aorist imperative), and keep on believing all the time from here on, (present imperative). The serene faith of Jesus inspired Jairus and his daughter was raised to life. **In John.11v40.** Jesus said to Martha, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" NKJV. The resurrection of Lazarus revealed to her that Jesus was the resurrection and the life.

Jesus was sad that people would not believe in the goodness of God without signs and wonders. He said in John.4v48. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." KJV. It took the Israelites 40 years in the wilderness to learn their lessons, and we will not learn them in five minutes. It took Moses 40 years to get ready for his prophetic ministry. The aim of Paul's life was to get to know Jesus and the Father, his desire to save souls arose out of his love for God and mankind. God heals people because He has compassion them, but God is grieved because there are few that are prepared to seek Him out for these ministries, and co-operate with Him to manifest His healing love and power. We can only rightfully use the gifts when we have love in our hearts, otherwise we can experience the tragedies that took place in the church at Thyatira. Rev.2v18-29. It is the Trinity who has had all the toils, labours, hard work, and scars. This is their glory, and our glory will be our scars and wounds for God the Father and Jesus, and this will be our joy. God wants, and aims to make something of us, and deliver us from selfish ambition, and to fill us with His compassions and priorities.

See Heb.4v9. We can have rest even though everything is against us. The world gives peace by making the circumstances right for them, God gives peace by showing us that through His presence and grace, we can conquer all the problems that face us. God could take the giants out of our Canaans, if He wanted to, but they are left there to develop our spiritual muscles. If God made things easier for us, it would hinder our spiritual growth and deprive us of glory, honour, and praise at the appearing of Jesus. 1Pet.1v4-7. We see from Heb.4v10,11., that we enter our heavenly Canaan by faith, not by our own works. We need God's help to accomplish the things He has told us to do. It took the Israelites, who were under 20 years old, 40 years in the wilderness to learn their lessons of faith and obedience, we will not learn our lessons in five minutes. **All the Israelites over 20 years old died in the wilderness. N.B. Num.32v11,12.** "Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they have not wholly followed Me, v12 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the LORD." NKJV. It is very difficult to find Christians with the faith and integrity of Caleb and Joshua in the Church today.

A strong warning against hardness of heart and unbelief.

In Heb.3v6 to 4v10. Paul gives some very strong warnings against following the example of the rebellious children of Israel in the wilderness. **Paul quotes from Ps.95v7-11.** and twice warns against the peril of hardening of the heart through rebellion, **Heb.3v7,8,15.** v7 "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: **Today, if**

you will hear His voice, v8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness." v15 "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." Paul also warns in Heb.3v12., "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." And in Heb.3v13,14., Paul warns us against being "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end." And in Heb.4v6., we read "those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience."

The words of Heb.3v10,11. Are very sobering and serious. "Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways. v11 So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'" Again we read in Heb.3v17,18., "Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? v18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?"

Their sin and disobedience was the result of a lack of faith in God, we read in Heb.3v19., "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." And Paul states in Heb.4v2., "but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it." We have to believe the Word of God and the Spirit of God to conquer our spiritual Canaan, and to retain our spiritual inheritance. They did not listen to the voice of God. Notice the emphasis upon "Today," we must have a daily walk with God and an open ear to listen to the Holy Spirit. The first seven verses of Psalm 95 tell us that a joyful worship and communion with God will preserve us from having hardened hearts.

The cure for rebellion and hardness of heart is communion with God and prayer and praise.

We emphasise again that we are informed in Psalm 95 that joyful worship and communion with God will stop us from getting hardened hearts, and enable us to defeat the giants, and other foes, and conquer our heavenly Canaan. The opposite is also true that if we fail to have deep fellowship with God in prayer, praise and worship, the giants, and other foes, will defeat us and we will not be able to conquer our heavenly Canaan.

We read in Numb.13v25 to 14v1., that ten of the twelve spies who went to spy out Canaan, gave a bad report of the land, they recognised that it was a good land that flowed with milk and honey; but said that Israel could not possess it, because of the strongly fortified cities and strong warlike nations; the Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, the Canaanites, and worst of all the giants, the Nephilim, (the descendants of Anak). Caleb said they could conquer the land and tried to inspire faith in the people, but the people believed the bad report of the ten unbelieving spies, that Israel was not able to conquer the land, and the nation wept in unbelief all night. Caleb and Joshua tried again to encourage the people to believe God, but the people rejected their message that the protection of the inhabitants of Canaan was gone and that "they are bread for us," and the people threatened to stone Caleb and Joshua. God manifested His glory and saved their lives.

In Numb.14v24,29-34,37., God warns that all the rebels over 20 years old will die in the wilderness, but He extols the characters of Caleb and Joshua and says that they will inherit the land, "But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.--- v29 The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. v30 Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. v31 But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. v32 But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. v33 And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. v34--and you shall know My breach of promise (KJV) my rejection (NKJV) my alienation (ASV) my opposition (NASB) my displeasure (RSV) Then you will know what it means to oppose me! CJB and shall know my revenge. Douay-Rheims v37 those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the LORD." Adam Clark states that most learned men agree that the words translated in the KJV as "breach of promise," "should be translated my vengeance, which is the rendering of the Septuagint, Vulgate, Coptic, and Anglo-Saxon, and which is followed by almost all our ancient English translations."

The Nature of Hymnology and Gospel Singing in Church Worship.

Ephesians.5v18,19. "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, v19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (NKJ)

"Speaking to one another." This is a Divine command; and God expects us to promote worship and communion with Him, and purity of life by songs of praise. Singing was an important part of early Church worship, and was practiced by the Lord Jesus and His apostles, and by Christians throughout Church history. Mt.26v30. Lk.24v52,53.

"In psalms." "psalmois" 5568, set pieces of music, sacred odes accompanied with the voice, harp or other instrument; a "psalm;" collectively, the book of the Psalms. The Psalms were sung by the Jews at the temple, and by the early Christians, and they have always been part of Church worship. They are valuable for instruction and devotion, the Scottish metrical psalms are a veritable treasure house. The psalms are full of doctrine and teaching as well as worship and praise. See Asaph's remarkable psalms, he led the tabernacle worship. 1Chron.16v5. Psalm 50, and 73 to 83. N.B. 1Cor.14v26. "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying."

"And hymns." A "hymn," "humnois" 5215, is properly a song which worships and honours of God, and is directly addressed to God. The Holy Spirit can spontaneously inspire these hymns, or they can be from a well-known and well-loved hymnology. See Acts 16:25.

"Spiritual songs." Spiritual is "pneumatikais" 4152; songs is from "odais" 5603, odes or songs relating to spiritual and Divine things, which are quite distinct from songs sung by worldly people for their entertainment, where God is forgotten and excluded. Christian music should be very different from worldly music; worship should edify Christians and be done "decently and in order" 1Cor.14v40., and should not disgust the pure in heart. Things are badly wrong when witchdoctors say they are amazed that Christians use the same drumbeats that they use, to call up demons.

"Singing." is "adontes" 1030. The dominant character of music in the worship of God should be vocal. God inhabits the praises of His people. Ps.22v3. The Bible says that we can praise God with musical instruments, and if instruments are employed in worship, they can play a valuable part in enhancing the vocal music.

"Speaking to yourselves." The result of being filled with the Holy Spirit, is both praise and thanksgiving, and good relationships in home and work. Eph.5v19-21.

"And making melody in your heart to the Lord." Some people are not good at singing and making melody outwardly. But even they, when they are filled with the Spirit, will make acceptable music to God in their hearts. "Making melody," is "psallontes" 5567, playing and singing, with an instrument. The word, which Paul uses, "psallo" 5567, is frequently used in the sense of touching or playing a lyre, or a harp; and then of making music, but it generally means to sing. It occurs in Rom.15v19., where it speaks of Gentiles singing to God's Name; and 1Cor.14v15., where it speaking of singing in tongues, as well as singing with the understanding; and in James.5v13., where it is translated, "sing psalms;" and here in Eph.5v19., where we are exhorted to sing from our hearts, and praise God from our hearts. The psalms, hymns, and songs are to be sung so that the heart is fully involved, and not so as to be merely musical entertainment, or just a mere external performance, we are singing to, and for, God.

"Giving thanks always." There is no limit on time or place. **"For all things."** There is no limit on circumstances; we can worship God in every circumstance of life. **1Thes.5v16-18.** v16 Rejoice always, v17 pray constantly, v18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (RSV) See Rom.8v28.

"To the Lord." Singing is an act of worship and prayer, and should be regarded as being addressed directly to God, it is not a trivial and frivolous act. Those who lead in singing should be godly, spiritual, and devout people who sing from the heart, for they join the angels singing around the throne of God. We profane divine worship if we draw near to God with our lips, while our hearts are far from him. The heart must always go with our music, it must not be just a musical performance. Too many soloists and choirs fail to sing from their hearts, when they sing the praises of God.

Colossians.3v16. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms (and) hymns (and) spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God."

"The word of Christ." is "ho" 3588, "logos" 3056, "tou" 3588, "Christou" 5547. This phrase only occurs here, though "the word of the Lord" occurs in 1Thes.1v8. 4v15. 2Thes.3v1. Elsewhere "the word of God." The phrase "the word of Christ," can be either the subjective genitive (the word delivered by Christ), or the objective genitive (the word about Christ). See 1Jn.2v14. We need to let both dwell in us richly. Paul is praising and uplifting Jesus in this Epistle, and we need to do the same in our singing and preaching. "Dwell," is "enoikeito" the present active imperative of "enoikeo" 1774, to make one's home, to be at home. "In you," is "en" 1722, "humin" 5213, not, "among you." "Richly," is an adverb "plousios" 4146, abundantly, copiously, richly.

Vincent says it is preferable to connect, "in all wisdom," with "teaching and admonishing," not with the adverb "richly, because the adverb "richly" forms an emphatic qualification of "dwell in," and it terminates the clause; and makes the whole passage more symmetrical. This is also confirmed by

Col.1v28., where the phrase "teaching and admonishing in all wisdom," occurs.

"Admonishing." "nouthetountes" 3560, from the verb "noutheteo," 3560, literally, to put in mind (from "nous" 3563, mind), and so, to admonish, to caution or reprove gently, to warn, to exhort, from "nouthetes," admonisher. Are we "put in mind" and warned about correct theology and practice by our modern psalms, hymns, and songs, and are they filled with good doctrinal teaching, "didaskontes" 1321?. We usually have to go to the great hymns of the Church, and the psalms of David and Asaph for such material.

"Singing with grace," is "en" 1722, "chariti" 5485, "adontes" 103, it means literally, singing in God's grace, a phrase also used in 2Cor.1v12. We are to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs enveloped in God's presence and grace. The verb "ado" 103) is also used in Eph.5v19., for the inspired emotional worship of a devout soul.

"In your hearts," is "en" 1722, "tais" 588, "kardiais" 2588, "humoon" 5216. Without this there is no real worship to Jesus or God the Father. Our singing and preaching must be from our hearts, or we will fail to bless people, or fail to be acceptable to God. Within a year or two of this time Emperor Nero began a murderous persecution of Christians, so open and loud singing could have meant the death of one's family, and all the Christians who took part in the singing. Unbelievers were glad to report any singing Christians to the authorities, and they rejoiced in their execution, and enjoyed looting their property; so singing in the heart was the order of the day.

Singing hymns and sacred songs is often our very best way of praying.

We read in Acts.16v23-25. v23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. v24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. v25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them." **Paul tells us in 2Cor.11v25.** that he was beaten by rods on three different occasions. However, Luke does not record these three instances, but only records this incident. Paul and Silas, in excruciating pain through painful bruised and bleeding backs, were locked up in the inner prison with their feet securely fastened in wooden stocks. How did they react?

In Acts.16v25. **"They were praying and singing hymns to God."** is "proseuchomenoi" 4336, "humnoun" 5214, "ton" 3588, "Theon" 2316. Literally, "praying, they sang hymns." "Proseuchomenoi humnoun," is the present participle and imperfect active indicative: **Praying they were singing, or singing they prayed.** Their praying and the praise are not described as distinct acts. Their singing of hymns was their prayer, probably some Psalms, for "humnoun," is the very word that is used to describe the Paschal hymn sung by our Lord and His disciples after their last Passover. Mt.26v30. We know the Jews sang Psalms 113 to 118, at the Passover festival, and every devout Jew would certainly know them by heart. Like Job, Paul and Silas could say, "He giveth songs in the night." Job.35v10. This was powerful evangelism, for the other prisoners heard them singing, and they were obviously amazed how people with bleeding backs, and tortured in the stocks, could make the prison resound with joyful song. The presence of their living God enabled them to joyfully sing, worship and pray even in their great suffering. Christians can have more true joy in tribulation and trials, than a worldly person can find in pleasure, prosperity and ease.

God answered their prayers in song with an earthquake, and released them from their chains. The jailor knew that this was an outstanding miracle, and he and his whole family accepted Jesus as their Saviour. Gospel singing and preaching that is confirmed by the acts and power of God, produces remarkable and lasting results. Rom.15v18-21.

In Mel Tari's, "Like A Mighty Wind," we read how the singing of sacred songs raised a man from the dead.

On pages 76 to 78 of "Like a Mighty Wind," (ISBN 0-89221-123-7) we read of a man, who had been dead for two days, being raised from the dead when Christians sang sacred songs around his corpse. **God directed some Christians to stand around the dead body of the man, and sing hymns until he came back to life.** The person had been dead for two days, and in the warm and humid atmosphere of Amfoang in Indonesia, the body had begun rapidly to decay, and it smelled so badly that the Christians found it difficult to stand around the body. However, they did as God commanded them, and after singing about six hymns the toes started to move on the dead body. After singing eight hymns, God raised the corpse to life, and the man sat up and was perfectly whole, and gave a forceful and eloquent testimony to his experience on the other side of death. He told of the reality of Heaven and Hell, and told people that only faith in Jesus could save them from going to Hell. Through his testimony and ministry, more than 21,000 people came to know Jesus as their Saviour in that area. **Singing they prayed, and God answered their prayers in the most remarkable way.** God will do the same for you. Singing is often the very best form of praying, and it can bring outstanding and mighty operations of the Holy Spirit, and wave of Divine healing to the body of Christ.

It is well known that the Welsh revival was birthed and sustained by God-anointed singing. It certainly was not due to the preaching, for preachers usually preached once in about six to nine months. They had the sense to get out of the way and let God the Holy Spirit do His work. Evan Roberts was hardly ever seen in the pulpit, he was crouched down behind the pulpit and was worshipping God in song with the congregation. The result of this worship in singing was a great revival that brought most of Wales in sincere repentance to God. **There can be no doubt that singing hymns and sacred songs is often our very best way of praying,** and it can bring genuine revival, and cause us to enter and conquer our spiritual Canaan. The great hymns of the Church have great power and blessing upon them. Let us use them in extended worship.

The place of Gifts of healings in the Church and in Evangelism.

The early Church was successful in its evangelism through the mighty signs and wonders that God did through its evangelists, prophets, and apostles. **N.B. Acts.5v12-16. 6v8. 8v5-8. Rom.15v18-21.** Divine healing was also a vital part of the ministry of elders in each local church. **James.5v13-20.** The elders were expected to pray a prayer of faith, and the sick expected to be healed. Why then, are many sick people prayed for in many churches, and they remain sick and are not healed? A variety of things can hinder the manifestation of gifts of healing in the Church. Unrepentant sin in the sick person's life, or a sin like Achan's in the Church, or sin in the elders. Joshua.7v1-26. 8v1. Sadly, Christians can be at sixes and sevens and have a bitter spirit towards one another, this can result in sickness and death. **See 1Cor.11v29,30.** v29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. v30 **For this reason many are weak and sick ("polloi astheneis kai arrostoi") among you, and many sleep ("koimontai hikanoi").** NKJV. Wrongs should not be allowed to fester, Christ commanded us to put them right. **N.B. Mt.18v15-35. Mk.11v22-26. Jn.13v34,35. 15v12-14. 1Cor.3v1-3.** Lack of healings in the church can also be due to lack of faith in the elders, or the sick person, and it is very often due to the fact that the church and church leaders are too spiritually lazy, or too worldly to defeat Satan. However, even if the poor spiritual condition of the elders, stops them from being a channel of salvation and 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.

When Christians die prematurely, people often take refuge behind the words, "It was obviously not God's will to heal them." However, very often the premature and untimely death of a Christian is not "God's will" at all, it is more often due to the spiritual failure and weakness 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 quoted as a faith destroying statement, and as an escape hatch of unbelief; 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" to them, when they go to be with the Saviour they love. John.17v24. 2Cor.5v6-10. Phil.1v20-25. Thank God for His wonderful grace, transcendent power, love and wisdom, and for the immortality brought to us by our dear Lord Jesus. 2Tim.1v10.

Glory is a reward for something that we have done, it is something accomplished, it is merited favour, not unmerited favour. The Lord Jesus received His inheritance, because He fought to save us in spite of incredible personal physical and emotional suffering. He had to fight all the way. Christ is not ashamed to call us brethren, because we belong to the same Father. John.20v17. Our faith and trust binds us to Him. Heb.2v13. We believe the same things that He believed, we are brethren and have one Father. Is.8v17,18. Ps.22v22,30. **See Heb 2:1-3.** "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. v2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; v3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." KJV

The Heavenly Places In Christ. One of the great themes of the book of Hebrews is entering into, and staying in our Heavenly Canaan. Like the Israelites (the first generation that came out of Egypt with Moses), who failed to enter Canaan through unbelief, we can also fail to enter and stay in our Canaans. Only two persons from the first Generation received the promise of entering Canaan, that was Joshua and Caleb, the rest, did not get in. Deut.14v30. The first Generation, unlike the second, failed to "first bind the strong man," and so were unable to "spoil his house." Mt.12v29.

Most of the second generation, however, only conquered a some of Canaan, they did not completely fulfil the commandment of the Lord, to put ALL of the inhabitants to the sword, but left some alive in Canaan. In later generations these inhabitants caused the Israelites many problems, mainly because the Israelites followed their example of worshipping their false gods, with the result, that God had to discipline them, usually by making Israel subject to the surrounding nations. God made Israel the tail instead of the head, instead of the other way around, and Gentiles ruled over them. **Deut.28v13,44.**

The 40 years that Israel spent in the Wilderness was not only a punishment for the disobedient in the first Generation, but also was to weed out the apostates within the second Generation, and prepare the second Generation to go into Canaan and conquer it. We read in **Numb.14v24.** "After the number of the days in

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

And in Deut 8v2,3. "And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live." **End of quote.**

The Father used exactly the same method to prepare the Lord Jesus for His Earthly and Heavenly High Priestly ministries, for Jesus quotes this very Scripture in Mt.4v4., from Deut.8v3., to the Devil during His Wilderness Temptation. The first 30 years of His life at Nazareth was a time of Preparation, during which He learned that, "man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD does man live." **End of quote.**

Paul writes in Heb.2v10. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Although the Lord Jesus was without sin, it was through the things that He suffered and went through during these 30 hidden years at Nazareth that turned Him into the Perfect High Priest and Saviour, who is able to fully sympathize with His people, for Heb.4v15. and 2v18. states: "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, **but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin....**For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." **End of quote.**

The way that the Father prepared the Lord Jesus for His Earthly and Heavenly High Priestly Ministries, is also the way He prepares us for ours (Heb.2v10. Rom.8v17.): "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings....And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." **End of quote.**

It is a fact, that the bad report of ten of the spies, kept a whole nation (except 2) out of the Promised Land. Deut.13v27 to 14v1., "And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people are strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. But the men that went up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. **And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.**" **End of quote.**

This very same thing has taken place throughout Church History, and still occurs today, when Christian, Teachers, Pastors and Theologians reject the truth concerning the Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit; and refuse to accept that the greater Apostolic, Prophetic and Evangelical ministries, and greater supernatural gifts, are still placed by Christ in His Church today, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph.4v11-16. Their unbelief and false doctrines result in multitudes of God's people being kept out of their Heavenly Canaan. These leaders are nothing but "blind leaders of the blind....who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof," they give an "evil report" to God's people. Mt.15v14. 2Tim.3v5. Num.13v21. These self-deceived leaders will have to answer to Christ on Judgement Day, before His Throne, for the lies that they have deliberately told to God's People about this very important subject. 1Cor 3v12-15.

The vast majority of the second Generation Israelites, and the greater majority of the Israelites, in general, looked for an Earthly Inheritance at the Resurrection, however some of them, like Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Samuel and the Prophets, etc looked for a Heavenly Inheritance at the Resurrection. **Heb.11v16.** "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

Because the second Generation of Israelites looked for only an Earthly Inheritance, Paul writes in Heb 4v8: "For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day." **NKJV**

The Old Testament saints who looked for a Heavenly Inheritance at the Resurrection, also experienced, like the New Testament believer, during their lifetime, the Heavenly places in Christ, i.e. they also entered into their Heavenly Canaan. They experienced the Heavenly places in the Lord (Yahweh) and having got through into His power, manifested this power in the Heavenly places and upon earth thought the Gifts of the Spirit. We read of

Elijah in 1Kings 17v1, James 5v17. "And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.....Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months."

Elijah, like all the other Old Testament prophets, stood before the Throne of God in Spirit, the same kind of phrase, which is used of the Two Witnesses in Rev.11v3. "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." They, John Baptist, and Elijah are all said to stand before the Throne of God in Spirit. Lk.1v17., **We read in 1Kings.17v1.**, "And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand. **We read in Mal.4v5,6.**, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." **See Lk.1v17.**, "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." **See Mt.17v11-13.** "But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." **End of quote.**

It is most unfortunate that many Christians do not enter their Heavenly Canaan, simply because their (so called) spiritual leaders don't tell them the Truth about this vital doctrine and experience. Both Old and New Testament saints, enter and stay in their Heavenly Canaan by having an ever increasing knowledge of Scriptural Truth and an experience of that Truth through a personal relationship with the Lord, which is fed and energised by a fervent prayer life. Failure to practice these means of grace has resulted in people losing their heavenly inheritance and even being severely disciplined by God. **We read in Heb.11v6.**, "But without faith it is impossible to please and be satisfactory to Him. For whoever would come near to God must [necessarily] believe that God exists and that He is the rewarder of those who earnestly and diligently seek Him [out]." **Amplified Bible.**

We read in Hos.4:6., "My people are destroyed (perish) for lack of (THE) knowledge (of ME)." "Knowledge," is literally, "THE knowledge," the knowledge "of God." The speaker is Yahweh, the nation perishes for lack of the knowledge of God and His salvation. "Hadda'ath," the knowledge, with the definite article points back to "da'ath Elohiim," knowledge of God," in Hos.4v1. The nation totally lacked any real knowledge of God. **See Isa.5v3-5. John.17v3.** Their ignorance was wilful, they ought to have known God, having had the great privilege and opportunity of being the people of God, and taught by the prophets of God.

Having this "knowledge of God" is particularly important in the last days, especially if the believer wants the Lord to use them, and manifest His power through them by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. **See Dan 11v32.**, "And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: **but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.**"

The Lord Jesus, before His Ascension into Heaven, charged His Church, which is His Body, Col.1v18., and which He had purchased with His own blood, Acts.20v28., to continue His ministry, after His Ascension. **We read in Mt.28v18-20.**, "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." **NKJV.**

The fulfilment of this command by the early Church is clearly seen in The Acts of the Apostles, where it is recorded by Luke, that the Church gave witness with very great power, to a resurrected, living Saviour. **See Acts 4v23.**, "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."

As with all things, the Lord Jesus is our example as to how we should first of all "bind the strong man" and then enter the "strong man's house, and spoil his goods." This continuance of the Lord's Ministry that He has started on earth, through His Church was a fulfilment of the following prophecy in **Isaiah.53v10.** "...He shall prolong His days, and the will and pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." (Amplified Bible).

The early Church "owned" the Lordship of Christ, and knew what it was to suffer persecution for entering into and abiding in their Heavenly Canaan. They didn't make their own plans and then ask God to bless them, **instead** they diligently sought God for His plans and purposes by fervent earnest prayer, and having found them, carried them out. **See Acts.6v4.**, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." **And in Acts.2v42.**, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." **And the result in Mk.16v20.**, "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

It is a most appalling fact, that the exact opposite is the case within the Church today, many leaders within the Church think that the most important things they can have to "further the Gospel" is wealth, position and power, and they rely upon the "arm of the flesh" and not upon what God can do for them. However, nothing could be further from the Truth, for "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of

God." **Luke.16v15.** The Lord of Glory stands patiently knocking at the door of the hearts of His people. Please note that Jesus is knocking at the door of the hearts of **His people**; **NOT** at the hearts of the unbelievers or worldlings, as many preachers so often apply this Scripture today. **See Rev.3v15-22. esp. v20.** "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. **Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.** To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." **End of quote.**

In Rev 3v17. "Because **thou** (emphatic) sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and **knowest not** that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." The Lord Jesus uses five very strong adjectives to describe the Laodiceans spiritual condition, and to correct their very wrong opinion of themselves.

"Wretched," Greek, "ho talaíporos," literally, "the wretched one," "talaiporos" 5055, enduring toils and troubles; afflicted, wretched, miserable, (but here in the sense of wretched or miserable). Note also, the one article in the predicate with all these five adjectives unifying the picture of sharp emphasis on "thou" su, "thou that boastest."

"Miserable," is "eleinos," 1652, to be pitied, miserable, the word indicates one who is set forth as an object of extreme pity.

"Poor," is "ptochos" 4434, "one who crouches and cowers," reduced to beggary, begging, destitute, poor, needy, here it is used in the sense of being completely void of all spiritual riches, no holiness of heart, and spiritually bankrupt.

"Blind," "tuphos," 5185, unable to see, blind, it is used both physically and metaphorically, in this verse it is used in the sense of spiritual and mental blindness.

"Naked," "gumnos" 1131, unclad, without clothing, naked, not covered, literal or figurative. They were naked and needed the white garments of a pure, faithful and righteous life.

Because the Laodicean Church had desired and sought after wealth, money and riches instead of their Lord, it had ended up, just over forty years after being founded by Paul and his helpers. It was founded by Paul's preaching in the school of Tyrannous in Ephesus, so that the whole of Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, for it is not recorded in Scripture that Paul actually visited Laodicea, but he did send at least two Epistles to the Church, and Epaphras had tended this Church. Acts.19v9,10. Col.4v12,13,16. But they had become completely spiritually bankrupt. We are not told by the Lord Jesus that there was anybody in this Church who was not in this dangerous spiritual condition, for He had mentioned those who had stood true to Him in other Churches in these chapters of the Book of Revelation. Rev.2v2,13,24,25. 3v4.

We see the tremendous contrast between the Churches of Laodicea and Smyrna. The Lord Jesus says to the Church at Smyrna, see Rev.2v8-11., especially v9, "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty, but you are rich." "Poverty," is in Greek, "ptocheian" the singular accusative of "ptocheia" 4432, beggary, deep extreme poverty, the condition of one totally destitute of all the necessities of life. Another Greek word for poverty is "penia," which means they had only life's essentials, **Trench** writes the following, "The "penes" has nothing superfluous, the "ptochos" nothing at all." The Lord then goes on to say, that although these Christians were "ptocheian," destitute in the material and financial sense, they were "plousios" 4145, wealthy, abounding, and abundantly supplied spiritually. There has always been a vivid contrast between the financially poor but spiritually rich church at Smyrna, and the materially rich but spiritually bankrupt church at Laodicea. If the people respond to Jesus the transformation can be instantaneous and lasting, just as with the apostles when Jesus came to them.

Of the seven Churches in the second and third Chapters of the Book of Revelation, Laodicea was the one that was in the very worst spiritual condition, and this is seen by the fact, as already mentioned, that the Lord Jesus had absolutely **nothing** good to say about even **one** person in that whole Church! The Devil accomplished this great spiritual dearth in the Laodicean Church by enticing and tempting them to seek after wealth, money and riches, so that "mammon" and not the Lord Jesus, became their God, the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches had completely and utterly choked the word of God, with the result that it became unfruitful. Mt.6v24.13v22. But even in this perilous state, the Lord Jesus gives a glorious prospect of reigning with Him, a promise that shows how God's grace can restore the backslider. Jesus says that they could still overcome and reign with Him. Jn.1v16. Rom.5v20. Rev.3v20,21.

Jesus reveals the people and means by which Satan attacks these seven churches. These are:-

A. False Religion. This, rather than atheism, is Satan's objective, for by this means he can deceive more people, and his real aim is worship of himself. False religion is seen in the following ways in these churches.

Synagogue. Rev.2v9. Even the order laid down by God can become the instrument of Satan, if only the outward form is carried out, and truth and Christ are rejected in favour of man-made tradition. The Temple of God at Jerusalem became a den of thieves instead of the house of prayer for all nations, and Israel's religious leaders rejected and crucified their Christ. John.2v13-22. Mark.11v15-19. 2Tim.3v5.

Paganism: Rev.2v20. The gods of the heathen are really demons, or Satan, who desires to be like God and be worshipped, he is the god of this degenerate world. 1Cor.10v19-21. 2Tim.3v7,8. 2Cor.4v4. 2Thes.2v7,8. Rev.13.

False Doctrine. Jn.8v44. Satan had infiltrated several of the seven churches with deadly false doctrines that included immorality and idolatry. Sensuous evil teaching such as this was part of the teaching of the Nicolaitanes, Baalamites, and the followers of Jezebel, and this kind of lawless Antinomianism has been a bane of the Church throughout its history. The voice of God repeats again and again, "Be ye holy, as I am holy." 1Pet.1v15,16. Rev.3v7. 4v8. 15v4. 6v10. 22v11.

B. Martyrdom. Rev.2v10. What Satan cannot win by seduction he tries to destroy by persecution, he has often used those who have unscriptural traditions, or practice false religion, or have political power, to persecute and kill God's dear children.

C. Worldly Interests. Satan once offered Jesus the world in exchange for His cross and he still comes with the same offer to the brethren of Jesus. The church at Laodicea had succumbed to this temptation, and many who resist Satan in other ways often fall prey to prosperity. We are urged to keep ourselves from the idols of the world and all worldliness. 1Tim.6v17-19. 1Jn.2v15-17. 4v4,5. 5v4. A struggle for power in the church is one of the most dangerous and sinful of the worldly attitudes that can attack the church, this sin cost Satan his place in Heaven, this struggle for power is sometimes disguised by a false claim to divine illumination and prophetic authority, we judge all such claims in the light of the Scriptures. God reveals the truth about the activities of seducing spirits to spiritually minded Christians. 1Cor.14v29. 1Thes.5v19-21. Godly spiritual elders can guide the flock of God out of spiritual danger and deliver the flock from ambitious persons. Heb.13v7,8,17. 1Tim.3v1-13. Tit.1v5-16. Of the different means mentioned above, which the Devil used to attack these seven Churches, it was that of seeking worldly interests, especially going after wealth, money and riches, which had the most devastating effect of all on them.

A Brief Exposition Of Heb. 1v8,9.

The text in Heb.1v8,9, is a quotation from Psalm 45v6,7., and which partially applies to Solomon, however, many details of Psalm 45 cannot apply to Solomon, and they clearly speak of King Jesus. Psalm 45 is a prophetic Messianic Psalm about the Marriage Feast of Messiah, which has its complete fulfilment at the end of the Age of Grace, at the Second Coming of Christ, when the Church is resurrected and raptured. and the wicked are destroyed. Rev.19v7-9. This Psalm refers to the "fullness" and majesty of Christ Jesus, His victory over evil, and His eternal kingdom. Col.1v15-19. John.1v1-3. Phil.2v5-11.

The correct reading of Heb.1v8,9, (from Psalm.45v6,7.) is: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." **KJV.** God, the Father addresses Christ as, "Ho Theos"; the quotation is taken almost verbatim from the Septuagint of Ps.45v6,7.. The Septuagint often uses "ho Theos" as a vocative, to speak of a direct address to God. Ps.3v7. 4v1. 5v10. 7v1. (The vocative case is the case of direct address: "He said unto him, **Man**, thy sins are forgiven thee." Lk.5v20. The Authorised Version, Revised Version, and Revised Standard Version, quite rightly support the vocative and translate, "ho thronos sou, ho theos," as "Thy Throne O God." Bengel goes so far as to say, "They clearly do violence to the text who hold the opinion that it is the nominative case in this passage." This certainly seems true, for to translate "O God" in the nominative case as the subject would read, "God is thy throne," and in the predicate as "Thy Throne is God," both of these translations are absurd and don't make sense, and they have no parallel elsewhere.

Verse 9: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Is speaking about Christ's victory over sin in His humanity, we read that because Christ loved righteousness and hated lawlessness, God anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows. Evil is not an insoluble problem, resistance to evil brings an hatred of it. If Adam and Eve had resisted Satan's lie that God was keeping something from them, and that He was selfish and wicked in doing so, they would have hated iniquity, just as Jesus did, when Satan attacked Him. You must have an experience of temptation and see the effects of evil to really hate it. This does not mean that we should sin; no, it means the very opposite; but we need to see the suffering that sin and evil brings to really hate evil.

What is it that brings a hatred of iniquity? It is righteous living, plus a total rejection of evil, because of a realisation of the horrific effects of evil. The Great Tribulation brings a full manifestation of Satan's evil plans, and reveals the horrific end of following Satan and His evil plans. 2Thes.2v7. It is not wrong to suffer temptation, temptation and trial caused Jesus considerable physical, mental and emotional suffering, but He overcame them all, and it filled Him with a perfect hatred of evil. The temptations and trials of life will cause all the redeemed inhabitants of God's kingdom to hate evil just as fervently as the Lord Jesus, and this hatred of evil and love of righteousness, will preserve the integrity and happiness of God's kingdom forever.

Heb.1v9. "Thou hast loved righteousness." You have been obedient to the Law of God, and lived a perfect and holy upright life. This truly describes the character of the Lord Jesus, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled," who "did no sin, and in whose mouth no guile was found." It is certainly very difficult to apply this verse to Solomon, whose life definitely did not fit this description. "Thou hast loved righteousness" is, "egapesas dikaiosunen." "Egapesas" is the aorist active indicative of "agapao" 25, a strong unconditional fervent love that gives to the uttermost. The love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Eph.3v19.

"Dikaiosúnen," "dikaiosune" 1343, righteousness, justification, has two meanings:

1. Justification, when brought to trial by the Law; this can take place in two ways:

- a) The evidence shows that you are not guilty; and so you are discharged;
- b) The evidence shows that you are guilty, but you, or someone else, pays the penalty imposed on you. So the convict who has done his time is "justified," and is no longer a convict, and it is libellous to speak of him as such!

2. A moral character, which deserves praise because, so far from breaking the Law, it goes the "second mile."

The full sense of this phrase, "Thou hast loved righteousness," is that during the earthly lifetime of the Lord Jesus, right from the word go, He fervently desired, with His whole being, to perfectly manifest the beautiful character of His Father, the God of Love, whose first name is "Compassion," and this He did fully and completely. 1John.4v8,16. Exod.34v6,7. John.17v6. 14v9.

The beautiful character of Jesus was formed and perfected during the hidden years at Nazareth through diligent study of the Scriptures, and a life of prayer and communion with His Father, and a life of love to people, so that by the age of thirty His heart was filled to overflowing with Grace, and His mind filled and dominated with Truth, so that He could also call Himself, "The Truth." Isa.50v3-7. Lk.11v1-13. Jn.14v6. 2Cor.4v4. Heb.2v10,17,18. 4v15. 5v8,9. Jesus overcame the most severe temptations from Satan and his evil legions, the like of which has not been experienced by any other human being, and came out of this ferocious and merciless life-long trial, "full of grace and truth." **We read in Jn.1v14.**, "And the Word (Christ) became flesh (human, incarnate) and tabernacled (fixed His tent of flesh, lived awhile) among us; and we [actually] saw His glory (His honor, His majesty), such glory as an only begotten son receives from his father, full of grace (favour, loving-kindness) and truth. [Isa.40v5.]" **AMP.**

The Lord Jesus not only "loved righteousness," but also "hated iniquity," (better "lawlessness"). "Hated iniquity" is, "emísesas anomían," "emísesas" is the aorist active indicative of "míseo" 3404, to detest, hate, to have malicious and unjustifiable feelings towards others, however, the meaning here is to hate or detest. "Anomían," is the singular accusative of "anomia" 485, a violation of law; lawlessness gives the best sense of the word, it speaks of, iniquity, unrighteousness, and wickedness.

During His time at Nazareth, the Father gave Jesus the full revelation of what evil in the end did to the personalities of freewill creatures, both human and angelic. He saw the complete destruction of personality, character, mind and being. In the angelic realm He had seen fully and completely how deceit, lust for power and the love of evil, had turned Lucifer the "Light-Bringer" into the Devil, the "Prince of Darkness." (In Is.14v12., the Hebrew, "heylel" 1966, or Greek, "phosphoros," 5459, which is derived from "phos," light, and "phero," to bring, i.e.. "Light-Bringer;" is translated in the KJV by the Latin "Lucifer.") When humans and Angels descend to this horrific evil condition, they have to be confinement in the Lake of Fire, to ensure the peace and security of God's Eternal Kingdom. Is.14v12-20. Ezek.28v11-19. Lk.16v19-31. Jn.16v11,12. Rev.14v9-11. 21v8.

It was because of His full knowledge of evil that Our Lord, "hated iniquity." God hates sin simply because it destroys the happiness of society, and the personalities of both humans and angels, it is not because "He cannot stand to look at it," for we see the tax collectors, sinners and prostitutes being welcomed by the Lord Jesus with love and compassion, and the Father of the Prodigal Son, running to meet him and kissing him repeatedly. Mt.9v10-13. Luke.15v11-32. John.4v1-42.

The Scripture says, that because the Lord Jesus "loved righteousness, and hated iniquity," that God the Father, anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows (or companions). This "anointing" with the oil of gladness refers to the Baptism in the Holy Spirit that He received at the Jordan, when John the Baptist, baptised Him in water, and The Father witnessed to Christ's Sonship with the words, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mt.3v13-17. Mk.1v9-11. Lk.3v21,22. Jn.1v29-34.

This anointing that Christ, (Greek, "Christos" 5547; Hebrew, "Mashiyach" 4899, i.e. Messiah; both mean anointed), received at the Jordan was to achieve His Earthly Ministry, Acts.10v38., and was the fulfilment of a number of Old Testament prophecies.

We read in Isaiah.11v1-3: "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears." **NKJV.**

We read in Is.42v1. "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." **NKJV.** And especially Is.61v1-2., with Is.58v6. We read in Luke 4v18,19. "The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon Me, because He has anointed Me [the Anointed One, the Messiah] to preach the good news (the Gospel) to the poor; He has sent Me to announce release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to send forth as delivered those who are oppressed [who are downtrodden, bruised, crushed, and broken down by calamity], To proclaim the accepted and acceptable year of the Lord [the day when salvation and the free favours of God profusely abound.]." **Amp.**

John the Baptist says the following about the anointing that Christ had received at Jordan in John.3v34., "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: **for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.**" Here was the fulfilment of this Old Testament prophecy in Psalm 45v7: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; **therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.**"

It took thirty years to turn the Babe of Bethlehem into The Christ, The Anointed One of God, and all this was done in secret by God the Father. Isaiah 49v1-6. We also see in Psalm 45, some other lovely aspects of His character, **Psalm 45v2,4.**, "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever....And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things."

In Ps.45v2. "Thou art fairer than the children of men," the Hebrew word for "fairer," is "yaap^ayaapiytaa", from "yaphah" 3302, to be bright, (by implication) beautiful, fair. Amos 2:5. Literally, 'Thou art beautiful-beautiful,' that is, thou art perfectly beautiful, with spiritual beauty as the following clause declares, "Grace is poured into thy lips." Paul wrote the following about the spiritual beauty of Christ Jesus in **Heb.7v26.**, "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."

Barnes writes on Is.45v2. "The Hebrew word rendered "thou art fairer" - Yaap^ayaapiytaa - is a very unusual term. It is properly a reduplication of the word meaning "beautiful," and thus means to be very beautiful. It would be well expressed by the phrase "Beautiful-beautiful-art thou above the children of men." It is the language of surprise-of a sudden impression of beauty-beauty as it strikes at the first glance-such as the eye had never seen before. The impression here is that produced by the general appearance or aspect of him who is seen as king. Afterward the attention is more particularly directed to the "grace that is poured into his lips." The language here would well express the emotions often felt by a young convert when he is first made to see the beauty of the character of the Lord Jesus as a Saviour: "Beautiful; beautiful, above all men." **End of Barnes quote.**

In the phrase, "**grace is poured into thy lips,**" the word here rendered "is poured," Hebrew "Huwtsaq," from "yatsaq" 3332, it means properly to pour, to pour out as liquids-water, or molten metal: Gen.28v18. 2Kings.4v4. The meaning here is, that grace seemed to be spread over his lips; or that this was strikingly manifest on his lips. The word "grace" means properly favour; and then it is used in the general sense of benignity, kindness, mildness, gentleness, and benevolence. The reference here is to his manner of speaking, as corresponding with the beauty of his person, and as that which particularly attracted the attention of the psalmist: the mildness; the gentleness; the kindness; the persuasive eloquence of his words.

Luke writes about the prophetic fulfilment of the phrase, "grace is poured into thy lips," in Luke.4v22., "And all were bearing witness to Him and marvelling at the words marked by a charming graciousness which were constantly proceeding out of His mouth; and they kept on saying, Is not this man Joseph's son?" **Wuest's Expanded New Testament.** Because of the beautiful character of Messiah, the Psalmist says: "...Therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." Which amongst other things, has a reference to the "oil of gladness," with which God had anointed Jesus above his companions.

"Truth and meekness and righteousness," "truth," is in Hebrew, "ameth" from "emeth" 571, certainty, truth, trustworthiness, faithful. In Hebrew the phrase "meekness and righteousness," is hyphenated and reads "w^a`anwaah-tsedeq," "w^a`anwaah" is from "anvah" 6037, mildness, gentleness, meekness, humility. "Righteousness," is "tsedeq" 6664, justice, righteousness, and equity. This phrase would best be rendered as, "humility-righteousness," or "meekness-righteousness," i.e., righteousness manifesting itself in meekness. These lovely virtues, should be manifested in those who are asking for Divine help, and are perfectly

manifested in Him who exemplifies them, that is the Messiah Christ Jesus. **Jn.14v6. Mt.11v28-30, 1Cor.1v30.**

Psalm.69v9,10., states the following: "Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. **When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting**, that became my reproach." These few words of Scripture give us the method by which the Father developed all these beautiful fruits in the character of His Son, Jesus, during the 30 hidden years of His life at Nazareth, He lived a life of continuous prayer with His Father, which resulted in Him being in the bosom of The Father (while He still lived upon Earth). **John.1v18. 3v13. Gal.5v22,23.**

The beautiful loving and sinless life that Christ lived upon earth was the result of His wonderful life of communion with His Heavenly Father in prayer during the hidden years at Nazareth and His Ministry. Christ's victorious living has removed ALL excuses for sin from every human being. People cannot blame their own personal sin upon their environment, or their parents, or ancestors, or by saying that they were "born in sin." The Lord Jesus overcame the extreme spiritual darkness of Nazareth, and the temptations from the world, the flesh, and the Devil from the level of our humanity, for He was "**made like unto his brethren in all things.**" **Heb.2v17,18. 1Pet.2v21,22. Jer.31v29,30. Mt.6v6.**

Without the 30 hidden years of "**preparation**" at Nazareth, Jesus would not have had His mighty ministry. He had to fulfil a huge number of Old Testament prophecies, and live a perfect sinless life to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Failure to do this would have meant that there would be no possibility of eternal life in God's Kingdom for us. Jesus also had to overcome all of life's trials in order to be our Great High Priest, who ever lives to intervene in our lives. It was His preparation by the Father at Nazareth that secured **ALL** of these essential necessities for our salvation. **Is.49v1-6. 50v3-8.**

If we as Christians wish to manifest His Presence and Power in our lives and ministries, we **MUST** follow His example, in our prayer-lives, study and meditation of the Scriptures, and obedience to the revealed will of God, either from the Scriptures or through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, His manner of life, and be willing to let God "**prepare**" us for both our earthly ministries and our position in Heaven in the Eternal Kingdom. **2Cor.3v5,6. Heb.2v10,11. As Paul writes in Heb.12v2.**, "Looking unto (and **into**) Jesus the **author** and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The word "author" is in Greek "**archegon**," singular accusative of "archegos," 747, a chief leader, author, captain, prince, pioneer, one that takes the lead in anything and thus affords an example, a predecessor in a matter, and thus the perfect exemplar of it. In Heb.12v2., "archegon," has the sense of not only "Author," i.e. Source (the One Who inspires our faith), but also of "Pioneer," the one Who gives and shows forth the perfect example of the way of faith.

We see that in Heb.6v20. "forerunner" contains exactly the same thought, "Whither the **forerunner** is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." "Forerunner," is in the Greek, "prodromos," 4274, a runner ahead, a scout, one who undergoes an experience in advance of others, one who goes on ahead in order to show the way or to pioneer on behalf of someone else. Let us therefore follow His example, and take up our cross and follow Him, even as He lifted up His Cross upon His shoulder from before the foundation of the World. **Mt.16v24. Rev.13v8.**

N.B. If you expect people not to be healed when they are prayed for, then you will get what you expect.

If the sick in a church continually come for prayer and still keep going away sick, then, in the end, no one will have any faith for healing. Such a situation demands earnest prayer by the church leaders. God's will is perfect wholeness; He does not desire His children to suffer with some horrible disease. **3John.v2.** God desires us to prosper and be in health as our soul prospers. It is the elders responsibility to bring the blessing of healing to those in the local church who are sick, or to know the reason why healing may be delayed. Delay in healing or gradual healing, may on occasions be the purpose of God and may not be due to human failure. Trophimus experienced a delay in healing, or a gradual healing, even though Paul had prayed for him, and Paul was certainly not lacking in spiritual power. **2Tim.4v20. Acts.19v11-20 20v4. 21v29.** Lack of spiritual power in the person praying for the sick is certainly a major reason for a delay in healing, but it is not the only reason. We will consider further the lack of spiritual power in the church, and the spiritual equipment that Christians need when they are praying for the sick, under the headings, "Why is there sickness in the Church of Christ", and, "Christ's Challenge to His Church".

N.B. THE SCRIPTURAL QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS WHO PRAY FOR THE SICK.

The qualifications for elders are found in **Acts.20v17,28. 1Tim.3v1-7. Titus.1v5-9. 2Pet.5v1-8.** These qualifications for elders include, integrity, honesty, self-discipline, wisdom, experience, ability, age, humility, and spirituality; not any busybody or ambitious person should be an elder. We read in **James.5v13-20.**, that another necessary qualification of an elder is the ability to bring healing to the sick through a prayer of faith. In the Early Church the elder, "presbuteros", and the bishop, or better, the overseer, "episkopos," were holders of

the same office. They were elder respected leaders of the local church, the word "overseer", describes their work.

1. Paul appointed elders in all the churches that he founded. Acts.14v23. Tit.1v5. Paul tells Titus to ordain elders and then proceeds to give the spiritual qualifications of overseers Titus.1v5-7. And when Paul writes to the leaders of the church at Philippi, he writes to the overseers and deacons. Paul would not have missed the elders out if they were not the same as bishops. Indeed the qualifications of elders and overseers are exactly the same. 1Tim.3v1-7. Tit.1v5-9.

2. The elders of Ephesus are called overseers. When Paul talks to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, he tells them that God has made them overseers, "episkopoi", and their work is to feed the flock which God has entrusted to them. Acts.20v17,28.

3. Peter writes to the oversight of the churches, as an elder to elders. The word for oversight in 1Pet.5v2., is, "episkopein." There can be no doubt that both Paul and Peter looked upon the elders as bishops, or better, as overseers of the local church. The guidance of the local church should be left in the hands of the older and more experienced godly men, however, godly deacons can also have a place in the ruling of the local church. 1Tim.3v8-16. Acts.6v3. Someone has suggested that the age of 40 should be the lowest limit for an elder. See Acts.11v30 15v6,23. 16v4. 20v17. 21v18. 1Thes.5v12,13. 1Tim.5v17-19. Heb.13v7,8. The elders at Jerusalem held an honoured place in the guidance of the early Church, it was not just left to the young apostles of Christ; they welcomed the advice and guidance of older, wiser, spiritual men.

The work of an elder should not be taken on lightly, for to be an elder with the correct Bible credentials is a very demanding thing. 1Pet.5v1-11. 1Tim.3v1-7. Tit.1v5-9. Heb13v7,8,17. In addition to Christ like qualities of character, there should be a deep spirituality. God tells us in James 5v13-20., that the elders who pray for the sick should be "prayed through" and full of the Holy Spirit like Elijah, having supernatural revelation gifts and spiritual power gifts in operation. It is not just the saying of a prayer by an elder that brings deliverance to the sick; it is having a powerful living communion with God, which brings deliverance and healing to the sick. Sometimes great faith and great patience are necessary when praying for the sick, on some occasions it may take prolonged prayer to get the victory for some sick one, as when Elijah prayed for rain. 1Kings.18v42-46. A prayerless, worldly-minded elder or preacher, has no hope of praying a prayer for the sick, and this is why many people are not healed. Christ said that you had to bind the strong man, i.e. Satan, before you can spoil his goods. Mk.3v22-30. N.B. v27. You have to be on victory in your life, through living in communion with Christ, if you are to deliver the needy. Any worldly-minded elder or Christian leader will be in no spiritual condition to pray a prayer of faith. A worldly minded ambitious church can never pray a successful prayer of deliverance for the sick and sinful, repentance must come before this can take place. You cannot use the name of Jesus as a certain formula for deliverance, you have to have a loving, clean, obedient, prayerful, powerfully Spirit-filled life, through abiding in Christ Jesus, before you can claim the promise of John.15v7,16.

The challenge comes to every elder and preacher, "Are you prayed through" and full of the Holy spirit, having supernatural revelation and manifesting spiritual gifts? Do you as an elder qualify for praying for the sick? It is no good pretending to be an elder, or being called an elder, unless you are spiritually equipped and qualified to do the work of an elder. Men can call you an elder, but if you are not an elder in the eyes of God, you are an impostor. Every N.T. elder and preacher was commissioned to bring deliverance to the sick and sinful. All the ministries of Eph.4v11. were and are intended to manifest God's saving and healing power Some ministries were obviously more specialised than others, but in the N.T. we read that they all brought deliverance to the sick and sinful. The Scriptures teach us that Christian preachers who give teaching about spiritual gifts should manifest the gifts that they are talking about; a pound of example is worth a ton of theory and talk. God is not "The great I was", He is "The great I am", and any failure can never be laid at His feet; any sin, unbelief, indifference or unfaithfulness in preachers and the elders that shepherd God's flock, will have to be answered for before the great throne of God. Jer.23v1-6. Ezek.34v1-34. Mt.23v13-39. 1Pet.5v1-4.

N.B.1. AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF. Ps.78v8-37.

With the heart man believes Rom.10v10. A tender heart trusts a loving God even in trials. It is easy to harden the heart through fear or grumbling. The Lord reveals the condition of our hearts by the temptations, which He allows to come our way.

N.B.2. Heb.3v14. "IF." "For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end. NKJV. Rom.8v17. So often the qualifying condition is neglected and the promises are looked upon as certain and unconditional: but 4v1. should correct this, and the whole warning of the epistle. **The "if" is very real.** it is only too possible to lose ones confidence in God when things go wrong or persecution arises, or hopes are dashed, or perplexity surrounds us. Every side of our nature, body, soul and spirit are tested for weakness and IF we overcome, like Jacob, we find ourselves sitting in a place of power with God, serene and secure in our understanding of His purposes, and our confidence in His love.

4. CHRIST'S APPRENTICESHIP. Heb.4v14 to 5v10, See 2v17,18.

The essential condition for the High Priesthood is a compassionate heart and the successful conquest of all

difficulties, which may beset those whom He represents to God. Christ therefore who was called by God to be High Priest, had to win His position by sharing all the difficulties which beset men, and overcome them, and becoming "perfect."

This principle of God's kingdom can be roughly stated by saying that in His service there are "no job for the boys," but everyone, even the Son of God, must win his place by sheer merit. Ph.2v8,9. Heb.4v15.

N.B.1. SAVED OUT OF DEATH. v7.

There are two Greek prepositions, which though alike are yet different. "apo," from, and "ek," out of. "Apo," from, usually speaks of being outside of the circle, and never entering into it, "ek," out of, must first enter before it can come out. So Christ was not saved from death without having to die, but "out of" it after He had entered it and tasted death for every man. Heb.2v9. Another example of this is found in Lk.21v36., which uses "ek," and should read, "escape OUT OF all these things."

N.B.2. CALLED OF GOD.

As our Lord read the Old Testament He found the main lines of His life plainly laid down. Ps.110. made it clear to Him that He was going to heaven not to escape difficulties or to enjoy Himself, but simply and safely to bear God's earthly Nation upon His heart, as Aaron had to bear God's earthly Nation upon his breast. Hence Jn.17v19. Rom.8v34. 1Tim.2v5. Heb.7v25. 1Jn.2v1. This High Priestly work will continue until our pilgrimage is over.

5. THE DIFFICULTY OF FEEDING THE UNWILLING. Heb.5v11 to 6v20.

A child with normal feeding should leave its milk diet and take to solid food suitable for an adult. The talk that is to follow about Melchizedek is solid food, which demands chewing. Will his heavers be able to follow it? By milk he means the foundation Truths or A. B. C. of Christianity, which must first be learned before anything else is attempted.

A Pastor's first priority is to make sure that his flock is fully instructed in these fundamental doctrines.

Nothing can be done with those who in the light of full understanding and experience decide to go back and give up their faith. For them, there only waits the fire of judgement. **Heb.10v26-39. 2Pet.2. and Jude.** Determination faith and patience are necessary if we are to obtain the promises of God, which He has confirmed by His oath, so that the hope of Heaven is, as it were, the anchor on the shore, to which the ship attaches its rope, that it may ride out the storm.

N.B.1. THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF THREE FULL ASSURANCES.

a. Of hope. Heb.6v11. b. Of faith. Heb.10v22. c. Of understanding. Col.3v2. Worth "a great conflict."

N.B.2. All Sons of God should expect by right reading of the Word of God to arrive at the stature of being able to instruct others. This, however, demands determined and diligent Bible study. Eph.4v11. 1Cor.12v28. Ps.1.

N.B.3. THE SEVEN FOUNDATION TRUTHS ARE:-

1. Repentance from the things, which a man who is dead to God does, and the choice to live in the presence of a Living God.
2. Faith towards God, which God counts as righteousness. Being justified by faith we have peace with God.
3. Baptism in Water and:- 4. Baptism in Spirit, which followed the New Birth as soon as possible.
5. The Laying on of Hands, which a young convert would see in church meetings from their first attendance.
 - a. In sickness.
 - b. In seeking the Baptism and ministries of the gifts.
6. Resurrection of the Dead, without which life has no meaning.
7. Eternal Judgement, after which our place in the Kingdom of Heaven is finally settled, if we are saved, or Hell if we are lost.

N.B.4. Some would teach that **Heb.6v4-8.**, and **Heb.10v20-36.**, are descriptions of an unbeliever, who was never born again. An unprejudiced reading of these verses however will soon convince us that such words could never be applied to an unbeliever, who certainly do not "taste the powers of the age to come," nor are sanctified by the blood of Jesus.

N.B. there is no statement that God ever refuses forgiveness to the repentant, for God will always forgive the repentant, the trouble is that men, like Satan and the powers of darkness, absolutely refuse to repent.. The eternal security of Jn.10., describes the eternal security of those who follow the Good Shepherd, against external foes. The will of men remains eternally "free." Rev.22v11-12,17. A gift can be thrown away. Heb.10v35.

6. THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK. Heb. 7 to 10.

It is amazing to find that "the order of Melchizedek" of which Christ is High Priest, was instituted long before the Aaronic Priesthood, but so far as we know, was not in operation until Christ Jesus revived it after the resurrection. The Genesis passage should be read together with **Jn.8v56. Lk.22v19,20. Ps.110v1.** Hebrews 7 and 8 are taken up with showing the shortcomings of Aaronic Priesthood, which necessitated a better one being raised up. The Melchizedek priesthood is eternal, the Aaronic priesthood was a temporary part of the Law. **We read in Heb.8v13.,** "In speaking of "a new covenant," he has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete and growing old will soon disappear." **NRSV.**

Hebrews 9 and 10 point out that, although the old Law and Priesthood were insufficient, yet, as coming events cast their shadows before, so all the details of the old were typical of the good things to come in the new. In asking the Jewish Christians to give up the Temple and its Aaronic God-ordained ministry of Priests and Levites and sacrifices, the writer is careful to point out only the ineffectiveness of the Old Covenant. Acts.13v39. 15v10. Gal.2v16. Rom.8v4. but also the vast superiority of the Christian Priesthood, which resumed the Melchizedek, order, so that they might be willing to exchange the Jewish shadow for the Christian substance. Rev.14v17. 15v5,8.

N.B.1. It is amazing that the Melchizedek order, like all the Christian Blessings, went back to Pre-Jewish Days, e.g. Circumcision. Jn7v22. Justification by faith. Rom.4v1-3. Here the Christian breaking of bread is seen to date back to the days of Abraham. Both Melchizedek and Abraham must have known the significance of the bread and wine. Possibly it was at this very meeting when Abraham was tempted to fall as Lot did, into close and profitable fellowship with the king of Sodom. Gen.19v1. that Jn.8v56. was fulfilled and Abraham had explained to him the coming sacrifice of God's Son at Calvary and His resurrection. If so, then Heb.11v17-19. receives fresh light. The God who was going to raise His own Son from the dead after he was killed by evil men, could also raise Isaac! Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek was no chance meeting. Melchizedek came to strengthen Abraham in an hour of trial. The fact that Abraham gave him tithes shows that he recognised his superior authority and dignity. He was received by Abraham as the messenger of the most High God.

N.B.2. Lot who had already moved towards Sodom for the sake of earthly prosperity and had been shown that he would be safer with Abraham, now adds this terrible sin of accepting what Abraham had just refused. When we next come across him he is in an official position in Sodom in spite of his dislike for their dreadful ways. So he ruined his wife and family and ended up in abject fear in a cave! Gen.19. 2Pet.2v7. The admonition and exposition of Melchizedek found no lodging place in his heart. How deep and grievous was the breach between uncle and Nephew is seen by the fact that Abraham, when praying for Sodom, never took his appeal below ten souls, and never mentioned Lot's name to the Lord. So far as we know the breach was final and irremediable. **If Abraham is a type of the overcomer, Lot certainly reminds us of those who suffer loss and are saved through fire. 1Cor.3.**

N.B.3. Theologians have found it difficult to decide who Melchizedek was or what the description of Heb.6v2,3. means.

Three main theories are held:-

- a. That it was Christ Himself: but it is difficult to believe that he lived on earth as king of Salem.
- b. That it was an angelic being who was sent upon earth by God as a kind of counter blast to Satan's wicked angels.
- c. That he was a man, about whom the Scriptures left out all details, and made him in this way a type of Christ. We see that **Heb.7v3.,** could then mean, that Melchizedek was, a mere nobody of whose birth and death no one was sufficiently interested to leave any record. We can imagine a godly king being as despised in those days as he might be now.

SALEM. means "peaceful." It is the name of a place linked with Melchizedek as its king. Gen.14v18. Heb.7v1,2. See Ps.76v2. The main identification of Salem according to Jewish commentators, from Onkelos (Targum) and Josephus (War, 6, 10; Ant. 1, 10, 2; 7; is that Salem is Jerusalem, on the ground that in Ps.76v2., Jerusalem is so called. However, the Samaritans have always identified Salem with Salim, East of Nablus. Jerome states without hesitation, though he was apparently alone in his belief, that the Salem of Melchizedek was not Jerusalem, but a town near Scythopolis, which in his day was still called Salem, and where the vast ruins of the palace of Melchizedek were still to be seen. There can be no doubt that a Salem existed where Jerome places it, for a Salem is mentioned in Judith 4v4., among the places which were seized and fortified by the Jews on the approach of "The valley of Salem," as it appears in the Apocrypha, this Salem must surely be that mentioned by Jerome.

"Without father, without mother, without genealogy "apator, ameter, agenealogetos." There is no record concerning his parentage, or his genealogy. This indicates a totally different type of priesthood from the Levitical, in which genealogy was most important. No one could exercise priestly functions who was not of the lineage of Aaron. The phrase, "Having neither beginning of days nor end of life," does not mean that he was a

miraculous being, without birth or death, it probably means that history is silent concerning his birth and death. This could mean that the pedigree of Melchizedek was of no consequence, and his parentage did not count in any way, and so they never troubled to keep a genealogy. In this way he would be like our Melchizedek, the Lord Jesus, whose parents were nobodies and whose occupation was despised. All priests of this Melchizedek Order seem to be despised and rejected by worldly people. When Jesus became High Priest of this order by being raised by God His Father from the dead, He created a heavenly Brotherhood of the Kings and Priests of the Most High God.

N.B.4. The faulty nature of the Aaronic Priesthood was shown:-

- a. By the inability of law to perfect man. Rom.8v4. b. By the faulty character of the Priests. Heb.2v27. Lk.3v2.
- c. By the death of the Priests who could not continue to do their good work.
- d. By God's mention of a new covenant, which should supersede the old..

N.B. Christian tithing is not authorised by Abraham's tithes to Melchisedec.

Systematic tithing is certainly not authorised or justified by appealing to the tithe that Abraham gave to Melchizedek about 430 years before the Law. Gen.14v18-20. Heb.7v1-11. N.B. v4. This tithe was almost certainly given to Melchizedek to give him some financial security, **however, it was a voluntary once only gift.** We also need to remember that Abraham's tithe was not a tenth of his wealth; **it was a single gift of "the tenth of the spoils" of victory in war. In Heb.7v4., "the spoils," is "akrothinion," which means, the top of the heap of spoils.** Melchizedek had the first choice of a tenth of the best of the spoils. Abraham obtained these spoils through a miraculous military defeat of the four kings who attacked Sodom and captured Lot. One king was Amraphel king of Shinar (Babylon), who has been identified as the great king and renowned law-maker Hammurabi, whose "Hammurabi Code" was a landmark in history, for it not only stated legal rights and responsibilities, it also fixed the rates of wages. There was also the great and famous Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Arioch king of Ellasar (Larsa), and Tidal king of Goiim, usually rendered as "nations." **Abraham won a miraculous victory over the vastly superior forces of these four kings and successfully rescued Lot out of their hands. Gen.14v5-20.** Those who use Abraham's tithe to Melchizedek to demand tithes, must realise that this would mean that we would only have to give tithes of the spoils of victory in war, **and then only once!! See Appendix 6. The Evil Seed Of A Perverted And Unscriptural Emphasis On Tithing.**

N.B. Christian tithing is not authorised by the tithes that Jacob gave to God.

Jacob promised to give God tithes of all that God had promised to give him after the wonderful vision of the ladder to Heaven at Bethel. Gen.28v11-22. This again was a voluntary gift, and not demanded by God. Jacob obviously used this tithe to minister to the poor and needy people that he came across in his travels, for there was no Levitical priesthood to support; Jacob himself was the spiritual head of his family. There is no record that Jacob gave tithes to the successors of Melchizedek, indeed, according to Heb.7v1-3., Melchizedek had no genealogy, and his priesthood was confined to himself.

N.B.5. The Old Testament shadow of the New Testament Substance.

Each part of the Tabernacle spoke of some part of the work of Christ for us.

Brazen altar ---- Christ's atoning death. **Laver** ----Christ's sanctification of us. **Shewbread** ---- Christ's teaching us.

Lamp stand ----Christ's gifts of the Spirit for us. **Table of Incense** ---- Christ's intercessions and interventions for us.

The Golden Pot ----Christ's descent from Heaven. **The Tables of Law** ---- Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

Aaron's Rod ----Christ's resurrection. **The veil Rent** ----Christ's Human Body Torn Apart.

The blood of Bulls ----The Blood of God's Son.

The contrast: An Unsatisfied Conscience After Many Sacrifices - A Satisfied Conscience By Christ's ONE Sacrifice.

Ps.40v6-8. had foretold the passing away of the old sacrifices and the bringing in of the real will of God, "mine ear hast thou opened," Is.50v4-6. this looked forward to the time when the Son of God would possess an earthly ear, which needed to hear and accept obediently tidings, which might well have been rejected. Mt.26v39. So great is the penalty that has been paid for our sins, that we are able to believe that God will allow us to enter even the Holy Places of Heaven trusting in its efficacy, which is pleaded by our High Priest at the Fathers side. Rom.8v32. It was in the faith of His resurrection that Christ sanctified Himself for this Heavenly Priesthood in Jn.17. and explained His ascension "for us" in Jn.16v7.

7. THE GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES. Heb.11v1 to 12v4.

The first verse might be translated, "faith gives substance to our hopes, and reality to our visions." In other words it leads to action in the quietness of certainty. In Heb.1v8-16., we seem again to glimpse the superior revelation of the patriarchs, who seemed to see further under the Melchizedek Priesthood, than their descendents did under the Aaronic Priesthood. They saw the heavenly Jerusalem,. Whereas the Jews looked for an earthly one. Zech.14. Ezek.40 to end.

The word "witnesses" does not mean, eye witness of our struggle, but those who testify to us of the

power of faith in their own struggle. They assure us that if we will only believe, we shall win the same victory. The last of these Old Testament witnesses is Jesus of Nazareth, who believed that God would raise Him from the dead, and give Him His Priesthood. Lk.9v22. Ps.110v1. Mt.22v41-46. Jesus bare witness to the faithfulness of God upon which He staked all.

8. THE EDUCATION OF A KING. Heb.12v5-29.

The creation of God has so far failed in its purpose owing to the faults of its rulers. God has not been able to find those who could be completely trusted. **Lucifer** the perfect angel rebelled: **Adam** the perfect man failed: **David** the man after God's own heart, ruined Israel: and **Solomon** beloved of the Lord, completed its downfall.

Christ however and His Brethren have been so trained by their Heavenly Father that those who pass their tests will be wholly trustworthy and completely Holy. i.e. as consecrated as God their Father is. 1Pet.1v13 to 2v10.

Esau lost his birthright at least partly because Isaac, an indulgent father encouraged him to believe that his slackness and worldliness would not disbar him. On the contrary our Heavenly Father has warned us in the simplest terms that if we do not pass our exams we shall lose our crown. James.1v12. Rev.2v10,26,27. 3v11,21.

Royalty must be beyond reproach. Jude24. and therefore we must expect our Father to put us through the strictest discipline and the severest tests, in the light of the magnificent future He has offered us. If we lose this our opportunity of promotion we shall have no second chance, **life shall be ours; honour no:** even in this world the slacker fails.

As Israel knew of the Promised Land but lost it through unbelief, so we know of our Heavenly Home, but may lose it through unbelief and slackness. Only a consecrated warrior is fit to be a king. **Mt.24v44-51. 25v28-30.** Those who would be chosen as a Royal Priesthood must be righteously trained and completely qualified for the position. No wonder Paul wrote 1Cor.9v24 to 10v13. God is no indulgent Father who lets us get away with things, but rather, "a consuming fire" who burns up everything that is below par. 1Cor.3v10-15. The aim of all this training is to make us as unselfish and consecrated as He is Himself. The good of the universe is to be our only consideration.

N.B.1. Hebrews.12v9. illustrates John.3v3-6.

See Heb.2v8,9. "Now if you are exempt from correction and left without discipline in which all [of God's children] share, then you are illegitimate offspring and not true sons [at all]. [Prov.3v11,12.] v9 Moreover, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we yielded [to them] and respected [them for training us]. Shall we not much more cheerfully submit to the Father of spirits and so [truly] live?" AMP.

See John.3v3-7. "Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." v4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" v5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. v6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. v7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'" NKJV.

In every birth there are two parties concerned.

a. The parents with the flesh.
b. God with the souls and spirits. Num.16v22. Is.42v5. 57v16. Heb.12v9. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? NKJV

N.B.2. The word translated "chastening" in verses 6,7,8,10,11. really means "bringing up as a Son," and includes not just chastisement but also education. We are to learn from our sorrows.

N.B.4. Heb.12v14-15. "Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. v15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled." NASB. What a standard for personal and Assembly life!

N.B.5. Acts.5v18-28., are a commentary upon "the great fear" which fell upon the early Church. Acts.5v5-11. 2Cor.5v9-11. Ph.2v12. God cannot be served as we like, but only as He likes! Lev.10v1-7.

9. Miscellaneous observations and personal remarks. Heb.13v1 to 25.

a. Heb.13v4. "Let marriage be held in honor (esteemed worthy, precious, of great price, and especially dear) in all things. And thus let the marriage bed be undefiled; for God will judge and punish the unchaste [all guilty of sexual vice] and adulterous." AMP.

b. Heb.13v5,6. "Let your character or moral disposition be free from love of money [including greed, avarice, lust, and craving for earthly possessions] and be satisfied with your present [circumstances and with what you

have]; for He [God] Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. [I will] not, [I will] not, [I will] not in any degree leave you helpless nor forsake nor let [you] down (relax My hold on you)! [Assuredly not!] [Josh.1v5.] **AMP.**

Heb.13v5,6. We quote from Wuest's outstanding commentary in his Word Studies from the Greek New Testament.

v5. "Let your manner of life be without love of money, being satisfied with your present circumstances. For He Himself has said, and the statement is on record, I will not, I will not cease to sustain and uphold you. I will not, I will not, I will not let you down. **v6** So that, being of good courage, we say, The Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What shall man do to me?"

The word "conversation" today is limited in its meaning to converse between two or more persons. In 1611 A.D., when the Authorized Version was translated, it meant what the Greek word means, "manner of life, behaviour." The words "without covetousness" are the translation of "**aphilarguros**," made up of phileo "to be fond of," arguros "silver," and Alpha prefixed, the total word meaning "without fondness for silver." The exhortation is against covetousness in the form of love of money.

The word "content" is the translation of "arkeo," "to be possessed of unailing strength, to be strong, to suffice, to be enough," finally, "to be satisfied, contented." The underlying thought is that one should be satisfied with that which meets our need, and not desire a superfluity. The cognate noun of this verb is compounded with the personal pronoun "self" in Phil.4v11., to mean "self-sufficient." This latter word was used by the Stoics to express the favourite doctrine of the sect, that man should be sufficient to himself for all things, able by the power of his will to resist the shock of circumstance. Paul was self-sufficient because he was Christ-dependent. The word "content," therefore, in our Hebrew passage means more than "satisfied." It refers to the ability of the Christian dependent upon the Holy Spirit, to be independent of outward circumstances. The words "such things as ye have" are the translation of "tois parousin," literally, "the things which are at present around one," namely, one's circumstances.

The reason why the child of God can and should obey these admonitions, is now given. The words "He hath said," are intensive in the Greek text, "He Himself hath said." God Himself spoke the promise and guarantee.

The word "leave" is not the usual word, which means "to leave," "leipo," but "**aniemi**," "to send back, to relax, to loosen, not to uphold, to let sink." **It is preceded by two negatives in the Greek text, which in English make a positive, but which in Greek only serve to strengthen the negation. It is "I will not, I will not cease to sustain and uphold thee."**

The word "forsake" is a compound of three Greek words, "**egkataleipo**," "eg" meaning "in," "kata" meaning "down," and "leipo" meaning "to leave." "Leipo" has the idea of forsaking one, "kata" suggests rejection, defeat, helplessness, and "eg" refers to some place or circumstance in which a person may find himself helpless, forsaken. The meaning of the word is that of forsaking someone in a state of defeat or helplessness in the midst of hostile circumstances. **The word in its totality means "to abandon, desert, leave in straits, leave helpless, leave destitute, leave in the lurch, let one down." There are three negatives before this word, making the promise one of triple assurance. It is, "I will not, I will not, I will not let thee down, leave thee in the lurch, leave thee destitute, leave thee in straits and helpless, abandon thee." All of which means that our God will come to our rescue when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances.**

As a consequence we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." The Greek text is literally, "So that, being of good courage, we say." The writer now quotes the LXX of Ps 118:6. The word "what" in the Greek text is not a relative pronoun but an interrogative. It introduces a question. It is, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What shall man do to me?" The first word in the quotation is "Lord," the last word, "man," as it is in the Greek text. These are brought out in strong contrast. The Greek word for Lord is kurios, the word used by the LXX to translate the Hebrew word Jehovah.

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c. Heb.13v15,16. "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that confess his name. **16** And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." NIV.

d. Heb.13v17. "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you." NKJV.

Young's Literal Translation reads. "Be obedient to those leading you, and be subject, for these do

watch for your souls, as about to give account, that with joy they may do this, and not sighing ("kai me stenazontes. "and not groaning," see Rom.8v23.) for this [is] unprofitable to you."

N.B. In Heb.13v7., The KJV, "Them that have the rule over you," is "ton hegoumenon humon," the present participle of "hegeomai," as in Heb.13v17,24. **Obey them that have the rule over you,** and submit (to them): for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this (were) unprofitable for you." "And not with grief," is "kai me stenazontes," which means "and not with groaning." See Rom.8v23.

"Be obedient," or "obey" A.V., is "peithesthe," the present imperative of "peitho," 3982.

Vine says of "peitho." "To persuade, to win over," in the passive and middle voices, "to be persuaded, to listen to, to obey," is so used with this meaning, in the middle voice, e. g., in Acts 5:36-37 (in v. 40, passive voice, "they agreed"); Rom 2:8; Gal 5:7; Heb 13:17; James 3:3. **The "obedience" suggested is not by submission to authority, but resulting from persuasion.** **End of quote.** The arguments of those in authority have to be reasonable, and not dogmatic and autocratic, if Christian leaders are dictatorial they do not have to be obeyed without question. Jesus said, Mt.20v25-28., "It shall not be so among you." KJV.

In Heb.13v7,17,24., in "them who have the rule over," "rule," is the present tense of the verb "hegeomai," 2233, which means "to lead," "to guide;" **Rotherham** translates it in all three instances as, "them who are guiding you."

Vine states that Heb 13:7 and 17., should be translated as, "are the guides," and Heb.13v24., as "guide." "Submit" is "hupeikete," the present active imperative of "hupeiko," which means to yield under, to give up. It only occurs here in the New Testament. We can, and should, submit to the correct guidance and long experience of wise and godly men and women, but should view with caution the directions of dictatorial, power hungry, unloving men, and if necessary, reject them.

"They watch," is "agrupnousin," the present active indicative of "agrupneo" from "agreo," to search, and "hupnos," sleep, to seek after sleep, to be sleepless and be watchful. See Mk.13v33. Note well the sleepless caring watching of loving leaders. These godly leaders are good shepherds, who recognize keenly their responsibility for the welfare of the flock, and will on judgement day give an account of the spiritual welfare and actions of their charges. See. Mt.12v36. A bad report will be unprofitable ("alusiteles,".255, hurtful and distressing) on judgement day.

See 1Thes.5v12,13. v12 "Now also we beseech you, brethren, get to know those who labour among you [recognize them for what they are, acknowledge and appreciate and respect them all] — your leaders who are over you in the Lord and those who warn and kindly reprove and exhort you. v13 And hold them in very high and most affectionate esteem in [intelligent and sympathetic] appreciation of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. **AMP.**

"Labour," is "kopiao,"2872, to labour, toil, be wearied and feel fatigue, to work hard: "Are over you," is "proistamenous humon," literally "who are placed before you." From the verb "proistemi," 4291, to stand before, to superintend, to preside, to be a protector. It is used of the administrators of households, as well as the elders of the churches. 1Tim.3v4-5,12. Rom.12v8. 1Tim.5v17. The early church was made up of a number of separate self-governing groups of believers. The leaders of these congregations were chosen by their church members, they elected leaders who they had confidence in. See 1Cor.16v15,16. The congregation exercised discipline and judgment: see 1Cor.5v3-5. with 2Cor.2v6-8. Gal.6v1,2. Paul exercised an apostolic superintendence of pastoral love. Paul says that they were to recognise their leaders in the Lord and get to know them and follow them.

In 1Thess.5v12. "And admonish you," is "kai nouthetountas humas," the verb "noutheteo," to put in mind, 3560, from "nous," mind, and "tithemi," to put. Putting common sense and good judgement into the heads of people, is a necessary and important part of Christian leadership, which is sometimes not well received. In the words, "them that labour among you," "labour" is the verb "kopiao" 2872, to feel fatigue, to work hard, be wearied, show that this toil can be difficult and wearying.

Heb.13v7,8. "Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. v8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." **NRSV.**

d. Heb .13v20,21. "May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, 21 equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." NIV.

APPENDIX. 1. Jesus, Our Great High Priest, Continually Intervenes In Our Lives.
Scholars say of "entugchano" in Heb.7v25., "The idea is not intercession, but intervention."

K. Weust gives a most helpful translation of "entugchano" in Heb.7v25., he writes, "The word "intercession" is the translation of "entugchano," which speaks of intervention rather than merely intercession." End of quote.

Vincent makes the same important comment on "entugchano," in Heb.7v25., "The idea is not "intercession," but "intervention." It includes every form of Christ's identifying himself with human interests." End of quote.

Vincent writes the following excellent comment on 1Tim.2v1.. "Entugchanein in the passages cited is not "to make intercession," but "to intervene, interfere." Thus in Rom.8v26., it is not that the Spirit pleads in our behalf, but that he throws himself into our case; takes part in it. So Heb.7v25.: not that Jesus is ever interceding for us, but that he is eternally meeting us at every point, and intervening in all our affairs for our benefit. In enteuxeis here the idea of interposition is prominent: making prayers a factor in relations with secular rulers." End of quote.

Jesus our Great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, continually intervenes in our lives with power, grace and love. And what is true of Jesus, our Great High Priest, is true of His brothers and sisters, who are priests after the order of Melchisedec; by God's grace and direction, they intervene by prayer in Church and world affairs, through God's grace, love, power and gifts. Rev.1v6. 5v10. 20v6. 1Cor.4v1. 1Pet.4v10.

"Entugchano" is used in the following places in the New Testament.
The Greek word "entugchano" 1793, does not occur in the Septuagint, except for the Apocrypha.

1. "Entugchano" is used in Rom.11v2-5., "v2 No, God has not rejected and disowned His people [whose destiny] He had marked out and appointed and foreknown from the beginning. Do you not know what the Scripture says of **Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?** [Ps 94:14; 1 Kings 19:1.] v3 Lord, they have killed Your prophets; they have demolished Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life. v4 But what is God's reply to him? I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal! [1 Kings 19:18.] v5 So too at the present time there is a remnant (a small believing minority), selected (chosen) by grace (by God's unmerited favour and graciousness). **AMP.**

"How he pleads with God against Israel," is "hos entugchanei to Theo kata tou Israel." "Entugchanei," the third person singular **present active indicative of "entugchano,"**1793, is used with the preposition "**kata,**" **against,** to accuse and act against another in a judicial way. It is used to describe Elijah's pleading with God **to intervene against** Israel. See 1Kings.19v10.

2. "Entugchano" is used in Acts.25v24., Festus uses "entugchano" to describe how the Jews had come before him and **petitioned him** to try Paul and condemn him. **In Acts.25v24.,** "Petitioned" is "enetuchon," the third person plural aorist active indicative of "entugchano" 1793. The Jews desired Festus to try Paul, and condemn him to death. **v24** And Festus said, "King Agrippa and all who are present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish people **petitioned me,** both at Jerusalem and here, **shouting that he ought not to live any longer.** **RSVNT.** "Shouting," is "boontes," the present active participle of "boao" 994, to shout in a riotous way, The Jews yelled at the top of their voices, and demanded the death of Paul.

When Paul testified in Jerusalem the Jews had violently threatened Paul and demanded his death.
See Acts.22v21-24., "And he (Jesus) said to me, 'Depart; for I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' v22 Up to this word they listened to him; **then they lifted up their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he ought not to live."** v23 And as they cried out and waved their garments and threw dust into the air." v24 the tribune commanded him to be brought into the barracks, and ordered him to be examined by scourging, to find out why they **shouted** thus against him." **RSV.**

In Acts.25v15., Festus explains to King Agrippa. "And when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me about him, petitioning for a judicial hearing and condemnation of him." **AMP Version.**

The TEV Version of Acts.25v15., reads, "and when I went to Jerusalem, the Jewish chief priests and elders brought charges against him and asked me to condemn him."

The KJV, "desiring to have judgment against him," follows E and Phi, the Byzantine texts, and Majority Text, and uses the noun "diken," which is used to mean, justice, judgment, punishment, and vengeance. **However,** the Critical Texts, p74, Aleph, A, B, C, and several others, read the noun "katadiken," which means, a sentence of condemnation, which meant the death sentence. This is clearly the meaning of both of these readings, for Paul's enemies only pretended that they wanted justice, but these evil did not seek justice, they wanted Paul's

death. Paul appeals to the Emperor, for he knew that the Jews only wanted him to return to Jerusalem, so that they could bring about his death. Acts.25v11,12,21.

3. "Entugchano" is used in Rom.8v34. and Heb.7v25. of Christ's High Priestly ministry.

It is twice used of Christ's ceaseless and active High Priestly ministry to aid us, as we draw near to God through Him.

We read in Heb.7v25., "he ever liveth to make intercession for them," is, "pantote zon eis to entugchanein huper auton." "Entugchanein," is the present continuous active infinitive of "entugchano," which states that Jesus is always actively engaged in intervening with power, grace, love, and His spiritual gifts, to meet the needs of His Church.

We read in Rom.8v34., "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us," "hos kai entugchanei huper hemon," literally, "who actively intervenes for us." The KJV "intercession," is "entugchanei," the third person singular present active indicative of "entugchano," 1793. These two Scriptures proclaim that Jesus is not passive, or static, in His High Priestly Ministry, **He is dynamically active in His interventions into our lives.** Jesus has been through all the trials and temptations of life and knows all about our needs, trials, and temptations and is totally and absolutely able to meet all our needs. Jesus is our Advocate and He paid the debt for our sins with his blood. We are pardoned and set free, and He unreservedly gives to us all the benefits and powers of His gifts, grace, love, and resurrection life. **See Isa.53v12., "Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors. NKJV**

K. Weust proclaims Christ's care and ability to meet all our needs in his translation of Heb.2v17,18., "For this reason it was an obligation for Him in all things to be made like His brethren, in order that He might become a compassionate and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, with a view to offering that sacrifice for the sins of the people that would perfectly meet the demands of God's justice. v18 For in that He suffered, having himself been tempted and put to the test, He is able to run to the cry of those who are being tempted and put to the test, and bring them aid." End of quote.

In Heb.2v18., the KJV "to succour," is "boethesai," the aorist active infinitive of the verb "boetheo," 997, from "boe," a cry, and "theo," to run, and so means to run at a cry or call for help. Paul declares that Jesus runs to meet the needs of His suffering saints. In Lk.15v20., we see God the Father running to meet the repentant prodigal. In Mt.15v24,25., the Syrophenician woman was distraught because her daughter was grievously vexed with a demon, she uses "boethei," the present active imperative of "boetheo" 997, to ask Jesus help her, and to run to her cry and deliver her child from the demon.

In Heb.2v18., "He is able," is "dunatai," the present passive indicative of "dunamai" 1410, "to be able, to have power." The power of Jesus to help us is derived not only from His Divine abilities, but also from the sympathy and understanding He acquired from His horrendous experiences of daily life, and the devastating trials of His true humanity. Jesus knows all about, and sympathises with, and aids, "those that are tempted," "tois peirazomenois," the present passive participle of "peirazo," for He has been there, done that, and very definitely wore the tee shirt of temptation, trial, vicious opposition and cruel suffering.

We read in Heb.4v14-16., "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. v15 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. v16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. RSV.

Jesus does not "pray the Father," as though the Father were unwilling; but meets the Father on the behalf of men, as a Mediator in whom the Father is well pleased. Jesus asks, "eroteso," the asking of an equal. We read in Ex.30v8., that there was a "perpetual incense before the Lord," which was burnt by the high priest, which was not seen by the people. In the same way the eternally continuing, constant and unchangeable High Priestly Melchisedec intercession and intervention ministry of Jesus, is hidden from the children of God in this world.

Jesus is our advocate in Heaven. 1Jn.2v1. "My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." **NKJV.** "An advocate," is the noun "parakleton" 3875. From "para," "to the side of," and "kaleo," "to summon," and speaks of "someone who is called to another's side to aid him," as an advocate in a court of justice. **See Jn.14v16., "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever." "Forever" is "eis ton aiona." Jesus and the Holy Spirit are to abide with us forever. See Mt.28v20.** "Another Comforter," is "allon parakleton," (not "heteron," of another kind), but "allon," another of the same kind as Jesus, the Holy Spirit, like Jesus is our Paraclete, Helper, and Advocate with the Father. "Parakletos" was used

in secular society for a legal assistant and advocate who pleads another's cause; in the New Testament it only occurs in John's writings. As Christians we have Jesus and the Holy Spirit as our Advocates with the Father, they act in a joint and integrated ministry on our behalf. See Rom.8v26-34. Jn.14v16,26. 15v26. 16v7. 1Jn.2v1. **N.B. In Jn.15v26.** "he ekeinos," the emphatic masculine pronoun is used to proclaim the real personality of "The Comforter," "ho parakletos," 3875, not the neuter "ekeino."

N.B. John.16v7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you." The Holy Spirit is the gift of the ascended Christ and the Father.

N.B. Acts.1v4,5. "And while being in their company and eating with them, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what the Father had promised, of which [He said] you have heard Me speak. [**John.14v16,26. 15v26.**] v5 For John baptized with water, but not many days from now you shall be baptized with (placed in, introduced into) the Holy Spirit. **AMP**

4. "Entugchano" is used in. Rom.8v26., to describe the Holy Spirit's interventions to aid us in prayer.

N.B. The Holy Spirit's continuous and ceaseless interventions in our lives and needs.

We read in Rom.8v26,27. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. v27. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." **KJV.**

The Greek word, "entugchano," occurs in Rom.8v26., where it is prefixed by "huper," ("huper," which means, "on behalf of"). "**Huperentugchano,**" is a striking word that describes the rescue by one who 'happens on' one who is in trouble, and 'in his behalf' ("huper") actively intervenes with power and grace, to effect a change. "**Maketh intercession for,**" is "**huperentugchanei,**" the present active indicative of the verb, "**huperentugchano**" 5241, "to intervene in behalf of," it is derived from "entugchano," 1793; and "huper," 5228. "**Huperentugchano,**" is only found here in Rom.8v26., in the New Testament. **It is a striking word that describes the act of dynamic and forceful rescue by the Holy Spirit, who meets the needs of one who is in trouble and "in his behalf" "huper," operates His almighty power and love to aid and deliver us, and pleads for us with unspeakable yearnings, groanings and sighs too deep for utterance" "alaletois."** It is a Divine mixture of almighty active intervention, combined with the deepest compassionate intercession, with "sighs and groanings too deep for words." Our Friend and helper, the Holy Spirit, is unfailingly constant in His caring love for us, and only God knows the enormous cost of this very demanding, laborious, and harrowing ministry to Him. Paul uses the present active indicative "**huperentugchanei,**" to reveal to us the Holy Spirit's continual active ministrations of power, grace and love to the Church of Jesus.

Various translators translate the latter part of Rom.8v26., of the New King James Version, "the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," ("**to 3588, Pneuma 4151, huperentugchanei 5241, huper 5228, hemon 2257, stenagmois 4726, alaletois 215,**")

The Amplified Bible reads. The Spirit "pleads in our behalf with unspeakable yearnings and groanings too deep for utterance."

The Revised Standard Version, reads. "The Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words."

The New Living Translation, reads. "The Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words."

Young's Literal translation, reads. "The Spirit himself doth make intercession for us with groanings unutterable."

K. Wuest, reads. "The Spirit himself comes to our rescue by interceding with unutterable groanings."

The New International Version, reads. "The Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."

Others translators read. "In groans that words cannot express;" and "with inexpressible yearnings;" and "with sighs that are beyond words," and, with unuttered groanings," and "with "sighs that baffle words."

All these translations reveal the deep feelings, heart involvement, and pain that the Trinity experiences over the needs, heartbreak, pain, and suffering, of God's beloved children. The Trinity and their Angelic Hosts are not detached onlookers, they are continually and eternally active in their ministrations, and feel deeply all our trials, heartaches and problems, and are active in their interventions and ministrations to us.

N.B. The Holy Spirit's intervenes for us "with unutterable groanings," "stenagmois alaletois." or "sighs too deep for words." We do not know how or what to pray for, but the Holy Spirit aids and directs us, and intervenes and ministers divine aid, power, grace and love, to meet the needs upon both His heart and ours. These words show the deep heart involvement of the Holy Spirit with us in our trials and tribulations. The noun "tugchano," 5177. means properly, to hit the mark (in contrast to "hamartanein," to miss the mark), it speaks of one discharging a javelin or arrow. The Holy Spirit always hits the mark.

We often do not know how to pray as is necessary. Rom.8v26-28.

We read in Rom.8v26., "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for (us) with groanings which cannot be uttered."

"How to pray," is "to ti proseuometha." "Proseuometha," is the aorist subjunctive of "proseuchomai," 4336, to earnestly pray to God, and to worship; it is derived from "pros" 4314, towards; and the verb "euchomai," 2172, to wish, to pray to God.

"As we ought," is "katho dei," which means, "As is necessary." This well describes the limitations of our human knowledge in prayer. It does not refer to the form of prayer, or the words used in prayer, but to our human lack of knowledge of the true state of affairs concerning what we are praying for. Compare 2Cor.8v12. 1Pet.4v13. This is where praying with the gift of tongues is essential, for the Holy Spirit knows the needs we pray for, and as we pray in tongues we not only pray correctly, but we, and the Holy Spirit, intervene with the Holy Spirit's power gifts to meet people's needs. This was the secret of Paul's prayer life, he thanked God that he spoke in tongues more than the talkative and verbose Corinthians. 1Cor.14v18. Invocation of the Covenant Names of Yahweh (Jehovah), and the Name of Yeshua (Jesus), add great power to our prayer in tongues.

We read in the Amplified Version of Rom.8v26., "So too the [Holy] Spirit comes to our aid and bears us up in our weakness; for we do not know what prayer to offer nor how to offer it worthily as we ought, but the Spirit Himself goes to meet our supplication and pleads in our behalf with unspeakable yearnings and groanings too deep for utterance. AMP.

In Jn.11v22., Martha has a limited perception of Jesus. Hebrews is written to correct our inaccurate ideas about Jesus.

Vincent comments on Jn.11v22., "But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." "Wilt ask of God " is "aiteo ton Theon." The verb "aiteo" is used of the asking of an inferior from a superior. "Erotao" is to ask on equal terms, and hence, is always used by Christ of His own asking from the Father, in the consciousness of His equal dignity. Hence, Martha, as Trench observes, "plainly reveals her poor, unworthy conception of His person, that she recognizes in Him no more than a prophet, when she ascribes that asking "aiteisthai" to Him which He never ascribes to Himself" ("Synonyms"). **Bengel says:** "Martha did not speak in Greek, yet John expresses her inaccurate remark, which the Lord kindly tolerated." **End of Vincent quote.**

We read in Jn.16v26., "At that day ye shall ask ("aiteo" 154) in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray ("erotao" 2065, to interrogate; by implication, to request) the Father for you." **KJV.** **We read in John.15v7.** "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." **NKJV.** "Ask whatsoever ye will," is "ho ean thelete aitesasthe," the present active subjunctive of "thelo," to wish, to will, and the aorist imperative of "aiteo," to ask. Jesus gives this astounding promise "genesetai," the future middle of ginomai, "**it will come to pass.**" This demands such an intimate union, communion, and harmony with Jesus that nothing will be asked out of harmony with His will, or the will of God the Father.

We read in Mark.11v23,24. "Truly I tell you, whoever says to this mountain, be lifted up and thrown into the sea! and does not doubt at all in his heart but believes that what he says will take place, it will be done for him. v24 For this reason I am telling you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe (trust and be confident) that it is granted to you, and you will [get it]." **AMP.**

"Believe that ye have received them," is "pisteuete hoti elabete," this is true faith, it believes and sees the fulfilment of Gods promise before it is received. "Elabete," is the aorist active indicative of "lambano" 2983, to take, to lay hold of, to receive. "Believe," is "pisteuete," the second person, plural, present, active, imperative of "pisteuo" 4100, to believe, to have faith in.

N.B. 1John.2v28. "And now, little children, abide (live, remain permanently) in Him, so that when He is made visible, we may have and enjoy perfect confidence (boldness, assurance) and not be ashamed and shrink from Him at His coming." **AMP.**

We read in 1John.5v14. "And this is the confidence (the assurance, the privilege of boldness) which we have in Him: [we are sure] that if we ask anything (make any request) according to His will (in agreement with His own plan), He listens to and hears us." **AMP.** The **ASV,** "toward him," is "pros auton," **face-to-face fellowship with Jesus brings boldness.** "**According to his will.**" is "kata to thelema autou." Jesus reveals

to us that this is the secret behind answered prayer. See 1Pet.4v19., which states that we can suffer according to the will of God. In Eph.1v5,11. Gal.1v4., see God's resolve, fervent desire and great plans for us. "He heareth us," "akouei hemon," even when God does not give us an immediate answer to our prayers.

We see then, that the nature of our Lord's High Priestly ministry, is intervention, not just intercession.

The passage in Heb.7v14-28. reveals our Lord's great High Priestly ministry. "v14 For it is obvious that our Lord sprang from the tribe of Judah, and Moses mentioned nothing about priests in connection with that tribe. v15 And this becomes more plainly evident when another Priest arises Who bears the likeness of Melchizedek, [Ps 110:4.] v16 Who has been constituted a Priest, not on the basis of a bodily legal requirement [an externally imposed command concerning His physical ancestry], but on the basis of the power of an endless and indestructible Life. v17 For it is witnessed of Him, You are a Priest forever after the order (with the rank) of Melchizedek. [Ps 110:4.] v18 So a previous physical regulation and command is cancelled because of its weakness and ineffectiveness and uselessness; v19 For the Law never made anything perfect; but instead a better hope is introduced through which we [now] come close to God. v20 And it was not without the taking of an oath [that Christ was made Priest], **v21 For those who formerly became priests received their office without its being confirmed by the taking of an oath by God, but this One was designated and addressed and saluted with an oath. The Lord has sworn and will not regret it or change His mind. You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.** [Ps 110:4.] v22 In keeping with [the oath's greater strength and force], Jesus has become the Guarantee of a better (stronger) agreement [a more excellent and more advantageous covenant]. v23 [Again, the former successive line of priests] was made up of many, because they were each prevented by death from continuing [perpetually in office]; **v24 But He holds His priesthood unchangeably, because He lives on forever. v25 Therefore He is able also to save to the uttermost (completely, perfectly, finally, and for all time and eternity) those who come to God through Him, since He is always living to make petition to God and intercede with Him and intervene for them.** v26 [Here is] the High Priest [perfectly adapted] to our needs, as was fitting; holy, blameless, unstained by sin, separated from sinners, and exalted higher than the heavens. v27 He has no day by day necessity, as [do each of these other] high priests, to offer sacrifice first of all for his own [personal] sins and then for those of the people, because He [met all the requirements] once for all when He brought Himself [as a sacrifice] which He offered up. v28 For the Law sets up men in their weakness [frail, sinful, dying human beings] as high priests, but the word of [God's] oath, which [was spoken later] after the institution of the Law, [chooses and appoints as priest One Whose appointment is complete and permanent], a Son Who has been made perfect forever. [Ps 110:4.] AMP.

Jesus continually intervenes directly in the world, and through His spiritual gifts to His Church.

Jesus has a continual, unchangeable intervention ministry to His Church through the spiritual gifts He gives to His Church, and through His direct providential acts of power, grace and love in the affairs in the World.

We read in Heb.7v24., "But He (Jesus), because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood." NKJV.

Vincent translates it, "hath his priesthood unchangeable." He says, "The King James Version, misses the possessive force of the article, "his" priesthood, and the emphasis on "unchangeable," "aparabatos." This may be explained either as "inviolable," or "which does not pass over to another." Usage is in favour of the former meaning, but the other falls in better with the course of thought." **End of quote.**

"Hath an unchangeable priesthood," is "aparabaton echei ten hierosunen." **The word "unchangeable" is the translation of "aparabation,"** which is derived from "baino," "to step," and "para" "across," and the negative "alpha," which means "not;" so the compound word means, "not stepping across." So the word describes that which cannot be violated, or that which does not pass over to another. **The translation, "which does not pass over to another," is a negative way of expressing unchangeableness and permanence.** "Aparabatos," only occurs here in the New Testament, and does not occur at all in the Septuagint. **God placed Jesus in this High Priestly ministry and no one else has either the right, or the ability, to fulfil this demanding ministry, and take on its gigantic responsibility. See Heb.7v3,23,24.**

Jesus ministers continually, without a break, to all of the needs, of all of the Church, and the needs of all of the World, and with the Most High rules in the affairs of the kingdoms of men. Dan.4v25,37. **The demands and extent of this difficult, laborious and demanding task are beyond our comprehension!** Jesus has an eternal unchangeable and non-transferable priesthood, and He is able to save and deliver the believer in all the trials and problems of life. There is a continual outpouring of power, grace and love from Jesus to the needs within His Church, and the needs of the World.

Our Lord's High Priestly ministry is much more than saying words, He intervenes with power in our lives.

The Greek phrase used in Heb.7v25. to describe our Lord's ministrations in His High Priestly ministry, "to make intercession for them," is "eis to entungchanein huper auton." **"Entungchanein" is the present active**

infinitive of "entugchano," and translators say it means, "to deal with, to light upon or fall in with; to go to meet, for consultation, conversation, or supplication." **However, as we have seen, some notable scholars give a better and fuller light on the meaning of "entugchano," they say that it speaks of active intervention with power, grace, and love, rather than just intercession with words, and the present continuous active infinitive of "entugchano" confirms this. Jesus is always actively engaged in intervening to meet the needs of His Church.** ("Entugchano" is also used in **Acts.25v24. Rom.v27,34. and 11v2.**, but it does not occur anywhere in the Septuagint, (the Greek version of the Old Testament). (However, the compound verb, "huperentugchanein," occurs in **Rom.8v26.**, and speaks of the continuous interventions of the Holy Spirit in our lives. In 1Tim2v1., Paul uses the noun "enteuxeis," "supplications," to direct us to use and invoke God's power to effect the leaders of the world.

Weust gives a most enlightening meaning of "entugchano he writes on Heb.7v25. "The word "intercession" is the translation of "entugchano," **which speaks of intervention rather than merely intercession.** It includes every form of Messiah's identifying Himself with humanity, and includes the idea of intercession. The writer speaks here of the present intercession of Messiah on behalf of believers, which is based upon and follows His once-for-all offering of Himself as the sacrifice for sin. **Translation.** But this (priest), because He abides forever, has the priesthood which is non-transferable, for which reason **He is able to be saving those completely and forever who come to God through Him, being always alive for the purpose of continually making intercession for them.**" End of quote.

The Amplified Bible also says that "entugchano" can mean "intervention," we read in Heb.7v24,25., v24 "But He holds His priesthood unchangeably, because He lives on forever. v25 Therefore He is able also to save to the uttermost (completely, perfectly, finally, and for all time and eternity) those who come to God through Him, since He is always living to make petition to God and intercede with Him **and intervene for them.**"

We read in Heb.7v25.. "Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." "To make intercession," is "eis to entugchanein," the present active infinitive of "entugchano." "The active interventions of Jesus in intercession, have cost Him more pain, sorrow, and suffering than words can ever tell. **In the phrase, "to the uttermost,"** "eis to panteles," **Rienecker** states it can mean either, or both, "for all time," or "fully and completely." The usual meaning of "panteles," is, all-complete, completely, utterly, perfectly.

"Panteles," only occurs in Heb.7v25. and Lk.13v11. K Wuest translates it: "A woman had a spirit that caused an infirmity 18 years and **was completely bent together** by a curvature of the spine, and was not able to raise herself up at all."

The New American Standard Update translates Lk.13v11., "And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all."

The Amplified Bible translates Lk.13v11., "And there was a woman there who for eighteen years had had an infirmity caused by a spirit. She was bent completely forward and **utterly unable** to straighten herself up or to look upward."

The KJV translates, Lk13v11., "And behold, a woman that had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years; and she was bowed together, and could **in no wise** ("eis to panteles") lift herself up." **End of quotes.**

The woman had "a spirit of infirmity," "pneuma astheneias," a spirit that caused "astheneias," that is weakness and lack of strength. It does not say that she was possessed, but that an evil spirit had made her ill for 18 years. The poor woman "was bowed together," "en sugkuptousa," the imperfect active of "sugkupto" 4794, it only occurs here in the New Testament, it means, "to bend, to stoop altogether," she was completely overcome by a severe curvature of the spine. "And could in no wise lift herself up," is "kai me dunamene anakupsai **eis to panteles,**" the negative form of the previous statement. "Anakupsai," is the aorist active infinitive of "anakupto," to unbend, she was absolutely unable, "eis to panteles," to bend herself back up. The poor woman was totally incapacitated by her infirmity, but Jesus healed her and said, **Lk.13v16.** "And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" **RSV.**

Adam Clark makes the following excellent note on Heb.7v25. "[Wherefore] Because he is an everlasting priest, and has offered the only available sacrifice, he is able to save, from the power, guilt, nature, and punishment of sin, to the uttermost, "eis to panteles," to all intents, degrees, and purposes; and always, and in and through all times, places, and circumstances; for all this is implied in the original word: but in and through all times seems to be the particular meaning here, because of what follows, he ever liveth to make intercession for them; this depends on the perpetuity of his priesthood, and the continuance of his mediatory office." **End of quote.**

In Lk.22v31,32.,we see the mighty interventions of the power gifts of Jesus in prayer, which

delivered Peter and the other apostles from apostasy. "Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, v32 but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." **NRSV.**

In John.17v11,12., we see how Jesus had guarded and kept the apostles through intervention with the power gifts of the Holy Spirit, and He will keep us in the same way, and we can keep others through our prayer power interventions.

We read in Heb.7v25. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." **KJV.** **In Heb.7v25.** the **RSV**, "draw near to God," and the **KJV**, "come unto God," is "proserchomenous to Theo." **Draw near,** is "**proserchomenous,**" the **present participle of proserchomai**, and it emphasises continual activity, it is **the verb used in Heb.4v16.** The verb only occurs here in Hebrews in Paul's writings, and in 1Pet.2v4. **See "engizein,"** "to draw near," in James.4v8. Heb.7v19. **See Ps.73v28.** "But it is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works." **KJV.** **See Heb.10v22.** "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." **KJV.**

WE CAN COME BOLDLY TO THE THRONE OF GRACE.

See Heb.4v16. "Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help (us) in time of need." "Let us therefore draw near" is "proserchometha oun," the **present active subjunctive of "proserchomai,"** which is, the **present continuous,** "**let us keep on coming to**" our sympathizing and Great High Priest. We need to daily, constantly, and reverently approach God in worship, to receive all the benefits that can come from communion with our dear Lord Jesus. In Hebrews, this verb, "proserchomai," means a reverent approach to God for worship. It occurs in Hebrews, in the sense of approach to God through the Old Testament sacrifices, or through the sacrifice of Christ. See Heb.7v25. 10v1,22. 11v6. **In Rom.5v2.** "access," is the noun "**prosagogen,**" and it expresses the same idea of approach into the presence of our Almighty Father. **In communion with Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, we can, as priests after the order of Melchisedec, operate Divine interventions in prayer through God's power and spiritual gifts, to bring deliverance to needy people, and so work with our Lord to perform His will.**

"That we may receive mercy." is "hina labomen eleos," the aorist active subjunctive of "lambano" 2983, to get hold of; with "**eleos,**" 1656, which speaks of active Divine compassion and tender mercy. "**And find grace,**" is "kai charin heuromen." "Grace" is "**charis,**" 5485, gracious kindness and "mercy" for past sins; and "grace" to resist evil, and face trials, and work for God, in daily life, in home and work. Paul makes it quite clear, that daily home life and work life, executed "heartily, as to the Lord," will bring a truly great reward. **We read in Col.3v23,24.** "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, v24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; **for you serve the Lord Christ.**" **NKJV.** See Col.3v1-25. and Eph.5v15-33.

In Heb.4v16. "**and find,**" is "**heuromen,**" the aorist active subjunctive of "heurisko," 2147, to find, obtain, get, perceive, and receive. **We are sure to receive what we need and ask for, because Jesus our Great High Priest is on the throne, and He is full of compassion, tender mercy and gracious kindness. So we can come "with boldness," "meta parrasias," and tell Jesus all the details of our, needs, problems, failures and sins.**

N.B. "To help us in time of need," is "**eis eukairon boetheian.**" "**Boetheia,**" 996, is used to speak of aid, and it also describes a rope or chain that is put around the hull of a ship to strengthen it in dangerous stormy weather; it only occurs here and Acts.27v17., in the New Testament. **It is derived from "botheo," to run to the cry of, to succour, see Heb.2v18.,** where Jesus runs to the desperate cries of his brothers and sisters. "**Eukairos**" is derived from "eu," well, and "kairos," opportunity, it only occurs here in the New Testament. The sense is, literally, "for seasonable help, or help in good time;" or, "for Divinely well-timed help," or, "for Divine help in the nick of time;" help that God guarantees to give us before it is too late.

"Unto the throne of grace," is "to throno tes charitos," we have integrated "thronos" into our English language, to speak of the throne of kings, and the Thrones of God and Christ. Heb.1v3,8. This throne is different from the thrones of men, for God our Father and the Lord Jesus dispense grace and mercy from the beautiful kindness of their beings to needy mankind. Jesus calls His throne in the Mt.25v31., "the Throne of His glory."

In 1Tim 2v1-8., Paul uses "enteuxis" to counsel Christians under lethal persecution.

Intervening in World affairs with God's revelation and power gifts is our Melchisedec priestly privilege

"I exhort therefore, that, **first of all,** ("**proton panton,**" "**first in importance**"), supplications ("**deesis**" 1162), prayers ("**proseuche,**" 4335), **intercessions,** ("**enteuxis**" 1783), and giving of thanks ("**eucharistia**" 2169), **be made for all men;** v2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we

may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. v3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; v4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.v5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; v6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. v7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. v8 **I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.**" KJV.

The noun, "enteuxis" 1783, is related to the verb "entugchano" 1793, it occurs in 1Tim.2v1., as the feminine plural accusative "enteuxeis," and in 1Tim.4v5., as the feminine singular genitive "enteuxeos." Like "entugchano" and "huperentugchano," "enteuxis" also has the meaning of "an intervention, with power, to effect a change." It does not occur in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament Scriptures, except for 2Macc.4v8.

It is a certain fact that the child Jesus intervened in Israel's political affairs through His prayer life, and it is almost certain that Jesus had a "power intervention in prayer," in A.D. 6., when He was about ten years old, that removed Archelaus from power through the Romans, because of his extreme cruelty.

There can also be no doubt that intercessions, and "power interventions in prayer," for Peter, in the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, brought about the release of Peter from prison. Acts.12v1-19. Their "prayer interventions with power" also undoubtedly brought about the judgemental act of Divine power that executed Herod Agrippa 1st., when he was smitten by the angel, and eaten up by worms. Acts.12v20-21.

We repeat again Vincent's outstanding note on "enteuxis" 1783, in 1Tim.2v1..

"Intercessions enteuxeis. Only here and 1Tim.4v5., the Septuagint, 2Macc.4:8. The verb entugchanein, commonly rendered "to make intercession," Rom 8:27,34; 11:2; and huperentugchanein, "to intercede in behalf of," Rom.8v26. The verb signifies "to fall in with a person; to draw near so as to converse familiarly." Hence, enteuxis is not properly "intercession" in the accepted sense of that term, but rather approach to God in free and familiar prayer. "Entugchanein" in the passages cited is not "to make intercession," but "to intervene, interfere." Thus in Rom.8v26., **it is not that the Spirit pleads in our behalf, but that he throws himself into our case; takes part in it.** So Heb.7v25.: **not that Jesus is ever interceding for us, but that he is eternally meeting us at every point, and intervening in all our affairs for our benefit.** In enteuxeis here the idea of interposition is prominent: making prayers a factor in relations with secular rulers. **End of Vincent quote.**

What tremendous truth, "Jesus is eternally meeting us at every point, and intervening in all our affairs for our benefit." This was certainly needed as we can see from the following. Jesus the martyr, sustains and welcomes His martyrs.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, states under, "19. 200 Years of Persecution."

"For 200 years, to become a Christian meant the great renunciation, the joining a despised and persecuted sect, the swimming against the tide of popular prejudice, the coming under the ban of the Empire, the possibility at any moment of imprisonment and death under its most fearful forms. For 200 years he that would follow Christ must count the cost, and be prepared to pay the same with his liberty and life. For 200 years the mere profession of Christianity was itself a crime. Christianus sum was almost the one plea for which there was Persecution no forgiveness, in itself all that was necessary as a 'title' on the back of the condemned. He who made it was allowed neither to present apology, nor call in the aid of a pleader. 'Public hatred,' writes Tertullian, 'asks but one thing, and that not investigation into the crimes charged, but simply the confession of the Christian name.' For the name itself in periods of stress, not a few, meant the rack, the blazing shirt of pitch, the lion, the panther, or in the case of maidens an infamy worse than death" (Workman, 103)." **End of quote.**

In the light of these terrible persecutions, we can well understand, why Paul said that every believer was to make this kind of praying for national leaders their top priority. "Supplications, prayers, intercessions ("enteuxeis," the feminine plural of "enteuxis" 1783, which means, "an intervention, with power, to effect a change"), and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority." Paul is teaching here, that the individual believer can change the whole atmosphere of the country, society and community that they live in, from one of great hostility, persecution, and unrest, to one of peace and quietness, by the operation of the power of God through the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Paul wrote the first epistle to Timothy in A.D. 67, and at this time the great persecution of Christians, started by the Emperor Nero in A.D. 64, was at its height. The fact that Paul had to state this exhortation makes it clear that the Christians, living at this time, were **NOT** fulfilling this very important injunction to effect the rulers of the nations with God's power. Tens of thousands of Christians were martyred, they were killed by lions, and bulls with metal tipped horns, and by other horrific means. Nero put inflammable substances on the bodies of Christians, even young teenagers, and set fire to them to illuminate his gardens at night. It is also interesting to note, that Nero died by committing suicide in the thirty-second year of his life, in July A.D. 68, a month after Paul had been beheaded. This would seem to indicate that believers in the Roman

Empire took this exhortation made by Paul in A.D. 67, seriously, and "started to intervene with God's power and gifts in prayer," to bring to an end Nero's persecutions. God's judgement upon Nero resulted in a greater measure of peace in the Christian societies.

Even in this time of great persecution Paul instructs the suffering Christians, in Phil.4v6., "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer ("proseuche," 4335), and supplication ("deesis" 1162), with thanksgiving ("eucharistia" 2169), let your requests("aitemata" 155, petitions, requests) be made known unto God." Thanksgiving and gratitude to God should be part of all of our various kinds of praying, even in the most trying of times.

The Amplified Bible renders Phil.4v6., "Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything, by prayer and petition (definite requests), with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God." **End of quote.** "In nothing be anxious," is "meden merimnate," **the present imperative of "merimnao," 3309, it is a definite present continuous prohibition, "stop being anxious."**

Jesus was under continual persecution, and died a martyr's death, but He said in Mt.6v25., "Therefore I say unto you, be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?" **ASV. "Be not anxious for your life,"** is "me merimnate te psuche humon." **"Merimnate," is the present active imperative of "merimnao" 3309.** "Anxious" is a good translation, for the King James Version, "Take no thought for your life," is a poor translation in today's language, for the word "thought" speaks of mental planning, and it fails to convey the idea of anxiety which is in the Greek word. "Take thought," was a correct rendering when the King James Version was made, since the old English word "thought," meant anxiety or worry.

Though "merimnao" does include the ideas of worry and anxiety, it can also sometimes include the ideas of thoughtful care and concern, as in 1Cor.7v32., "careth for the things of the Lord;" and **1Cor.12v25.** "that the members should have the same care one for another." **See the RSV of Phil.2v20.**, "I have no one like him, who will be genuinely anxious for your welfare. **See the KJV of Phil.2v20.**, "For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state." In these Scriptures the sense of anxiety or worry is entirely improper. **In other cases anxiety and worry is foremost, as in Mt.13v22.**, "the care of this world," which chokes the good seed. **See also Lk.8v14.**, "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." **KJV.**

In Lk.10v41., when Jesus says "art anxious," He uses "merimnas," the present active indicative of "merimnao" 3309, to gently rebuke Martha for her anxiety and agitation about preparing a meal for Jesus. Like Martha, many housewives, can be subject to anxiety and agitation over the pressures of life, of home relationships, and finances.

As we have seen, Jesus warned against anxiety in His Sermon on the Mount. Mt.6v25,28,31,34. See Lk.12v11,22,26.

We read in Mt.6v31. "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" **RSV. Jesus uses the aorist active subjunctive of "merimnao," 3309, "to be anxious about, with the negative, to direct his disciples not to have the habit of soul-destroying worry about food and clothing.** The related noun is "merimna," "care," which speaks of a dividing care, which distracts the heart of a person from the true purpose and goal of life. However, the word can also speak of thoughtful care, as well as the idea of worry and anxiety. **In Mt.6v34.**, Jesus repeats the prohibition with the aorist subjunctive: "Do not become anxious," It is worry about the future, which Jesus warns against here.

In 1Pet.5v7. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." "Casting," is the aorist participle "epiripsantes," which indicates a once for all act; **throwing the whole life with all its care on him. "He careth" is "melei," which speaks of the "watchful" providential care, love and affection of God.** Let us humble ourselves before God and cast all our anxiety on Him. Pride can cause much of our anxiety. Often human beings find it difficult and humiliating to cast everything upon another and be cared for. **However, God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble, and it is only as we submit to God that we can successfully resist the Devil, and see him flee from us. James.4v6,7.** God really does care for us.

In 1Pet.5v7. the King James Version unfortunately ignores the distinction between the two kinds of care, anxiety is not distinguished from God's tender providential love and care for His beloved children. "Casting all your care ("merimnan," "anxiety") upon Him, for He careth ("auto melei") for you." **"Melei" 3199, is the present active indicative of "melo," and proclaims to us the continuous active present tense care of God. God states that we are the object His care; the care of forethought, attention and love, not of worry and anxiety.** "Casting," is "epiripsantes," the aorist active participle of "epirripto" 1977, which means, "to throw upon, to place upon," it only occurs in the New Testament here in 1Pet.5v7. and Lk.19v35., where

they were casting their clothes on the colt that Jesus was to ride upon.

The Amplified Bible translates 1Pet.5v7. beautifully. "Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully. [Ps.55v22.]" **End of quote.** God is always watchfully, thoughtfully and affectionately really caring for His beloved children, **and that means you.**

The Living Bible also has a lovely translation of 1Pet.5v7. "Let him have all your worries and cares, for he is always thinking about you and watching everything that concerns you."

See also Ps.55v22., in The Amplified Bible. "Cast your burden on the Lord [releasing the weight of it] and He will sustain you; He will **never** allow the [consistently] righteous to be moved (made to slip, fall, or fail)."
End of quote.

Note, Luke.12v32. "Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." **KJV**

See also Lk.21v18,19. "But there shall not an hair of your head perish. v19 In your patience possess ye your souls." **KJV.**

We have finished this section with Lk.21v18,19., a Scripture on the Second Coming of Jesus, and I have done this deliberately, for when the hearts of men are failing them for fear for the catastrophic things that are coming on the earth. **If we walk with God we can be at peace, and be free from anxiety, for Jesus has told us that these things must happen first, and shortly after them, Jesus will return and set up His kingdom.**

PRAYER AND INTERCESSION INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DANGEROUS LAST DAYS.

In Lk.21v12-19., Jesus warns of great persecution and hard times for His Church. Jesus tells us in, Luke.21v17-19. "And you will be hated (despised) by everyone because [you bear] My name and for its sake. v18 But not a hair of your head shall perish. [1Sam.14v45.] v19 By your steadfastness and patient endurance you shall win the true life of your souls. **AMP.**

Intervention with God's revelation and power judgement gifts is a vital part of Great Tribulation ministry.

As we have already seen in 1Tim.2v1-8., Paul states that every believer is to make their top priority, "supplications, prayers, intercessions ("enteuxeis," the feminine plural accusative of "enteuxis" 1783, which means, "an intervention, with power, to effect a change"), and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority." Paul is teaching here, that the individual believer can often change the spiritual atmosphere of the country, society and community which they live in, from one of great hostility, persecution, and unrest, to one of peace and quietness, by persevering prayer and the intervention through the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the power of God.

By these "power interventions in prayer," the believer actively restrains the Devil and his evil angels from putting their evil plans and purposes into operation through evil worldly rulers and leaders. This becomes extremely important in the last three and a half years of this Age of Grace, the period known as The Great Tribulation. During this time God removes His restraint upon the Devil and the powers of darkness, so that the "Mystery of Iniquity," (or better "Mystery of Lawlessness") will begin to fully manifest itself. The striking prophetic example of this intervention with God's gifts and power is seen in the ministry of the Two Witnesses in Rev.11., and the mighty interventions of the woman in Rev.12., which we will now consider.

God's answer to Antichrist, two mighty New Testament prophets, the Two Witnesses.

It will be through these "power interventions," during "The Great Tribulation", that believers in Jesus, like the Two Witnesses, will manifest great power and authority, and bring Divine judgement, by Angelic ministry, and through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, upon the powers of darkness, and Satan's children upon the earth. They manifest the ultimate in judgement ministry.

We read in Rev.11v3-6. "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." v4 These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands standing before the God of the earth. v5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. v6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, **as often as they desire. NKJV. N.B.** "As oft as they desire," **this is a totally new level of authority for Christians, it is New Testament Elijah ministry."**

The followers of Antichrist will persecute and kill God's children, and massacre hundreds of millions of the world's population, and devastate and destroy great areas of the earth. The Divine judgements upon these

wicked followers of Antichrist through the Two Witnesses, and other powerful Christians, will have a restraining effect upon these evil people, and will frustrate them from carrying out many of their evil desires and deeds.

N.B. The Woman of Rev.12. is part of the Church specially created and empowered by God for the last days.

Some say that the woman is Mary, and the man-child is Jesus, however, Rev.4v1., definitely informs us that the things that followed were in the future and not in the past. So the woman of Rev.12., cannot be Mary, nor is the man-child Jesus.

The vision of this glorious woman reveals to us one of God's major purposes for the last days. She represents a group of people, who are foreknown, designed, specially created and empowered by God for the Great Tribulation. It is a group of praying people, with prepared hearts and special Melchisedec priestly intervention ministries for the last days, who will operate with awesome power as a prayer-warrior group behind the scenes. Through this vision God also gives us a definite promise that He will protect, provide and empower the seeking hearts in His Church in a new and special way in the last days, and will not leave His Church defenceless in the great tribulation. This glorious woman reveals that part of the Church will be clothed with the fullness of God's power, and will be transported, protected and fed by God. **This group is a major part of God's answer to the mystery of iniquity, and it is one of many such groups, who operate in other parts of the world.** This woman is certainly not speaking of Orthodox Jews; however this group, or a group like it, could well be speaking of the Christian Church in Israel, for the following reasons.

a. Jesus warns Christians to get out, and keep out, of Israel at the start of the great tribulation.

Jesus warns us that Christians in Judea are to flee into the wilderness, when Antichrist sets up the abomination of desolation, the divinely aided transportation of this woman, seems to be an obvious fulfilment of that prophetic warning. Mt.24v15-20. Our Lord was teaching the leaders of His Church in Mt.24., and His directions were for them and not the Orthodox Jew. Anyway, it is a fact that no traditional Jew, who rejected Christ, would accept or heed His warnings and prophecies.

b. The picture of this woman is far too magnificent for a group of unbelieving Israelites.

Here we see part of the Church filled with the power and glory of God. The symbols used are very striking and significant. The moon of Mosaic dispensation shone with the light of the Gospel, as the moon shines with the light of the sun. The woman is not shining with the light of the moon of Judaism, she is clothed with the light of the Gospel sun. Jewish worship was a shadow of things to come. Many of the Old Testament types, shadows and prophecies have been fulfilled in the birth, life, death, resurrection, and intercessory and intervention ministry of Christ. These revelations of Christ Jesus, and other prophetic and moral truths in the Old Testament Scriptures, constitute the moon under the feet of the woman, for the Church is founded upon the truths revealed to the Old Testament prophets, as well as the truth given to New Testament apostles. Eph.3v5. Col.2v17. Heb.8v1-13. 10v1-16.

c. The twelve stars are not the twelve tribes of Israel.

It is very unlikely that the twelve stars are the twelve tribes of Israel, for most of the sons of Jacob were rather wicked, and anything but shining lights. We read in Rev.13v8., that Christians are the only ones who do not follow Antichrist in the countries that are under his control. Antichrist will corrupt the Israelites who are not saved. **Dan.11v32-35.** We see from Rev.17., that most of the Israelites do follow Antichrist, and he kills those who reject him. We read in Zech.13v8,9., that Jesus executes two out of three Jews when He returns at His Second Coming, because they have been corrupted by Antichrist.

The twelve stars are more likely to be the twelve apostles of Christ, as a star usually portrays an individual not a group of people. **Rev.1v20. 2v1. 12v4. 21v12-14. Mt.19v28. Paul tells us in Gal.3v28.** that in this age of grace, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ." Through the blood of Jesus the distinction between Jews and Gentiles is abolished, we are fellow citizens of the household of God. **Eph.2v11-22.**

d. The woman is surely giving birth to her own kind.

We know that the man-child, which is born to the woman, is a group of Christians, for the martyred man-child is said to have overcome Satan and Antichrist through the blood of the Lamb. Rev.12v5,11,12. We are also told in **Rev.12v17.**, that the seed of the woman keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

N.B. The Woman is not the whole Church of Christ.

The vast majority of the Church is now in Heaven and so is absolutely safe from being persecuted by Satan and the powers of darkness, in fact the Church will judge evil angels. 1Cor.6v1-3. Jude.v14,15. **We see from Rev.12v17., which speaks of the "seed of the woman," that the woman represents a group of Christians, who flee into the wilderness for safety from the murderous wrath of Satan and Antichrist.** The warning by Jesus in Mt.24v15-21. Mk.13v14-20. and Lk.21v20-24., is to the Christians in Judea, and not to the whole Church, this is an obvious fulfilment of that warning. The woman is fed by God for 3½ years in the wilderness, this has obviously a local, and not a universal fulfilment. Rev.12v6,14-16. The

woman flees from Antichrist at the start of the great tribulation, and at this time his authority is limited to the Middle East and some countries North and East of this area, he certainly does not possess worldwide power. Indeed, he never has world dominion even when he wins His final military victory in the Middle East, a few days before the end of the great tribulation.

The wilderness referred to in Rev.12, could be a wilderness area in the region of Edom, Moab and Ammon, which, according to Dan.11v41., never fall into the hands of Antichrist. When Antichrist sends an army to destroy the woman, God opens up the ground and swallows up and destroys an army, which Antichrist sends out to kill and destroy this godly praying group of Christians symbolised by the woman. This army suffers same fate as the sons of Korah in Numb.16v28-35., see Rev.12v15,16. The destruction of this army could well be through the intervention power gifts manifested by this group of praying Christians. **Here, then, is the answer to terrorism, God's power and judgement gifts, operating through a praying body of Christians, just as they do through the Two Witnesses.**

Antichrist appears to send out another army, just before Christ returns, in an attempt to destroy the saints in Edom. We read in Is.63v1-6., and 34v1-8., that Jesus personally destroys this army. Though Christians are persecuted and hated by all nations at this time, it is only when Antichrist puts his image in the Temple that life becomes impossible for them in Palestine. Christ's warning in Mt.24v9-21., for Christians to flee from Judea, had a partial fulfilment in A.D. 70, when Titus destroyed Jerusalem. However, this warning is really directed at Christians in Judea during the last 3½ years of this age. The warning in Lk.21v20-24., for Christians to flee from Judea, when Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, had a definite fulfilment in A.D. 70, for v24 speaks of the dispersion of the Jews among the nations, and a long period of trampling under foot of Jerusalem by Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. As the context of Lk.21v20-24., has many prophecies concerning Christ's second coming, the warning to flee from Judea, and not to enter into Judea, when armies surround Jerusalem, must have a dual fulfilment, and also apply to the events of the great tribulation. Since Rev.11v1,2., was written after Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by Titus, so another sanctuary has to be built and desecrated by Antichrist. **We can only correctly interpret these prophecies when we accept that Christ's return will take place after the great tribulation. Mt.25v15-31.**

The woman in travail and her man-child. Micah.4v10.

This does not seem to be the soul travail that we can have in prayer for sinners to be saved, even though Christians who know the truth will be making great efforts to win people to Jesus, and warn them of the approaching calamities under Antichrist. This travail is more likely to be that spoken of by Jesus in Mt.24v8., "all these things are the beginning of travail, THEN shall they deliver you up into tribulation, and shall kill you." Though at this time travail will, in some measure, be experienced by the universal Church, persecution will be particularly lethal for the Church in Judea. Jesus emphasises the necessity of enduring to the end. Mt.24v8-13. In Rev.12v13., "persecuted," is "edioxen," the aorist active indicative of "dioko," to hunt, to pursue, and to chase, it speaks of hostile pursuit as in Mt.5v10-12. and 10v23.

N.B. The man-child is a group of Christians who are martyred for their faith.

We read in Rev.12v11., that, "they loved not their lives unto death." Jesus said that the Church in Israel will experience travail, suffering and death. Mt.24v8,9. Those who are faithful to death will rule with Christ. Rev.2v26,27. 3v21. 20v4-6. The martyred man-child is in sharp contrast to the Christians who allow the abounding iniquity of the last days to cool off their "agape" love for God. Mt.24v12,13,44-48. The man-child overcomes through the blood of Jesus, their word of testimony, and an utter disregard of love for their own life, out of love for God. Rev.12v10-12. They overcome, not by their own power, but by relying on God's grace and power. Personal love for God is the secret of victory, and its absence is the cause of defeat. 1Jn.2v12-14.

So after God has removed His restraining hand upon the Devil and the powers of darkness, and the Mystery of Iniquity begins to work, the Church will have the responsibility to be a restraining influence in the world through their "power interventions." Is.26v9. Dan.11v32. Lk.18v1-8. 2Thes.2v1-12. Rev.7v9-17. 11v3-6. 12v1-17. We read in Rev.11v18., that when Jesus returns to raise his beloved saints from the dead, and give them their rewards, **He will at that same time destroy the wicked who are destroying the earth. The wicked are consumed by the rod of His mouth, and the breath of His lips, and destroyed by the brightness of His appearing, "katargesei 2673, te 3588, epiphaneia 2015, tes 3588, parousias 3952, autou 846." Is.11v4. Rev.19v11-21. 2Thes.2v8.**

During His early years of life at Nazareth Jesus learned how to intervene with His Father's power and gifts.

See Is.49v1-3. 50v3-7. The secret preparation of Jesus at Nazareth by God the Father was the foundation of the ministry of the Lord Jesus, and the lessons He learned in communion with God His Father, was the source of His spiritual power. For 30 years Jesus was in His Father's school of prayer and intercession. **Jesus actively intervened in situations and people's lives by manifesting God's power in the Heavenly places through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, to change the situations and circumstances of people's lives. He could not deny the compassion of His loving heart.** The turning of the water to wine was our Lord's first public sign, but He had tens of thousands of private prayer interventions with His Father's power in people's lives **before** this first public sign miracle, "semeion" 4592. **The Living Bible**

translates John.2v11. "This miracle at Cana in Galilee was Jesus' first public demonstration of his heaven-sent power. And his disciples believed that he really was the Messiah."

Jesus makes the following very instructive statement in Mark.10v27. "And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for **with God** all things are possible." KJV. What is impossible by the side of human beings, "para 3844, anthropois 444," becomes possible by the side of God, "para 3844, to 3588, Theo 2316." **When we position ourselves alongside God, all things are possible.** This statement covers **ALL** situations and circumstances! **See Mt.19v26. Lk.18v27.**

In Mk.10v27. "with God", is "para to Theo." "Para" 3844, is a preposition, which means properly, near, beside, by the side of, alongside, in the presence of. When we humble ourselves, submit and draw near to God, we are able to take His great power and change situations and circumstances, and bring healing and deliverance to people by God's mighty "interventions." We can even make the Devil flee from us, we read in James.4v6,7., "But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." v7. **Therefore submit to God. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you.**" NKJV.

These were the kind of interventions that were made by the Lord Jesus during His earthly life, and He was able to say in Mt.17v20. "nothing will be impossible for you." We read in Mt.17v15-21. "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. v16 So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him." v18 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. v19 **Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"** v20 **So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.** v21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." NKJV. (See Mt.21v21. Lk.17v6.) **What a wonderful promise! "Nothing shall be impossible to you."**

See also Mt.21v19-21. "And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. v20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! v21 **Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.**" KJV

See Lk.17v6. "And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamore tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." KJV

Certain signs and world events must happen before Jesus can return.

The NKJV translates Lk.21v9. "But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for **these things must come to pass first**, but the end will not come immediately." "Do not be terrified," is "me ptoethete," the aorist passive subjunctive with the negative "me" from "ptoeo" 4422, "to terrify," "to scare," from "ptoa," "terror." It only occurs in the New Testament here in Lk.21v9. and 24v37. **"First," is "proton," if we are not careful we can ignore Christ's words that these things must happen first, and insist that the end is imminent and "immediately," in spite of Christ's explicit denial of this here.**

The NIV Bible translates Lk.21v9. "When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen **first**, but the end will not come right away." **The Amplified Bible translates Lk.21v9.** "And when you hear of wars and insurrections (disturbances, disorder, and confusion), do not become alarmed and panic-stricken and terrified; **for all this must take place first**, but the end will not [come] immediately."

We read in Mt.24.6. "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: **see that ye be not troubled** : for all these things must come to pass, **but the end is not yet.**" KJV. "See that ye be not troubled," is "horate me throeisthe." "Throeisthe," 2360, is the second person plural present passive imperative of "threo" 2360, **to cry aloud**, from "threomai," to wail, to clamour.

We read in Mark.13v7. "And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, **be ye not troubled**, for such things must needs be; **but the end shall not be yet.**" KJV. "Troubled," is the second person plural present passive imperative of "threo," which as we have seen, means to cry aloud, to scream, and in the passive to be terrified by an outcry.

We read in 2Thess.2v1-5. "v1 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling to meet him, we beg you, brethren, v2 not to be quickly shaken in mind or excited, either by spirit or by word, or by letter purporting to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. v3 Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition, v4 who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. v5 Do you not remember that when

I was still with you I told you this? **RSV.**

We read in 2Thess.2v2. "That you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." **KJV.** "**You be not soon shaken.**" is "me tacheos saleuthenai humas," the aorist passive infinitive of "saleuo," 4531, to agitate, to disturb, to rock, to topple, to destroy. **In Mt.11v7.** to cause to totter like a reed. **In Heb.12v26.**, God shakes the earth. However, Paul warns them not to be shaken, "**in your mind.**" "apo tou noos," mind, reason, sober sense. Paul arms us against a state of agitation following the shock of traumatic World events.

"Or be troubled." is "mede throeisthai," the present passive infinitive of "throeo" 2360, to cry aloud, to scream, and in the passive to be terrified by an outcry. Paul tells us not to cry out in fear, or be in a state of fear; for the present passive infinitive, indicates it is "a continued state of agitation." Paul warns us against being deceived and disturbed by false reports that predict that Christ's second coming is imminent. Paul tells us to look out for the Antichrist, and wars and rumours of wars, but we are not to let any cry of fear come from our mouths, or be terrified by alarming world events.

The ten faithless spies terrified the Israelites by a bad report about the warlike tribes in the land, and the people cried all night in fear. Numb.13v25-33. 14v1-10. The people rejected the counsel of Joshua and Caleb that they were well able to defeat these foes and conquer the land. The people did not believe Caleb and Joshua and wanted to stone them, and it was only the manifestation of the glory of God that saved their lives. **We are not to imitate these unbelieving Israelites and cry out in fear, when the Antichrist is manifested,** and the world is plunged great darkness, and great wars come upon the World, and great persecutions are hurled against the Church. God has made great provisions for His Church in these last days.

Paul warns against three sources of prophetic deception.

1. "Neither by spirit," "mete dia pneumatos." By false prophecy. No individual claim of divine revelation can justify the claim of an imminent return of Jesus. **2. "Nor by word," "mete dia logou."** The false report of a supposed word or remark purporting to come from Paul, or a supposed private remark by Paul, that sets aside his teaching on the second coming of Christ.

3. Nor by a false epistle purporting to come from Paul. "mete di epistoles hos di hemon." In 1Thess.4v13 to 5:3. Paul had plainly said that Jesus would come as a thief in the night, and that the Christian dead would be raised to life. It seems that someone claimed to have a private epistle from Paul, which said that Christ's return was imminent, Paul tells them to reject it.

"As that the day of the Lord is now present," "hos hoti enesteken he hemera tou kuriou," is the perfect active indicative of "enistemi", to be at hand, is present, "is imminent" (Lightfoot). Paul warns us against prophetic utterances that state that the return of Christ is imminent, and emphatically denies that that he had suggested by conversation or by letter that the second coming was imminent. **Paul tells us to reject any idea of an imminent return of Jesus before Antichrist is manifested.**

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS INTERVENED WITH GOD'S GIFTS TO CHANGE CIRCUMSTANCES.

We read in Heb.11v of many of God's interventions in the lives of His beloved people. The translation of Enoch, Noah's building of the ark, God's many and varied interventions in the life of Abraham. The lives of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph are full of instances of Divine intervention. The life of Moses is filled with many marvellous instances of Divine intervention. Moses delivered Israel from Egypt by intervening with the power judgement gifts of God, and provided for Israel's needs by 40 years of continual miracles of provision. Joshua proved the promise was true that God would never fail him or forsake him. As Heb.11v32 onwards tells us, time would fail us to tell of Gideon, of Barak, of Samson, of Jephthah, of David, of Samuel and the prophets, who, through faith in God's grace and power, v33 "subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, v34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. v35 Women received their dead raised to life again." Heb.11v33-35. NKJV

Paul then goes on to speak of those, who in faith and love for God, bravely and victoriously overcame great suffering for God's sake. v35 "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. v36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. v37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented — v38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. v39 **And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise.** v40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us." Heb.11v35-40. NKJV. Paul then goes on to speak of the very greatest exhibition of the brave endurance of hatred, persecution and extreme suffering, the life, ministry and death of our Lord Jesus, who bravely endured the hostility of sinners and the sufferings and death of the Cross. Heb.12v2,3.

The Lord Jesus followed the example of the O.T. prophets, and actively intervened to change

circumstances, and people's lives with the power mercy gifts of God, and the envious religious leaders of Israel murdered him for it.

God is not the "Great I Was." He is the "Great I Am." Who dares to limit The Holy One of Israel. See Ps.78v41-43. "Yes, again and again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. v42 They did not remember His power: The day when He redeemed them from the enemy, v43 When He worked His signs in Egypt, And His wonders in the field of Zoan." NKJV.

The chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof, speaks of Divine intervention by anointed men of God.

This description was used by Elisha of Elijah, and king Joash of Elisha, and it meant that Elijah and Elisha were the spiritual defence of Israel, for chariots and horsemen were the major weapons of defence in warfare in those days.

We read in 2Kings.2v1-18. N.B. v9-15., that Elisha used it of Elijah, when Elijah was about to be translated by God to Heaven. Elisha knew that without Elijah's presence, all the evil godfathers in Israel would feel safe to manifest themselves, and that there would also be no spiritual defence against satanically motivated heathen kings. Elisha felt that God was making a big mistake, but Elisha did not realise that his day of power had arrived. Jordan was parted and Elisha went over on dry ground, God confirmed that Elisha had received the double portion that proved he was Elijah's anointed and empowered successor. **Elijah's God is alive today, and James.5v13ff tells us to pray like Elijah and expect the same results. Elijah stopped it raining for three and a half years by God's power gifts, and we too are assured of certain answers to believing prayer.**

We read in 2Kings.13v14-21. that king Joash described Elisha as "the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!" v14."Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. **Then Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face, and said, "O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!"** (these were the very words that Elisha had spoken when Elijah was to be taken away from him in 2Kings.2v12.). v15 And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and some arrows." So he took himself a bow and some arrows. v16 Then he said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow." So he put his hand on it, and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. v17 And he said, "Open the east window"; and he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot"; and he shot. And he said, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at Aphek till you have destroyed them." v18 Then he said, "Take the arrows"; so he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground"; so he struck three times, and stopped. v19 And the man of God was angry with him, and said, "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed it! But now you will strike Syria only three times." v20 Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. v21 So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet. **NKJV.**

Even King Joash realised that it was Elisha, by his Divine interventions, who had been the real defence of Israel, so much so that King Joash called him, **"the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."** Joash knew that with the death of Elisha, the real defence of Israel would disappear, as there had not arisen another great prophet, who stood before the Throne of God (in spirit), and who had a "double portion" of the anointing of the Holy Spirit that both Elijah and Elisha had experienced.

Elisha performed possibly his last "Divine intervention" on behalf of Israel; when he asked Joash to strike the ground with the remaining arrows. However, King Joash being of little faith, only struck the ground three times, when he should have struck it at least five or six, which would have seen Syria destroyed for good. Certainly the words of Jesus in Mt.9v29., apply to King Joash: "According to your faith be it unto you." And in 2Kings 13v20 we read: "Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year." The spiritual defence and protection of Israel had disappeared with the death of the great prophet Elisha, for he was, "the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof," and this resulted in the immediate inrush of Israel's enemies into the land.

Paul uses "entugchano" in Rom.11v2-4. to tell how Elijah pleads with God against Israel.

We read in Rom.11v2-4. "v2 No, God has not rejected and disowned His people [whose destiny] He had marked out and appointed and foreknown from the beginning. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, **how he pleads with God against Israel?** [Ps.94v14. 1Kings.19v1.] v3 Lord, they have killed Your prophets; they have demolished Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life. v4 But what is God's reply to him? I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal! [1Kings.19v18.]" **AMP.** See 1Kings.19v1-18.

In this passage of Scripture, "he pleads with God **against** Israel," "entungchanei to Theo kata tou Israel." "Entugchano" is used with "**kata,**" **against,** to reveal that, Elijah was trying to get God to intervene, to bring His judgement down on Israel, however, because of the seven thousand men, who had not bowed the knee to

Baal, God would not bring widespread judgement on Israel, other than the famine through lack of rainfall. However, the time for judgement by famine was now over and Elijah was directed by God to pray for the rain to fall again. **See 1Kings.18v38-46. N.B. v43,44.** Elijah prayed seven times before the rain came. This is our example for persevering prayer for the sick, you pray until the vision God has given you becomes a reality. **See James.5v13-20. N.B. v17,18.** The Judge of all the earth will always do right, and He will never slay the righteous with the wicked. **Gen 18v16-33.** However, the false prophets of Jezebel certainly experienced the judgement of God, Elijah commanded the people to execute all of these false prophets that were present on Carmel.

However, God's mighty signs and wonders can be Divine acts of mercy to bring people to repentance.

In this way "entugchano" can even speak of judgement gifts that are Divine interventions in mercy. When Elijah stopped it raining for three and a half years, and brought down the fire of God on Carmel, it was an act of Divine mercy to bring Israel to repentance. **1Kings.18v1-46. esp. v36-40.**

We read in James.5v17.. "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. NKJV. "He prayed earnestly," is "proseuche proseuxato," which literally means, "he prayed with prayer." **The aorist indicative of "proseuchomai," and the addition of the noun "proseuche," intensifies the meaning of the verb.** (See Lk.22v15. and John.3v29. for a similar Greek construction.) So we can see that "proseuchomai," is used in the same way as "entugchano" to speak of active intervention in prayer with God's power, in judgement as well as in mercy.

We read in Luke.22v15.. "And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer," (the aorist active infinitive of "pascho"). This verse only occurs in Luke. "With desire I have desired," is "epithumia epethumesa," a Hebraism, which is common in the Septuagint. **The noun "epithumia," is linked with "epethumesa," the aorist active indicative of "epithumeo," and intensifies its action.** "Epithumia" 1939, is derived from the verb "epithumeo" 1937; a strong desire and longing. "Epithumeo" 1937, means, to set the heart upon, i.e. long for; rightfully, to desire; or wrongfully, to covet, and lust after. Like Paul, who exhorts us to seek after spiritual gifts, Jesus uses the strongest words possible to show His great desire to have fellowship with, and to impart something to His disciples before His sufferings.

We read in John.3v29.. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." KJV. John said he "rejoiceth greatly," **"chara chairei," a Hebrew idiom, literally, "rejoiceth with joy," the present active indicative of "chairo" 5463, which means to be joyful and rejoice, the noun "chara" intensifies the action of the verb "chairo."** John "with joy rejoices," that Jesus, the Christ had come, and he heard His voice. "This my joy therefore is fulfilled," is a very emphatic expression: "this, the joy which is mine." John uses the perfect passive indicative of "pleroo" 4137, to make replete, John was filled to overflowing with joy. He said he was acting as, the groom's closest friend, who took care of the wedding arrangements. The perfect tense shows John's complete and permanent joy at his service to, and his subordination to, the ministry of Jesus.

We read in 1Kings.18v30,31,36-40. "v30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. v31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name." v36 And it came to pass, **at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word."** v37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, **that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.** v38 **Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench.** v39 **Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!"** v40 And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!" So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there." **NKJV.**

We see God and Elijah "intervening" to bring judgement down on the wicked, 2Kings.1v1-18. (esp. 9-15).

v5 And when the messengers (of Ahaziah, the king of Samaria), returned to him, he said to them, "Why have you come back?" v6 So they said to him, "A man came up to meet us, and said to us, 'Go, return to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" v7 Then he said to them, "What kind of man was it who came up to meet you and told you these words?" v8 So they answered him, "A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite." v9 Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. So he went up to him; and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him: "Man of God,

the king has said, 'Come down!'" v10 So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. v11 Then he sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty men. And he answered and said to him: "Man of God, thus has the king said, 'Come down quickly!'" v12 So Elijah answered and said to them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. v13 Again, he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, and said to him: "Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight. v14 Look, fire has come down from heaven and burned up the first two captains of fifties with their fifties. But let my life now be precious in your sight." v15 And the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So he arose and went down with him to the king. v16 Then he said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" v17 So Ahaziah died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. Because he had no son, Jehoram became king in his place, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. v18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah, which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? **NKJV.**

"Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down. And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. **And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.** Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly. And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. **And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.** And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight. And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king." The fire of the Lord that fell and consumed the sacrifice fell in "mercy" **However, this time the fire that fell from Heaven on the soldiers, fell in judgement, and not in mercy, but it was a sign, which was intended to bring others to repentance.**

In Numb.16v1-50. (esp. v28-34), we also see Moses "intervening" to bring judgement down on Korah and those with him who rebelled against the Lord, with the ground opening under them and swallowing them up, and everything that they possessed. "And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD. **And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.** They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also." **End of quote.**

It was "God's interventions" through the prophetess Deborah, which gave rest to the land of Israel for forty years.

See Judges.4 and 5. We see that "God's interventions" through a believer, can either be in "mercy" or in "judgement." Any believer can, and most definitely should, exercise this great authority with "power interventions in prayer." In one of his hymns, **William Cowper penned the following words: "Satan trembles when he sees, the weakest saint upon their knees."** This authority and ministry is available to **every** believer, the believer does not have to have an Apostolic, Prophetic, Evangelistic, or Pastoring ministry to exercise it. As already stated, the practice of the Lord Jesus, and indeed the early Church followed our Lord's example in this most important ministry. **Mt.6v6,9-13, Eph.4v7-16.**

James tells us that ordinary Christians can operate God's power gifts and resist the Devil and he will flee from us. We read In James.4v6,7., "But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." v7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." v8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded." **NKJV.**

Similarly we read in 1Peter.5v6-9. "If you will humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, in his good time he will lift you up. **v7 Let him have all your worries and cares, for he is always**

thinking about you and watching everything that concerns you. v8 Be careful-watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart. v9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. TLB NIV

In Acts chapter 12 (v1-25), A.D. 44, we see what happened when **the whole Church** at Jerusalem (v5 "but fervent prayer for him was persistently made to God **by the church** (assembly)" Amplified Version) got down to persistent "interventions" for the release of Peter from prison, who had been arrested by Herod Agrippa I (the grandson of Herod the Great), because after he had killed James (the elder brother of John), he saw that it pleased the Jews. An Angel of the Lord came and got Peter out of prison, in a most miraculous fashion, who then went promptly to John Mark's mother's (Mary) house. Having knocked on the door, Rhoda, the servant girl heard his voice, and was so overcome with joy that she forgot to let him in, but went and told everybody that Peter was alive, which they ALL promptly refused to believe, saying that she was mad (a case of persons praying in unbelief, for when the answer came they wouldn't accept and believe it). After letting Peter into the house, he explained how the Lord had freed him from prison, he then left that house and went to another place (for safety).

Immediately after this Herod went down to Caesarea, and during a festival in honour of the Emperor Claudius (possibly his birthday), Herod sat upon his throne, arrayed in royal apparel, and gave an oration to the crowd, which then started to hail him as a god, at which point an Angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God, with the result, he was eaten by worms and died. It was the result of the "interventions" of the Church at Jerusalem, which brought Divine judgement on Herod, for this ruler refused to let the believers have a quiet and peaceable life in the society that they lived in. **1Tim.2v1-8.**

Through the "power interventions in prayer" of God's people a few years ago (in the early 1990s), we saw the collapse of Communism in the USSR and Albania, and also a softening in the attitude of the hard-line Communist rulers of China. Paul states in 1Tim 2v3 that these "interventions" are **"good and acceptable** in the sight of God our Saviour." "Good and acceptable" is in Greek, "kalon kaí apodekton", "kalon" is singular nominative of "kalos" 2570, which denotes, that which is intrinsically "good," beautiful, fair, excellent. "Apodekton" is the singular nominative of "apodektos" 587, "acceptable," in the sense of what is pleasing and welcome. So God welcomes our "power interventions" and finds them beautiful and pleasing.

We should also remember that officers of the state are God's ministers, appointed by Him to deal with earthly matters. **Rom.13v1-7. See Dan.4v17,25,35. Is.44v28 to45.v7. Ezra.1v2.** They are, therefore, to be obeyed conscientiously as of Divine authority. If, however, these rulers step beyond their authority and impinge on spiritual matters, then God is to be obeyed rather than men. **Acts.4v19.** The help of rulers is legitimately to be sought in worldly matters, Paul appealed to them for help. **Acts.16v37,38. 22v25. 23v11 with 25v11.** Ester relied on Divine help, but did not neglect to do her best in influencing the king. **Ester.4v1-17. 6v1-3. 7v1 to 8v17.**

In 1Tim 2v8, Paul states the following: **"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."** The "lifting up holy hands" is not only an act of adoration and worship to God, but also has the effect of directing the power of God against the powers of darkness, which removes their ability to use their evil power, and causes them to flee. Because it says, "that men pray every where..." it does **NOT** mean that women are not also to pray everywhere "lifting up holy hands" as well. This is seen by the Scripture references giving clear instructions for woman (and for ALL believers) to pray. **Mt.5v44. 6v5-13. 7v7-11. Luke.11v1-13. Acts.6v11-15. 1Cor.11v5.14v26-31. 1Thes.5v17. etc.**

We read in Exodus 17v8-16 the following: "Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, **when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.** But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and **Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.** And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi: For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

The only thing that gave Israel victory, was the "power interventions" of Moses (which included invoking the Covenant Name of God, Yahweh Nissi, "The Lord our Banner and Conqueror"), combined with his hands being held up and supported until the sun went down; it was the raised hands that made **ALL** the difference between victory and defeat. The "interventions" of the believer become more effective, when we also uplift our hands as well! The subject of uplifted hands occurs in the following places, **Ex.9v29,33. 1Kings.8v22. Ezra.9v5. Neh.8v6. Psalm.63v4. 88v9. 143v6. Lam.2v19. Is.1v15.**

“Interventions” In Prayer With God’s Power In The Last Days. 1Tim.2v1-8. Lk.18v1-8.

As the last seven years (the 70th week of Daniel’s 70-week prophecy, Daniel 9v20-27) of this Age (the Age of Grace) rapidly approaches, especially the last three and a half years of this Age (the period known as “The Great Tribulation.” Dan 9v27, Mt.24v15-28, Rev.7v9-17.) Satan is busy and is endeavouring to put his evil servants into positions of power and authority, wicked people who will put the Devil’s and Antichrist’s evil plans into operation, which is to kill as many people and destroy as much as possible, before they themselves are destroyed by Christ at His Second Coming, by being consumed by the breath of His mouth. 2Thess.2v8). It is during the last three and a half years of this Age, that the Mystery of Lawlessness (Satan’s evil plan) will fully work, and will commence when Satan and his evil Angels are expelled from the Heavenly places by Michael and his Angels into the Earth. When this occurs God’s restraint upon the Devil and the powers of darkness is removed, and The Great Tribulation will begin, which is not caused by the wrath of God, but by the “great wrath” of the Devil, because he knows that he only has a short time of freedom left, before God imprisons him in the Abyss. Rev.12v7-17. esp. v12. 2Thess.2v1-12.

The Devil will then proceed to put his evil plan (the Mystery of Lawlessness) into operation through Antichrist and other evil persons, whom he has put into positions of power and authority. Mt.4v8-10. Rev.13v1-10. 16v12-16. It is, therefore, **NOW** most urgent and imperative, that we, as Believers, are obedient to the most important injunction made by Paul in 1Timothy.2v1-8., to make “interventions,” “for all men, for kings and all who are in authority.” This can be both in support of righteous men, and against Satan’s men. That God will put honest, upright, wise and compassionate, persons into places of power and authority, and thwart the Devil’s attempts to put his own evil servants into these places. Remember, it is the Most High Who rules in the kingdoms of men and gives them to whomsoever He wishes, and sets over them the lowest of men. Dan.4v17. This ministry will be most vital if believers are to come through the dark evil days of the Great Tribulation victoriously, and not to lose heart and faint, and stand before the Lord Jesus at His Second coming, in white garments. Luke.18v1-8. 2Cor 5v1-10. Rev.3v1-5. 12v1-6. 19v7-9. With all these things in mind, the Believer should endeavour to imitate the Lord Jesus, Who, in all things is their example, in this most important ministry of “intervening” with God’s power gifts in Church and World affairs. 1Cor 11v1.

APPENDIX 2 LOOKING AWAY UNTO JESUS.

THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTER OF OUR FAITH. Heb.12v2.

I have used my sermon on Heb.12v2. “Looking unto Jesus,” at the close of this study on the book of Hebrews, as it summarises the aim, thought and content of this remarkable God-inspired book. I trust and pray that this study will comfort and inspire Christians, and reveal to them the privilege and power of being a priest after the order of Melchizedek, with Jesus the Great High Priest of the order of Melchizedek. In this book some important thoughts have been repeated several times to drive home the vital truths that they proclaim.

a. The authorship of Hebrews.

Tertullian, one of the most learned writers of the second and third centuries ascribes Hebrews to Barnabus, however, it must be remembered that Tertullian was prone to being dogmatic, and this was undoubtedly one of His personal opinions; for this viewpoint was never widely accepted in Christendom, and Hebrews was not received as the work of Barnabus either in Africa, Tertullian’s country, or in Cyprus, the country of Barnabus.

The epistle to the Hebrews was primarily and specially addressed to the Hebrews of the East, particularly those of Jerusalem and Palestine. The Christians there personally knew the author of the epistle, even though he did not append His name to the epistle, for we read in Hebrews13v18,23., “Pray for us, for we are persuaded that we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly; but I beseech you the rather to do this, in order that I may be restored to you the sooner...v23. And again, know ye that our brother Timothy has been set at liberty, with whom, if he come soon, I will visit you.”

The churches of Alexandria, Asia, Syria Jerusalem, and Palestine, the people to whom the epistle to the Hebrews was primarily addressed, say that Paul wrote it. Cyril of Jerusalem attributes the epistle to Paul. Theodoret also states that Eusebius wrote that Paul was the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, “and that all the ancients entertained this opinion concerning the authorship of the epistle.” Jerome also confirmed that Paul was the author of Hebrews, he wrote, “All the Greek writers received it as His.” The Church at Antioch confirms the Pauline authorship of Hebrews, which was the centre from which Paul’s missionary journeys originated by Divine commission and command. Chrysostom of Antioch and Constantinople, ascribes Hebrews to Paul, as does Theodore of Mopsuestia in Cilicia, both of Paul’s own country, and many other important witnesses. The Council of Nicea, 325 A.D., and the Synod of Laodicea, 363 A.D., received Hebrews as a genuine work of Paul.

The fact that Clement of Rome does not mention that Paul was the author of Hebrews, may simply be due to the fact that He respected Paul’s desire and reasons for keeping the work anonymous, and did not desire to

betray His personal and intimate friends confidence. Phil.4v3. The name of Paul was not only abhorrent to the Jews, it was anathema to the Judaizing Christians, and so Paul did not want an epistle specifically designed to help people from a Hebrew background, to be hindered from reading it by putting His name to the document.

b. Hebrews was also written to rouse sleepy Christians to seek the promises of heavenly blessings. Eph.1v3.

Paul wanted to awake these sleepy Christians and make them realise that they were pilgrims and strangers in this world. As in 1Cor.10., Paul uses the Old Testament experiences of Israel passing from Egypt to Canaan to drive home His lessons. Abraham was an immigrant from Mesopotamia into Canaan, and Hebrews draws attention to the fact that like Him all Christians are pilgrims and strangers in this world. Although probably written primarily to Hebrew Christians familiar with the Old Testament and Temple worship, it is equally applicable to all who have a knowledge of the Old Testament. The epistle should be read in conjunction with the prison epistles of Paul, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, which deal especially with **the heavenly places, which the Christian is called to enter by conflict with the powers of darkness.**

Christians are called to be a Royal Priesthood. 1Peter.2v9. We read in Exod.19v6., that God called Israel to be "a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation," but their sin frustrated this Divine desire. However, in Jesus Christians are made and called to be kings and priest to God. We read in Rev.1v6., "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (KJV) And again, in Rev.5v10., Heaven declares of Christians, "And Thou hast made them {to be} a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." (NAS) We are called to be priests after the order of Melchizedek with Jesus our Great High Priest, and operate God's mercy gifts. This is a very great calling indeed.

c. Paul uses the picture of the games and competitors being encouraged to finish the race.

Paul uses the example of the great saints; prophets and martyrs who had run well and finished their course with honour, praise and glory to inspire us to run well in the Christian race.

d. Paul's writes Hebrews to show that Jesus is the inspiration and cure for all the ills of our souls.

After considering the Old Testament heroes of faith and their magnificent victories of faith, Paul states that Jesus is not only the source of all faith and justification by faith, but that He is also the incentive of all Christian holiness. "Looking away" is, "aphorontes," the present active participle of "aphorao" to look away and to concentrate on another. If we desire to run well and win the race, **we must look away into ("eis") all that Jesus was and is,** His majestic life, character and sacrificial love. We must look away even from the greatest of Old Testament saints, and concentrate our gaze on Jesus our Lord. It is good to be inspired by the saints, but the inspiration they give in the up building of the soul, is limited. Jesus is God's Word to speak to the depths of our soul. If we desire victory in the Christian life, we must concentrate our gaze on Jesus.

e. Paul was also defending the Church from the Docetic Gnostics, who denied Christ's humanity. Heb.2.

Both the apostle John and Paul realised the great danger that the acceptance of Gnostic doctrine would have on the Church, and wrote with the strongest words possible against it. John said that those who deny the humanity of Jesus are "not of God," and have the spirit of Antichrist. 1Jn.4v2,3. 2v18. This is a very present danger in the Church today, Docetic Gnosticism has invaded the Church again; it has always been one of Satan's major weapons against the true knowledge of Christ Jesus.

A. LOOKING AWAY INTO JESUS THE PIONEER OF FAITH. "ton-archegon."

"Looking unto Jesus," is "aphorontes eis." "Aphorontes," is the present active participle of "aphorao" a verb meaning "to turn the eyes away from other things and fix them on something," it only occurs here and in Phil.2v23. "Unto," is "eis," into. " so, Paul exhorts us with the present continuous tense, to be actively and always "looking away," "eis" "into," and "unto Jesus."

The word for "author," is "archegon." Strong 747. "Archegon" speaks of a chief, leader, prince, and of anyone who takes the lead in anything, a pioneer, a predecessor and example. "Archegon" occurs four times in the New Testament. In the Authorised Version it is twice translated in Acts, as "Prince;" in Acts.3v15., "And killed the *Prince* of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses;" and Acts5v31., "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a *Prince* and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. "Archegon" occurs twice in Hebrews, in the Authorised Version it is translated as "Captain," in Heb.2v10., "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the *Captain* of their salvation perfect through sufferings." It is translated as "Author" in Heb.12v2., "Looking unto Jesus the *Author* and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Jesus the Pioneer and greatest victor of faith.

After considering some of the great heroes of faith, the writer to the Hebrews, asks us to consider the greatest victor of faith, our Lord Jesus Christ; His faith was tried to the greatest extent, and He overcame all the trials and difficulties of His life and ministry with triumphant faith. Jesus is not only our example in holy and loving

living, He is our example in believing God. Jesus pioneered the way of faith, He not only inspired the faith of all those great saints of old, and He is also the most shining example of personal faith in God. The Scriptures state, "The just shall live by faith," Rom.1v17. Gal.3v11. Heb.10v38. This was the experience of Jesus, throughout all His life; Jesus lived by faith, just as we should do. Jesus said in John.6v57. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." When Jesus did His miracles, He turned His faith on, not His deity. In Jn.14v10., Jesus said the Father did the miracles, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but **the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.** We read in Jn.5v19., "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." In Jn.5v30., Jesus stated, "**I can of mine own self do nothing:** as I hear, I judge: and my judgement is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." Jesus walked in the Father's will, and His own great personal faith and love was the channel of the Father's power and mercy healing gifts.

1. JESUS THE PIONEER OF FAITH IN VICTORIOUS DAILY LIVING.

The life of Jesus at Nazareth was a triumph of faith, a life of faith in God His Father. Our Lord was not a protected hothouse plant, He conquered the pressures, problems, and temptations of life by sustained communion with God His Father. We read in Heb.2v17,18. and 4v15., that Jesus was "made in all points like unto His brethren," and was "tempted in all points like His brethren." Jesus was victorious, sinless and perfect, in childhood development, teenage temptations, and the temptations and trials of manhood, work and daily living. Lk.2v40-52. His life was continual manifestation of awe-inspiring wonderful faith.

2. JESUS PIONEERED FAITH IN VICTORIOUS EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY GOD.

THE NEED FOR PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY.

a. Is.49v1-3 and 50v3-6. Show our Lord's preparation by God the Father.

We need to follow His example of victorious preparation for service. In Jn.1v14. we see our Lord full of grace and truth. A triumphant victorious faith over the circumstances, spiritual darkness, and backslidden people of Nazareth. Jn.4v6. Nathanael was amazed that anything good could come out of the notoriously spiritually dark town of Nazareth, Nathanael knew well the evil state of Nazareth by personal experience, for he lived about nine miles away in Cana of Galilee. Jn.21v2. Jesus overcame the evil of Nazareth and lived the same perfect and beautiful life that He had lived in Heaven with the Father. Jn.1v46-51.

Our Lords faith and purity triumphed over the spiritual darkness of Nazareth.

We read in Ps.69v19-21., that Satan stirred up opposition against Jesus and got people, including His family, to criticise and mock Christ's life of prayer and fasting. Reproach broke His heart, He looked for sympathetic companions who would understand, and there was none. The soul loneliness of Jesus was horrific, His heart was broken, but He set His face like a flint and overcame it all through His Father's grace, and a determined faith in His Father's care and love. Is.50v3-9. Lk.9v51. Heb.2v8,9. These awful problems at Nazareth were part of Christ's preparation and training by God His Father, for both His earthly ministry and His High Priestly ministry. The vicious reproach and persecution Jesus endured at Nazareth is revealed in **Ps.69v7-21.,** there was bitter rejection by His brothers and sisters. Mk.3v21. Jn.7v5. Town leaders criticised and mocked Jesus, and drunkards sang vile songs about Him. All this brought deep waters into the soul of Jesus. Ps.69v14. The sinless and prayerful life of Jesus at Nazareth stirred up pitiless continual opposition against Him. **We read in Ps.69v8-12., v8.** "I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children; **v9.** **Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up,** and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. **v10.** When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach. **v11.** I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. Those who sit in the gate speak against me, and I am the song of the drunkards." Scholars say, "Your House," refers to God's children, not just the Temple.

In Is.53v10-12., we read "He shall," five times, and "shall," three times. Jesus must have repeated these verses in faith and love many times in the dark nights of His soul, when Satan and men attacked Him. He lived on, and claimed, the precious promises of God His Father, just as we do. Jesus, like ourselves, had a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, in the immutable, counsel and promises of God's Word, and His father's unbreakable oath of confirmation. Heb.6v13-20.

From Mk.6v1-6., we see that Jesus had four brothers and at least three sisters, and they came to forcibly take Jesus home when Jesus upset Israel's religious leaders, and these leaders started to oppose and persecute Him. We read in Mk.3v21. and Jn.7v5., that Mary's other children did not believe in Jesus, and thought that He was mad, when He upset Israel's religious leaders. Mk.3v21,31-35. In Mk.3v21., "hoi para autou," "His family," means literally "those from the side of Him," a phrase used commonly in the Greek Septuagint Old Testament, to speak of a persons family and kinsfolk, and the mention of our Lord's family in Mk.3v31-35., confirms that it is referring to His family. They said, "He is beside Himself," "exeste," the aorist active indicative of "existemi," a charge which was made against Paul by Festus in Acts.26v24., he said that Paul's much learning had turned Him insane. Festus uses "maine," the present indicative of "mainomai," to be mad, to be out of one's mind. Paul stated that he was certainly not mad, but spoke words of truth and soberness, ("sophrosune," means a rational control and soundness of mind. It was the minds of Israel's religious leaders and Festus, which were

controlled by the delusions of the Devil, and the madness of spiritual insanity.

b. The attack on Christ's faith and Sonship. Mt.4v1-4.

When Satan tempted Jesus to turn the stones into bread, our Lord replied from Deut.8v3. The context speaks of discipline and training, and humbling and proving by trial. Our Lord was saying, "My faith is being tested and I believe God My Father. The discipline and testing of the wilderness proved our Lord's victorious faith.

3. JESUS THE PIONEER OF FAITH IN VICTORIOUS SANCTIFYING TRUTH.

a. Jesus had inspired the prophets with truth; He came down to live it. Jesus lived in worldly, carnal, and unspiritual Nazareth, the life of holiness and love He had lived in heaven. Wonderful Jesus!

b. Jesus had to believe God's Word when everything and everyone around Him denied it and rejected Him.

Even Mary and Joseph had fallen into unbelief over the purpose of our Lord's ministry by the time that Jesus was twelve. We read in Lk.2v42-52., that they did not understand what Jesus meant when He said, "I must be about my Father's business."

We read in Jn.1v14., that the Lord Jesus came out of Nazareth full of grace and truth, fully equipped by the Father for the task that lay ahead of Him. We read in Jn.17v19., that our Lord sanctified Himself to do the Father's will, and that doing the will of God was His delight. Ps.40v6-8. Heb.10v5-10. Jesus prayed in Jn.17v17., "Sanctify them through Your truth. Your Word is truth." He also states in Jn.7v17., "He who does the will of God shall know the doctrine." When you walk with God and live a life of love, truth burns with light. Jesus lived a life of perfect love, and the truth He perceived burned with life and energy in His heart and mind, and His words and sermons were filled with spirit and life. John.6v63. Jesus had a faith that was energised by a life of perfect love. Gal.5v6. He lived out the more excellent way. 1Cor.12v31. He perfectly lived out the Word of God, and claimed, experienced, and demonstrated the sure promises of God. Jesus had a victorious conquering faith, which desired to do the Father's will and provide spiritual bread and healing of body and soul for others. Luke.11v9-13.

N.B. Trials through life's problems, that test our faith in God's Word, impart qualifications for ministry to us.

Our Lord came out of Nazareth not just with an intellectual faith but a living experimental faith through tens of thousands of victories of faith over the problems, trials and temptations of life. Hallelujah.

Moffat accurately translates Is.53v3., "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," as, "a man of pain who knew what sickness was." The Hebrew states that Jesus, "knew by personal experience sickness." Jesus experienced, and had personal victories of faith over the sicknesses that afflicted Him. **In Is.53v3., "sorrows," "makob," means, grief, pain; and in "acquainted with grief," grief is "choliy," disease.** It is translated in the Authorised Version as "sickness," in Is.38v9,12. Deut.7v15. 28v61. 1Kings.17v17. 2Kings.13v14. 2Chron.21v15,19. Ps.41v3. Deut.28v59.; as "disease," in 2Kings1v2. 8v28,29. 1Chron.16v2. 21v18. Job.30v18. Ps.38v7. Eccles.6v2.; as sick in Is.1v5. To be our perfect High Priest, Jesus had to be tempted in all points like ourselves, and this meant that He had to experience sickness, He really knows what we go through, He has personally experienced all the trials and temptations of life, and we are assured of His sympathetic understanding and merciful love, He has compassion and deals gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray. Heb.5v2.

4. JESUS THE PIONEER OF FAITH IN VICTORIOUS INSPIRING GRACE.

Jesus calls us, and inspires us, to cast away every encumbrance and to run the race of life.

a. There is a vast cloud of witnesses to God's faithfulness. "Nephos marturon," is in the plural "Nephele" is a single cloud, "nephos," a vast mass of clouds. "Marturon," does not speak of mere spectators, which would be described by "theatai;" "marturon" speaks of witnesses who testify out of their own experience. Heb.11v2,4,5,33,39.

b. Laying aside us, like the putting off of old clothes. Col.3v8. Runners ran nearly naked. Every weight that hinders, "ogkon panta." "And the sin which does so easily beset us." "Which doth so easily beset," is "euperistaton," it is derived from "eu," "well," and "peri," "around," and "statos," "standing," and so means easily encompassing, and describes the sinful environment of the world around us, and the difficulty to avoid its defiling influence. God recognises the difficulty of fighting against the defiling sin in our environment, and our personal fleshly and spiritual problems, but there is victory in Jesus. Rom.8v1-4.

d. Let us run, is, "trechomen," the present active, i.e. let us keep on running, the race that is set before us. "With patience," is, "di hupomones," with brave endurance, not with doubt, despair, self-criticism and impatience with ourselves.

Jesus experienced sickness and pain and had a great many victories of faith over them. Our Lord was tempted in all points like we are and this included sickness. In Job.2v4-7., Satan said that severe sickness is the

greatest test of character, and God did not contradict Satan. It cannot be that Job was tempted more than our Lord, and is a more sympathetic person to those who are sick, because of it. Jesus is our perfect sympathetic High priest; He was made perfect and complete by experiencing and suffering the problems of life, as well as His suffering and dying on the Cross. Heb.5v8. Our Lord had a victorious triumphant faith over sickness, He personally believed and proved the promises of divine healing.

The Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament, states of Is.53v3., "He was despised and forsaken by men; a man of griefs, and well acquainted with disease; and like one from whom men hide their face: despised, and we esteemed Him not." --- "Moreover, He was [mak^aobowt (Heb 4341) 'iysh (Heb 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.

N.B. Paul tells us to consider Jesus as the pioneer of faith, He not only won the victory on the Cross; His whole life demanded constant endurance over painful trials. Jesus He experienced a continuous and total victory of faith and love over all the trials that came against Him.

5. JESUS THE PIONEER OF FAITH IN MINISTRY, AND A LIFE OF PRAYER.

Our Lord's ministry was the result of a life of prayer and communion with God the Father. His love for God and people drove Him to pray through for others. When Jesus began His ministry, He was so busy that daily manual labour was impossible. This was quite different from Paul at Corinth, Ephesus and Thessalonica. Jesus believed God for the material provision, not just for Himself, but also for: **-a. The twelve.** The faith of Jesus had to provide for them for 3½ years. God provided for Jesus and the twelve apostles through women of substance. Lk.8v1-3. **b. The Seventy.** The thirty-five bands of preachers. Lk.10. Jesus believed for them, and gave them authority.

B. LOOKING AWAY INTO JESUS THE PERFECTER OF FAITH.

In Heb.12v2., Paul coins the word, "teleiotes," (seemingly from "teleio"), it means, "Perfector", one who brings us to the goal, (the Latin Vulgate has "Consummator"). **In Heb.12v3., "consider," is "analogisasthe," the aorist imperative of "analogizomai," to reckon up, to compare, to weigh, it only occurs here in the N.T. In Heb.3v1., "consider is "katanoesate," the aorist imperative of "katanoeo," a compound verb, from "kata," down, and "nous," mind, and so means, to put the mind down on a thing, as in Mt.7v3. and Lk.12v24.** These Hebrew Christians are exhorted to think hard about Jesus as their Apostle and High Priest, and not to give way to the temptation to give Jesus up, and backslide from the grace of God. Jesus can, and will, perfect our faith if we follow Him. This is the only place in the N.T. where Jesus is called an apostle, "apostolos," though the verb "apostello" is often used of God's sending Him forth. See Jn.17v3. "Profession" is "homologeoo," from "homon," same, and "lego," say, and so, to say the same thing, to agree, to confess, to profess. Fixing the mind and heart on Jesus, and confessing the truth about Him is the cure for spiritual weariness, doubt and fear.

1. Jesus is the example of perfect patient endurance.

a. Jesus endured the Cross.

"Hupemeinen" the aorist active indicative of "hupomeno," to patiently and bravely endure, a triumphant endurance. "Prokeimenes," the present participle, "the laying before Him joy", this joy was the joy of seeing us saved and blessed. Jesus endured the Cross for us, not for self-glory, or exaltation and praise by others. The motive was pure love for us.

b. Jesus endured the shame of the Cross; "stauros."

"Shame," is "aischune," shame, disgrace. "Despised it," is "kataphronesas," the aorist active participle of "kataphroneo," to think down on something, here with the thought of despising, and treating as contemptible the shame and disgrace of the Cross. **He treated the shame of the Cross with contempt, but not you; He endured it all for you.**

c. "Jesus endured the contradiction of sinners." In "endured the contradiction of sinners, "endured, is "hupomemenekota," the perfect active participle of "hupomeno," the perfect shows the abiding effect of Christ's redemptive sufferings and brave endurance. "Contradiction," is "antilogian," a hostile and vicious speaking against. In "lest you be weary," weary is "kamete," the aorist active subjunctive of "kamno," to be weary, or as in James.5v15., to be weary and exhausted through sickness. In "fainting in your souls," "fainting," is "ekluomenai," the present passive participle of "ekluo," which mean to loosen out, to be set free, but in the passive it means to be tired out, or enfeebled.

2. The Throne of Authority Jesus sits on.

In Heb.12v2. "Sat down at the right hand of God, is "kekathiken," the perfect active indicative of, "kathizo," to take one's seat and sit down. The perfect tense shows that Jesus is still there at the throne of infinite power and authority, to perfect your faith. **"Consider," is "analogisasthe," the aorist middle imperative of "analogizomai," to reckon up, count up, to consider, to compare and weigh, it can also speak of meditation. It only occurs here in the New Testament.**

3. Jesus is the perfect Perfecter of faith.

As we have seen, "teleiotes," Perfecter, is one who brings to the goal. In Heb.5v9. we read, "And being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all those that obey Him." "Perfect," is "teleiotheis," the aorist passive participle of "teleio," to complete, to perfect.

Jesus perfected faith in. a. In the woman at the well. b. In the dying thief. c. In Peter. d. In Paul. Etc, and etc.

4. Jesus will perfect our faith, transfigure us, and conform us to His image.

We read in 2Cor.3v18., that as we behold the glory and beauty of God our Father and the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of God transfigures us from glory to glory. Beholding the glorious Trinity changes us, and perfects our faith and love. The power of the Holy Spirit, Communion with God our Father, and contemplation of Jesus transfigures us.

We read in Rom.8v28-39., v28. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. v29. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. v30. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, and these He also glorified. v31. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? v32. **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?** v33. Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. v34. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. v35. **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? v36. As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." v37. Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. v38. **For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, v39. nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NKJ)**

Before creation God the Father knew who would truly respond to the Gospel call, and He set His mind to conform us to the image of the Lord Jesus. Nothing can separate us from God's love and His eternal purposes for us. Jesus came into the world with a totally unselfish magnificent desire to save us, and share with us the eternal riches and blessings of the kingdom of God. Jesus **will** perfect our faith and love and bring us to His everlasting kingdom.

PAUL WARNS US ABOUT FAILING UNDER DISCIPLINE AND LIFE'S TRIALS. Heb.12v3-17.

1. Jesus is the cure for weariness and fainting under opposition. Heb.12v3-15.

Jesus was victorious in His conflict with Satan and evil men. We read in Heb.12v2., that Jesus bravely endured the violent and vicious verbal abuse and opposition of sinful men. "Endured," is "hupomemenekota," the perfect active participle of the same verb "hupomeno," which is used in Heb.12v2., of our Lord's brave and triumphant endurance of the Cross. A prayerful consideration of Our Lord's determined bravery will keep us from weariness ("kamno," as in James.5v15.), fainting and enfeeblement. The bitter hostility and hatred did not quench His faith in God or zeal for God. Jesus conquered by faith.

2. Jesus the cure for fainting and weariness under discipline. Heb.12v5-11.

We read in Deut.8v5., that God chastens us as sons, for "chastening," in Heb.12v5., is "paideias," from "paideuo," **to train a child**, and "pais," instruction, see 2Tim3v16., "instruction in righteousness." The primary thought is the instruction, training, and development of character, which is given to children. God is conforming His dearly beloved children to the image of Jesus, and this sometimes means, as with a child, that there is the necessity of gentle reprimand, rebuke, and even punishment. Rom.8v28-34. In Col.3v21., Paul warns fathers, that excessive discipline can discourage children and hinder the growth of personality and character. See also Eph.6v4. The thought behind "paideia," is of instructive discipline not punishment. **Our Lord personally experienced temptation and "training as a child," in His time of preparation for His ministry at Nazareth, and when Satan tempted Him in the wilderness, and on many other occasions too. The discipline proved His Sonship, and matured His personality, for we read in Heb.5v8., that our Lord was "made perfect through suffering."**

Problems and pressure produce character as 1Pet.1v3-7. tells us, "the trial of our faith is much more precious than gold." When Jesus experienced the many trial of His faith at Nazareth, He undoubtedly said to Himself, what He tells us to say, "these trials are more precious than gold." His faith triumphed over them. Jesus was a victorious pioneer of faith. Feeble knees and faint hands in the body of Christ should be encouraged onward by the loving ministrations of the church, and the direction to look to our sympathetic Saviour, who has been through it all, and conquered. Heb.12v12,13.

3. Jesus the cure for a defiling root of bitterness. Heb.12v15.

In Deut.29v18., we read of "a root of bitterness," and here it speaks of departure from God. Bitterness is

"pikria." The departure from the living God is here manifested in two ways.

a. Carnality and impurity; any fornication v16. "Pornos," immoral.

b. Worldly-mindedness and despising of sacred and eternal things. "Profane," is "bebelos," a despiser of sacred things, an irreligious person. 1Tim.1v9. 4v7. 6v20. 2Tim.2v16.

Bitterness against God produces a bad life. We are warned that a large number of believers, and even the majority of believers, like the Israelites, can be infected with bitterness, unless great care is taken. **Contemplation of Jesus is the cure.**

N.B. The warning of Esau. Esau lost His birthright and blessing through carnality; we can lose our inheritance if we are not careful. v16,17. The blessing was gone and had been given to another. We can lose our place in the kingdom by similar carnality and worldliness. Contemplation of Jesus is the cure for the Esau spirit.

Meditating and feeding on Jesus, and His living truth, is the cure for all the ills of our souls.
"Consider" in Heb12v3.. is "analogisasthe," to reckon up, to count up, to consider, it includes the thought of meditation. In John.6v51-71., Jesus informs us that it is vitally necessary for us to eat His flesh and drink His blood; He means that we must meditate upon His life and words, to grow spiritually strong. Judas never fed his soul with a heart relationship with Jesus. Judas hardened his heart, and refused to turn him from his evil ways, even after Jesus had fed the five thousand, walked on the water, stilled the storm, and miraculously transported the boat from the middle of the lake to the shore. Judas failed to feed on Jesus and His words, and so his soul shrivelled and died spiritually, and he started to slander Jesus, and then betrayed Him. Jn.6v1-71. Mt.26v15,16. Meditate upon Christ's words of spirit and life, and you will have His life in you. The depths of your soul will be inspired, fed, and filled with Jesus, and changed by the living Word of God, and you will be transfigured from glory to glory, by beholding the beauty and splendour of His majestic being. 2Cor.3v18. The gentle humility and loveliness of Jesus invite us to come to Him, and we will find rest and rejuvenation for our souls. Mt.11v28-30.

In Heb.6v1., Paul pleads with us to allow God's gale of the Spirit to propel us along to maturity.

We are to walk with God and be diligent in spiritual matters, but seek for God's enabling to carry us forward, and not rely on self-effort. Heb.6v12.. We read in Heb.6v1., "Therefore leaving the elementary doctrine of Christ, let us be borne on to maturity." No longer babes on milk, but mature adults, able to eat solid spiritual food, and able to comprehend the deeper truths about Jesus." The translations, "let us go on," or "let us press on, to perfection," give the idea that the effort is ours. However, "**pherometha,**" **the present subjunctive passive of "phero,"** literally means, "let us be borne on by the gale of the Holy Spirit to completeness, or maturity. We must rely on God's gale of the Spirit, and His enabling grace and power, and not on our human efforts. We must put up our sails by communion with God, and let the gale of the Spirit blow us on.

The Scriptures teach that the prophets were impelled and borne along by the mighty energies of the Holy Spirit.

We read in 2Peter.1v20,21. "Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. v21. For prophecy never had its origin, or came, by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved ("**pheromenoi,**" **the present passive participle of "phero."** AMP, "Borne along, moved and impelled." Phillips, "inspired." NIV, "Carried along") by the Holy Spirit." "Moved" is the same verb as "came," it literally means, "being borne along." It is a favourite word with Peter, occurring six times in his two epistles. 1Pet.1v13. 2Pet.1v17,18,21. 2Pet.2v11. It speaks of someone being powerfully spoken to, and carried along, by God, and as a result being mightily used by God.

We are to be blown along by God like a sail ship before a mighty wind. The spiritual impetus comes from God.

"Phero," is used in Acts.27v15,17., to describe the ship in which Paul was on being "borne along," "epherometha," **the imperfect passive of "phero"**), and "driven," "epheronto," **the imperfect passive of "phero," before the mighty wind. In Acts.2v2., the present participle, passive of "phero," is used in to describe the "rushing" sound of a mighty wind, literally, a mighty wind borne along violently,** ("hosper pheromenes pnoes biaias"). We read in Acts.2v2., "And suddenly there came an echoing sound out of heaven as of a mighty wind borne along violently. And it filled ("eplerosen") the whole house where they were sitting." ("Echos," our echo, is used in Luke 4:37 for "rumour," and Luke.21v25., for the last days "roaring of the sea.") The Pythagorean Schools used "pherometha" in the sense of being carried on to a higher stage of instruction, but Heb.6v1.,- goes much further than mental instruction, it speaks of a deep experience of God's mighty energies.

God, through Paul, urges us to put up our sails, and allow ourselves to be borne along in the gale of the Spirit to maturity, to an experience of Jesus as our great High Priest. Heb.5v10 to 6v1. "Unto perfection," is "epi ten teleioteta," from "teleios," mature, adults, as in Heb.5v14.; it only occurs twice in the New Testament, here in Heb.6v1., and Col.3v14.. The writer appeals to us to leave Christian babyhood, and go

on to be mature adult Christians, who are able to masticate solid spiritual food, and able to comprehend the deeper truths about Jesus. Paul assures and promises us that the Divine energisings and powerful transforming and enabling gale of the Holy Spirit will impel and carry us along to Christian maturity and Christ-like character. **See 2Cor.3v17,18.**, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. **v18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transfigured into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.**" Beholding the glory of Jesus will transfigure our lives, so let us look to and into Jesus, who will inspire and perfect our faith and character.

APPENDIX 3. GOD MADE JESUS THE PERFECT SAVIOUR AND HIGH PRIEST THROUGH SUFFERING.
The following study is derived from some extracts from my book, " By His stripes we are healed."

We read in The Amplified Version of Heb.5v8-10. v8 "Although He was a Son, He learned [active, special] obedience through what He suffered. v9 And, [His completed experience] making Him perfectly [equipped], He became the Author and Source of eternal salvation to all those who give heed and obey Him, [Isa.45v17.] v10 Being designated and recognized and saluted by God as High Priest after the order (with the rank) of Melchizedek. [Ps.10v4.]"

N.B. Jesus experienced dreadful and relentless conflict and suffering all through 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, the Hebrew of this verse means much more than the truth that is conveyed by King James Version.

In Is.53v11., "He shall see of the travail of His soul," "travail," is "amal" 5999." "Travail," "amal," 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 a life of burdensome and protracted toil, trials and trouble, not a short period of trials, problems and difficulties. Jesus was badly bruised and suffered throughout all His life. A lifelong trial of unrelenting bruising, suffering and hurt. "Amal" 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 Jesus was going to make all Christ's soul destroying drudgery, trials, grief, and hardship worthwhile.

Today's English Version gives a correct and 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., "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 suffering 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."

A comment of Barnes on the Hebrew word in Is.53v5, for "bruised," "daka," reveals the life-long suffering of Jesus. "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." End of quote.

N.B. Satan thought that by catastrophic and appalling physical pain and mental pressure he would subdue and defeat Jesus, but he failed completely to accomplish this. Jesus completely defeated him, even though He endured the very worst physical and mental sufferings. Jesus suffered even worse devastating physical and mental suffering than His beloved servant Job endured. As Jesus watched the suffering of Job He knew that even worse mental and physical suffering, and an even more relentless spiritual attack and opposition was coming His way when He became man.

We read in the Hebrew of Psalm.69v20. that the reproaches and vicious opposition that Jesus experienced were so severe that they made Him physically ill. 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." AMP. "**Distressingly sick,**" speaks of the most trying and extreme sickness, and since Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, this must have included mental pain as well as physical pain. **Young's Literal Translation correctly translates "mak'ob," 4341, (grief, pain, anguish) as "pain" in Is.53v3 and 4., "A man of pains (mak'ob," 4341), and acquainted with sickness," v4 And our pains (mak'ob," 4341) he hath carried them." End of quote.**

The scholars Keil and Delitzsch, say of Is.53v4.:- "Freely but faithfully does the Gospel of Matthew translate this text, 'Himself took our infirmities and carried our sicknesses.' The help, which Jesus rendered to people with all kinds of bodily sickness, is taken in Matthew to be the fulfilment of what in Isaiah is prophesied of the Servant of Jehovah. The Hebrew verbs of the text, when used of sin, signify to assume a heavy burden and bear away the guilt of sin, as one's own; that is, to bear sin mediatorially in order to atone for it. But here, where not our sins, but our sicknesses and pains are the object, the mediatorial sense remains the same. **It is not meant that the Servant of Jehovah merely entered into the fellowship of our sufferings, but that He took upon Himself the sufferings that we had to bear, and deserved to bear; and, therefore, He not only bore them away, but also in His own person endured them in order to discharge us from them.** Now when one takes sufferings upon himself which another had to bear, and does this, not merely in fellowship with him, but in his stead, we call it Substitution." **End of quote.** N.B. A great Hebrew scholar declares that it was Substitution.

1. Jesus experienced great reproach, rejection, and heartbreaking opposition in His home.

This reproach, pain, and suffering was not confined to events around the cross. **We read in Ps.69v7-11.** that there was reproach, ostracism and opposition from Christ's four brothers and His sisters. Scorn and derision was heaped upon Jesus by the townspeople and elders of Nazareth, and by the drunkards who made up vile songs about Him. The Devil certainly camped out at Nazareth during Christ's 30 years there, and stirred His family and the people against Jesus. This reproach broke the loving heart of Jesus, and made Him "distressingly sick."

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 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 when Jesus got older, 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.

Mary did not talk about these events, and the fact that she kept these things hidden away in her heart speaks volumes. The reasons become obvious when we read and study the above Scriptures. Mary definitely felt that she must keep quiet because of 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. Lk.4v16-30. **N.B. in Lk.4v28., ALL the people in the synagogue tried to kill Jesus.**

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

The Amplified Bible translates Ps.69v8-11. **v8** "I have become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien to my mother's children. [John.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. [John 2:17; Rom 15:3.] **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." **End of quote.**

These verses declare that Christ's holiness and dedicated prayer life, caused His four brothers, and at least three sisters, to be severely hostile to Jesus and they despised and rejected Him, and treated Him like a

stranger and an alien, and verbally reproached and criticised Him. 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 mankind impelled Jesus forward.

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.

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." **"Hoi para autou," is translated as "His family, " by NRSV; RSV; NIV; NLT; TEV. Weust translates Mk.3v21.,** "And having heard, those nearest to Him among His kinsfolk went out for the purpose of taking Him by force, for they were saying, He is out of His mind." Wycliffe has; "kinsmen." Tyndale has; "they that belonged unto him." **Vincent states, "Literally, "they who were from beside him:" i.e., by origin or birth. His mother and brethren."** **The Amplified Version translates Mark.3v21.,** "And when those who belonged to Him (His kinsmen) heard it, they went out to take Him by force, for they kept saying, He is out of His mind (beside Himself, deranged)!" **End of quote.**

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. What a sad day for Jesus when His family thought and said that He was insane. This very same charge was brought against Paul. See Acts.26v24. 2Cor.5v13.

These were Christ's family, they were certainly not His disciples, for His disciples 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. It also shows that she was influenced the rejection of Jesus by the people of Nazareth, and by the unbelief of the rest of the family, and was afraid of the result of the enmity of Israel's religious leaders. Mark.6v1-6:

Mary was certainly influenced by the gross moral and spiritual conditions of Nazareth. Mt.4v14-16. Nathanael lived at Cana, some four to eight miles from Nazareth, he knew well its bad character, and said, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Jn.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."

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!**

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.2v11. 42v11; Isa.51v19. Jer.16v5.). **[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 evil men and 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 69v10-12., that Christ's holy prayerful life stirred up great opposition against Him.

The Amplified Bible translates Ps.69v7-12., 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. [John.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. [John 2:17; Rom 15:3.] **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." **End of quote.**

Jesus was ostracised and rejected by His brothers and sisters, and the judges and businessmen, who sat in the gate of Nazareth, censured and criticised Jesus, and drunkards made up and sang vile and disgusting songs about Jesus. The gates were the usual place of public gatherings, of law proceedings, and of transacting business. The towns magistrates and judges sat in the gate to administer justice, this means that those who had rank and power, joined in the reproach against Jesus. Jesus was also

reproached by others who were gathered around the gates, the people of business, and the townspeople who gathered there; Jesus was the subject of idle and malicious chatter. "They that sit in the gate speak against me," is literally, "speak with premeditation ('siyach') against me;" they "think upon me," and with sneers repeat derisive and contemptuous remarks at my expense. Jesus was the subject of a smearing campaign orchestrated by The Slanderer, the Devil. Reproach after reproach came upon him; they hurled insults at Him and maliciously gossiped about him; and everywhere, both in the gate, by the judges and the business men, and by the common people, He was jeered at and slandered. Even those engaged in serious business transactions think critically about Jesus and speak out those thoughts.

"I was the song of the drunkards," is, literally, "and the strains of those drinking strong drink (shekar) speak against me." These drunkards, aided by the Prince of darkness, 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 these false accusations, 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.

N.B. 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)

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

We are told in **Lk.4v22-30.**, 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. 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 broke His heart and caused Jesus considerable mental and emotional suffering. It was an extremely bruising experience.

N.B. 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, "teleiotes" 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 totally worthy of all the praise that we can give Him.

N.B. 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.

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

In Heb.12v3.. The New King James Version reads. "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."

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., "endured," is the perfect active participle "hupomemenekota,"** it is used to speak of our Lord's brave endurance of the vicious verbal attacks spoken against Him by His enemies. The KJV **"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 provocation, 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. **See below on Heb.12v2., where "hupemeinen," the aorist active indicative of "hupomeno" 5278, is used to describe our Lord's brave endurance of the Cross.**

In Heb.12v3.. "consider" is "analogisasthe," "the aorist imperative of "analogizomai" 357, which means to reckon up, to compare, to weigh, to count up, to compare, to weigh, to consider. It only occurs here in the New Testament. Some scholars say that, "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.** 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.**

We read in Heb.12v2., that Jesus bravely endured the Cross. "He endured," is "hupemeinen," 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 all deaths. In Gethsemane He briefly shrank from the sufferings of the Cross and Hades that lay 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. In Heaven and earth. Heb.1v3. Eph.1v20-23. Mt.28v18-20.

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

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 Psalms and Isaiah, we see the inner pain and conflicts of Jesus. In the Gospels, generally speaking, we see the outward actions and physical cruelty against Jesus. We see how the Roman soldiers savagely beat and mocked Jesus, and how Israel's religious leaders, baited, reviled, and mocked Jesus in the most terrible and blasphemous manner.

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 everyone in God's kingdom will give Him the praise that He truly deserves.

N.B. 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.**

N.B. Besides all these pressures Jesus had the burden of total poverty.

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 "epptocheusen," (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 "plouteo" 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 financial prosperity and the possession of riches.****

N.B. SATAN'S ATTACKS ON JESUS BROUGHT HIM GREAT SUFFERING.

a. Jesus was suffered badly from Satan's attacks on Him 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." "**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. 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. On many occasions Satan used Israel's religious leaders to attack Jesus, by malicious slander and crafty schemes to entrap and kill Him. Jn.5v18. 7v1. 8v39-40. Lk.22v1-6. 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 attacked Jesus in full force as the time came for Him to make atonement for sin, but He overcame all their malicious and vicious opposition, and conquered and subjugated them. **Blessed be His wonderful Name! Heb.2v15.**

In Eph.6v12., Paul reveals the hosts of evil that waged war against Jesus, and which we also fight against, "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 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, kosmokratras 2888, tou 3588, skotous 4655, tou 3588, aionos 165, toutou 5127." The rulers and emperors of the darkness of this present age. "Kosmokratras," 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.

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. 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.**

Paul had to beat his body under, restrain it, and keep it under control, we read in 1Cor.9v26,27., "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."

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, became 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 usually 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 realise, that he will certainly and 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. **James.4v7. 1Pet.5v7-9. Zech.3v1-11.**

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.

N.B. THE VICIOUS ATTACK ON JESUS BY SATAN AND HIS EVIL ANGELS IN GETHSEMANE.

Satan and his evil angels encompassed Jesus in Gethsemane and ferociously attacked Him with great amounts of evil power, through energy lines of evil intensity, in order to weaken and devastate Jesus, and destroy His resolve to save mankind. The level of conflict was gigantic, horrendous, and totally excruciating. No other human being has come close to suffering what Jesus suffered and endured in Gethsemane. Jesus suffered and endured this onslaught of evil, and conquered it, out of pure love for us. Blessed be His Name!

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

We read in **Mt.26v37-39.,** "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., "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 sent 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" 1617, means "very fervently," so it means, "He prayed very fervently and even more earnestly." The verb "ekteino," 1614, means literally, "stretched out," from "ek," out, and "teino," to stretch, and literally means extended, stretched out, and then, intense, fervent or earnest. **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 Maj. Text and T.R., it is not as in the A.V., "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.

Mt.26v37,38. "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." **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's 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."** Dear Lord Jesus, what overwhelming terrors you faced out of love for us!

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus Himself feels and faces the most distressing and terrible fear and amazement, as He directly confronts Satan and all 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.

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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. **N.B. 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" **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 five 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.

N.B. 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 has 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. Tenderhearted 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 excruciating internal emotional pain and distress, and an horrendous fight of faith.

2. Jesus bravely conquered all these 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, and the sufferings of Hades. 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.

N.B. 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 most 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. **"Odinas," is also used to describe the intolerable anguish caused by the catastrophic calamities, which just precede the return of Jesus. See 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 from the dead for our justification. N.B. 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.

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 past called a "hellier" because he "covered in" a dwelling.

N.B. JESUS SUFFERED THE PAINS OF HADES TO REDEEM HIS DEARLY BELOVED SAINTS.

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

Jesus not only taught about Hades and judgement; He took 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, "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 shalt 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. **N.B. 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 in His life and ministry. **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, our dear Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will never, never, never, never, never forsake us, or fail us. Jesus experienced a forsaking that God's children 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 endured 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.

"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 Devil's lie that they "have been born in sin," and are incapable of living a good life, their minds are darkened the mindset is created 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 preach Docetic Gnosticism and 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." **NKJV.**

N.B. 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, and 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 Jesus, 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.

The leading Biblical scholars confirm the truth of what I say about Christ's true humanity, and 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 more clear, 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.

Conclusion.

The Living Bible translates Hos.4v6., "My people are destroyed because they don't know me, and it is all your fault, you priests, for you yourselves refuse to know me; therefore, I refuse to recognize you as my priests. Since you have forgotten my laws, I will 'forget' to bless your children."

In the days of Hosea God refused to recognise the priests who did not know Him, or tell the truth about Him to the people of God. The same must be true today. God refuses to recognise preachers who do not live in communion with God, or fail to tell the truth about God. This is no small matter, for God states that He will not bless apostate or backslidden preachers. John warns us in **1John.4v3.**, that those who deny our Lord's humanity are "not of God," and have the "spirit of antichrist."

Jesus castigated the religious leaders of Israel because they stopped people from having a real experience of God. We read in **Luke.11v52.**, "Woe to you, lawyers (experts in the Mosaic Law)! For you have taken away the key to knowledge; you did not go in yourselves, and you hindered and prevented those who were entering. v52 Woe to you, lawyers! For you have taken away the key to knowledge; you did not go in yourselves, and you hindered and prevented those who were entering. **AMP.**

Barnes comments on Hos.4v6., "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." "My people are," not, "is." This accurately represents the Hebrew. They are destroyed for lack of it, for the true knowledge of God is the life of the soul, true life, eternal life, as our Saviour saith, "This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." (John.17v3.) **End of quote.**

The Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary comments on Hos.4v6., "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge - literally, 'THE knowledge,' the only true and saving knowledge, the knowledge "of God" (Hos 4:1)." **End of quote.**

The Keil and Delitzsch Commentary comments on Hos.4v6., "The speaker is Jehovah: my nation, that is to say, the nation of Jehovah. This nation perishes for lack of the knowledge of God and His salvation. Hadda'ath (the knowledge) with the definite article points back to da'ath Eloohiim (knowledge of God) in v. 1." **End of quote.**

So we can see that God states through the prophet Hosea, in Hosea.4v6., "My people are destroyed (perish) for lack of the knowledge (of ME)." That is the lack of the correct knowledge about Jesus and the Father. It is vitally important to have a correct interpretation of the Scriptures about the character and love of God our Father, and the true humanity as well as the absolute Deity of Jesus. It is vitally important to have a true appreciation of the emotional as well as the physical sufferings of Jesus, or we will 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 truly 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.**

APPENDIX 4. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S GIFTS FOR CONQUERING CANAAN.

INTRODUCTION. To conquer our spiritual Canaan we need the almighty help, continual assistance and manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Jesus and His early Church needed them to serve God effectively, and so do we. However, it is a sad fact that movements and denominations, which

have been bulwarks for the Gospel, have often become bulwarks against the Spirit of God and His gifts. It is tragedy to see churches, which are praying for revival, and claim to be founded on the New Testament, so resolutely opposed to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that they forbid the miraculous things that happened in the New Testament from taking place in their churches. They fulfil the words of Jesus in Luke.11v52., "Woe to you, lawyers (experts in the Mosaic Law)! For you have taken away the key to knowledge; you did not go in yourselves, and you hindered and prevented those who were entering." AMP. The traditions of men have replaced, and made void, the Word of God in our day, just as surely as they did in our Lord's time. Mk.7v9-13. Col.2v8. 1Pet.1v18. Religious leaders still oppose the miraculous works of the Holy Spirit just as they did in our Lord's ministry.

Those who insist that God has withdrawn spiritual gifts, must, if they are to be consistent, insist that God has removed them all. However, it is a fact that Christians who say that spiritual gifts have been withdrawn, do in fact often pray for God to manifest His gifts. They pray for people to be physically healed; this is a gift of healing. They pray for illumination upon a problem, or guidance from God; these are in the province of words of wisdom and knowledge. They pray for preachers to be anointed by God, and for people to be blessed, and for Satan's hold upon people to be broken; all these are in the sphere of operation of the gift of faith. They pray for a miraculous supply of material needs; this is the province of workings of miracles. They pray for a revelation of God to the soul; this is a discerning of spirits. They pray for the Holy Spirit to inspire them in worship and prayer; this is the function of the gift of tongues and prophetic prayer. Christians who say that spiritual gifts have been withdrawn, do in fact often pray that God will manifest His spiritual gifts. The rejection of spiritual gifts, is really a rejection of God's influence in His Church. God has given these gifts, let us accept them, and not charge God with folly, or frustrate His loving purposes through His gifts. "The powers of the age to come," are still available today, for God has promised to confirm His truth by signs, wonders and miracles until the great and notable day of our Lord's second coming. Acts.2v17-21,38,39. Heb.6v5. 13v8.

a. The Holy Spirit was the source of our Lord's powerful, tender, and caring ministry.

Matthew states that our Lord fulfilled the prophecy concerning the Messiah found in Is.42v1-4., His ministry had the phenomenal mixture of total guileless love, irresistible power and infinite patience, which was manifested in an unassuming and unobtrusive loving ministry that restored broken lives. We read in Mt.12v18-21. "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgement to the Gentiles. v19. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. v20. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgement unto victory. v21. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust." Halleluyah!!

The fullness of the power, concern, and love of the Holy Spirit were perfectly manifested in the public ministry of Jesus. Jesus quoted from Is.61v1,2. and Is.58v6., when He preached in the Synagogue at Nazareth; we read in Luke.4v16-21. "So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. v17. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: v18. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; v19. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." v20. Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. v21. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." NKJV.

Both John Baptist and Jesus prophetically proclaimed that the ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus brought in the new age of the Holy Spirit's ministry. Mt.3v11,12. Mk.1v8. Lk.3v16,17. Jn.1v32,33. The Holy Spirit was the gift to the Church of both the Father and the ascended Christ. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came to perform the new ministries connected with the new age of grace. Jews and Gentiles were admitted to this new experience of the Spirit of God. Acts.10. , even the despised racially mongrel Samaritans were granted the gift of the Holy Spirit, and became members of the body of Christ. Acts.8. Every believer is given the privilege of being sealed, permanently indwelt, and continuously filled with the Holy Spirit. This heritage has been purchased with the precious blood of Christ.

b. The Holy Spirit is the agent of the regeneration and the rebirth of our spirits.

The Spirit of God strove with fallen mankind, and He still convicts people of sin, righteousness and judgement to come. Gen.6v3. John.16v7-11. The word for "convict," in Jn.16v8, is "elengxei," the future active of "elegcho", confuting and convicting by proof, it describes enlightenment and conquest of the mind by truth, and a moral process. This word has already been used in Jn.3v29. and 8v46.. The Holy Spirit makes His appeal on the grounds of truth. He brings us to the new birth, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" Jn.3v6. Our spirits, which were dead through our sin, were quickened by the Holy Spirit. Eph.2v1-3. Titus.3v3-5. James.1v13,14. Nicodemus and Jesus. John.3v3-7. Paul said that it is the Holy Spirit who enables us to confess that Jesus is Lord, and gives us the inner witness to our salvation. 1Cor.12v3. Paul states In Rom.8v16,17., "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, v17 and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. NKJV.

God promises in Ezek.36v25-27., that He would put a new heart in His people at the setting up of the kingdom,

we read, "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes." In Hebrews.8v10-13., we read that the covenant promised in Jer.31v31-34., is promised to the Church in this age. Paul tells us in 2Cor.3v8-18., that we are now in the age of "the ministration of the Spirit." We are indeed very privileged. Now that we are regenerated children of God the Holy Spirit comes to manifest Himself in our lives and churches.

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES TO GIVE US PRACTICAL AID IN OUR DAILY LIVING.

a. In our home and work relationships and the practical problems of life.

In our home and garage business we had many instances of this. Jesus experienced considerable home and business problems, for He was in charge of the family business when Joseph died. Mk.6v3. "Is not this the carpenter?"

In Col.3v17., Paul directs, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, constantly giving thanks through Him to God the Father." We live most of our lives outside of our church fellowships, in work and home situations; this is why Paul puts such a strong emphasis on doing everything in the name of Jesus. Paul makes it clear that true spirituality is manifested in "agape" love between the family members, and the exclusion of bitter recriminations. Children are to obey their parents, and fathers are not to expect too much from their children, or dishearten them by being severe in their discipline, but rather work by encouragement.

In Col.3v23-25., Paul's instruction to slaves, applies to us all, "Whatever may be your task, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, and not for men, v24. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. v25. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and that without partiality." In Col.4v1., Paul's warns the Christian masters of slaves, that the Lord watches our work practices, this also applies to those in management positions today, "Masters, on your part be rendering to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven."

b. The Holy Spirit comes to give us joy and liberty in our daily lives, and all the other fruit of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has come to impart His fruit of character into our daily living, He comes to replace the soul-destroying lusts, conflicts and enmities that are the result of walking in the flesh, with the fruit and harvest that grows in us as we yield to His presence and guidance, they are, "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control." Gal.5v19-22. The Holy Spirit is the source of our liberty and joy, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2Cor.3v17. And as we continue to "behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord," we are, "transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2Cor.3v18.

c. The Holy Spirit comes to give us His continuous presence and benediction to our lives.

In 2Cor.13v14., Paul blesses the Corinthians with the grace, love, and communion of the Godhead in a Trinitarian benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." The Holy Spirit comes to cause us to abound in hope with power, In Rom.15v13., Paul blesses the Romans, "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the means by which we walk and live in God, and the pledge or guarantee by which we are sealed for the day of salvation. Rom.8v1-16. 2Cor.1v21,22. The Holy Spirit also comes to reveal to us the deep things of God, and the mystery (hidden glories and secrets) about Christ Jesus. 1Cor.1v10-12. Eph.3v3-5.

The Holy Spirit is the source of inward purity in our daily living. David felt an intense sense of guilt and sin, so he prayed for forgiveness and pleaded, "Take not thy holy Spirit from me," he knew the Holy Spirit gave him the chance of transformation, renewal and walking with God. He is called "good," Neh.9v20. Ps.143v10. Isa.63v10. He is "holy," Is.6v3. "And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" NKJV The Hebrew states it more emphatically, "the fullness of this whole earth is His glory." Ps.24v1. 72v19.

God gives us the Holy Spirit, so that even rebels can come under His transforming influence, and by being empowered, can be influenced and changed. Ps.68v18. with Eph.4v7,8. The Holy Spirit makes the ugly and nasty, beautiful. He recreates our personalities, and imparts His character to us, the fruit of the Spirit.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SOURCE OF EFFECTIVE MINISTRY.

a. The Holy Spirit is the revealer of the Father and Jesus. John.14v26.15v26.16v13,14. Eph.1v12-18. 3v14-21. The Holy Spirit brings the deepest experiences of the Father and Jesus, this is the only real foundation for successful ministry.

b The Holy Spirit is the overseer of the ministry gifts. 1Cor.12v28. Rom.12. Eph.4v8-11.

c. The Holy Spirit brings unity to the body of Christ, and is the source of body ministry. Eph.4v

d. The Holy Spirit is the Source of transforming and satisfying worship. 2Cor.3v18. Eph.5v18-20.Col.3v16.

We read in Eph.5v18-20., that when we are filled with the Spirit we will have remarkable and inspired times of worship.

e. The Holy Spirit is the Source of power in prayer and intercession. Rom.8v26.

f. The Holy Spirit is the Source of successful evangelism.

Preaching with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. This preaching was not in word only, we read in **1Thes.1v5.**, "For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake." NKJV. Paul states in **1Cor.2v4,5.**, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration (the noun "apodeixei" 585) of the Spirit and of power, v5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The Holy Spirit provided the evidence of the divine origin of Paul's Gospel, Paul did not depend on the persuasiveness of his intellectual arguments or his eloquence; Paul said that God confirmed his words with miracles. This demonstration of God's power brought about many conversions in this most morally corrupt of cities. We read in Acts.18v9, 10. "Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; v10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city." NKJV. **We read in Rom.15v18-21., that Paul compelled the Gentiles to believe through mighty signs, wonders and miracles.**

We read in **1Pet.1v12.**, "To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through **those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--** things which angels desire to look into." **The Holy Spirit gives His miraculous abilities to us through His spiritual gifts.**

The guidance of the Holy Spirit in Acts.

The Holy Spirit guides Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, and then "catches away" Philip. Acts.8v29,39. He guides Peter at Joppa, through a vision, to go to the Gentile soldier Cornelius at Caesarea. Acts.10v1-48. 11v12. The Spirit commands the church at Antioch to separate Saul and Barnabus for the Christian work and apostolic ministry to which they had been previously called to by God. Acts.13v1-4. The Holy Spirit confirms the wisdom of the Church in dealing with the relationship of Gentile Christians to the Law. Acts.15v28. He forbids the apostle to go and preach in Bithynia and Mysia. Acts.16v6,7. By the Spirit Agabus warns Paul of the consequences of disobeying the Holy Spirit's instruction not to go to Jerusalem. Acts.21v4,10,11. It was the Holy Spirit who gave the elders of Ephesus their position as pastors and overseers in the Church. Acts.20v28-32.

A BRIEF STUDY OF THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

INTRODUCTION.

It fills us with joy to hear that tens of thousands of God's children from all denominations are receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and are manifesting God's spiritual gifts exactly as the disciples did in the New Testament. God is pouring out His Spirit upon all mankind, just as He promised to do before the great, glorious, awesome and notable day of our Lord's second coming. Joel.2v11,28-32. Acts.2v16-21. The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to prepare for the great day of His coming; for they play a major part in the comfort and edification in love of the Church, as well as being the Divine means of confirming the truth of the Gospel, and were the cutting edge of New Testament evangelism. 1Cor.14v1-5,39,40. Rom.15v18-21. Heb.2v4. Christian leaders, who teach that God has withdrawn His spiritual gifts, and oppose and forbid them in their churches, are doing incalculable harm to their flocks. They are denying Christians the essential spiritual equipment, not only for spiritual growth and witness, but also for survival in the traumatic and evil events that precede our Lord's return. Jesus pronounced a stern "woe" upon teachers who take away "the key of knowledge," and hinder people from going through the gateway of an experience of God and His gifts. Luke.11v52. Severe judgement follows this grave sin. James.3v1.

It is an undeniable fact of Scripture, that the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the operation of His spiritual gifts was the norm for Christians in the early Church. Those who resist this New Testament pattern, resist God. See Acts.7v51-53. Those who stubbornly rebel against the gifts of the Holy Spirit, should remember that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry." 1Sam.15v23. These modern critics would have been very unhappy, and quite out of place, in the early Church.

In spite of the massive Scriptural evidence for the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit, there is a very determined opposition to them in some Christian circles. Indeed, some view Christians who manifest the Holy Spirit's gifts in the same light as the heretical cults and other false religions, and look upon them with suspicion and hostility, and even denounce them as "not of God." However, this charge will not bear examination, for true Pentecostal Christians emphasise every doctrine the Scriptures hold as "fundamental" and "precious." We believe in the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures, and their teaching on the virgin birth, true deity, compassionate humanity, sinless life, atoning death, victorious resurrection, high priestly ministry, and glorious

return and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. True Pentecostals also practice godly caring love, consecrated sacrificial living, and diligent service for God.

The critics, who say that the gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased with the apostles, are being wilfully blind to the clear facts of Scripture and Church History. To justify their unbelief in the possibility of a present day experience of the baptism and gifts of the Spirit, some "Christian" writers have written material that is quite unworthy of true Christian scholarship and love, and have compiled records of the failures of Pentecostal Christians in order to justify their unbelieving position. Exposition that depends for its justification on character assassination is manifestly, "Not of God," and will result in severe condemnation on judgement day. James.3v1. 1Cor.3v10-14. In 1Cor.13v5., Paul condemns this carping criticism, and loveless documenting of people's sins, he writes "love does not compile records of evil, ("logizomai," to take an inventory)." Christians who are filled with God's love do not compile a catalogue of people's sins, to censure fallen Christians. True "agape" love "suffers long and is kind," and tries in a spirit of meekness, to help, heal, and restore fallen Christians; not seek out, gloat over, and magnify their sins and failures. Gal.6v1. "Love bears all things," "panta stegei," it protects and covers; and exercises all faith, "panta pisteuei," and all hope, "panta elpizei," for their spiritual recovery. When all efforts fail, "love endures all things," "panta hupomenei". This is the triumph of God's forgiving love towards us. Writers who descend to gutter press standards of journalism, with the excuse that they are exposing false prophets, set the standards for their own judgement. Mt.7v1,2., "Do not judge lest you be judged. v2. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you." James.2v13. "For judgement is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgement." Mt.5v7. 6v15. 18v28-35.

What Christian group has no spiritual failures? Even the apostolic band could be looked upon as "not of God" by this carping and loveless method of examination. Christ was betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter and forsaken by all, and the Bible tells us of many good men who have failed God. Some of the Christians at Corinth were Pentecostal failures; but though their lives were deplorable, Paul recognises them as God's children, and their spiritual gifts as genuine. 1Cor.1v2,7. 3v1-3. Are we to ignore the great grace and mercy of God to His dear children? Are we to judge the faithful by the failures of the faithless? What kind of justice is that? I do not judge the anti-Pentecostal Christians by their spiritual wrecks. Indeed, the Bible tells me to sorrow over the fall of a brother and commands me to try to help and restore him. Gal.6v1. Mt.5v44-48. Let the tree be judged by its good fruit, not by the fruit that has gone bad. Jesus warns us of the serious consequences of this kind of carping criticism. Mt.5v19,22,44-48. 7v1-5. Is not resistance to the Holy Spirit's gifts, a beam in the eye? Resisting the Spirit is a sin of religious leaders, the ordinary people heard Jesus gladly. Mk.12v37. Acts.2v41. 7v51-53.

Critics who say that the Holy Spirit's gifts are, "Of the Devil," have gone far beyond the sin of carping criticism. Jesus warns that it is the worst kind of blasphemy to ascribe the works of God to Satan. Mk.3v22-30. Lk.19v41-44. Acts.7v51-53. We, like Jesus, ask, "Can Satan be divided against himself? Can a person who is born of the Holy Spirit, and washed in the precious blood of Christ, be possessed by Satan?" We emphatically answer, "**Never! Never!**" Jesus definitely promised that his was absolutely impossible. Lk.11v9-13. 1Jn.5v18. An apostate Christian, who treads under foot our Lord Jesus, and counts the blood of the covenant whereby he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and insults the Holy Spirit, may become demon possessed, but not the Christian who loves and follows their Lord. Jn.10v25-30. Heb.10v26-31.

True Pentecostal Christians do not over-emphasise the gift of tongues and spiritual gifts, we just give them the place that God's Word tells us to. It is the critics, who say, and quite wrongly, that this is our only theme, we give the Lord Jesus pre-eminence in all things. Col.1v18. It is the attacks of the critics that drive us to defend the truths that are so precious to us. I pray that these studies will be a blessing to all those who read them, and that through them many Christians will come to experience their heritage, the power and love of the Holy Spirit operating through His spiritual gifts. W.H. Turner. April 10th. 2007.

THE NINE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. 1Cor.12v7-10.

In considering these "Nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit," 1Cor.12v7-10., we in no way forget or neglect the vital "Nine Fruit of the Holy Spirit." Gal.5v22-24. We recognise the correct place given to both fruit and gifts in the Scripture. Love, and the other fruit of the Spirit, have need of God's power to fulfil His beautiful desires; and we need the fruit of the Spirit to correctly use His gifts. The Holy Spirit comes to give us both fruits and gifts, they are both part of His full ministry to us and through us, and each perfectly complements the other. The life and ministry of Jesus show the perfect manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Those who love the Lord Jesus and desire to follow Him, will desire both the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Jn.10v27. Jesus is the Head of the Church, and we should accept the spiritual gifts that He gives to His Church. The nine spiritual gifts are the combined and co-ordinated abilities and acts of God the Father, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in the Church. Their manifestations can be divided up in the following three ways.

THE THREE MAIN DIVISIONS OF THE NINE SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

A. The Gifts of Revelation and Information. Manifesting God's omniscience.

The Trinity give us their guidance, wisdom and knowledge through the gifts of revelation.

1. The gift of a word of wisdom. 2. The gift of a word of knowledge. 3. The gift of discernings of spirits.

B. The Gifts of Action and Power. Manifesting God's omnipotence.

The Trinity give us power to work miracles through the power gifts.

4. The gift of faith. 5. The gift of workings of miracles. 6. The gift of gifts of healings.

C. The Gifts of Inspiration and Encouragement. Manifesting God's omnipresent love.

The Trinity encourage us through devotional gifts that inspire, edify and comfort.

7. The gift of prophecy. 8. The gift of various kinds of tongues. 9. The gift of interpretation of tongues.

The apostle Paul divides the manifestations of the Holy Spirit into nine separate divisions, nine gifts that can operate quite separately from each other. These nine gifts are really the various aspects of the love, power, wisdom and knowledge of God imparted to us by the Holy Spirit, as we need them. They are the interventions of God in our lives and ministries. Sometimes we may need only one gift, but at other times we may need several gifts to meet our needs, and we can receive them in one outpouring of the love and power, and wisdom and knowledge of God. e.g. Acts.9v10-19. 12v5-11. The gifts of the Holy Spirit reveal the great and loving heart of God to the Church and the world, and manifest and bring the beauty, love and healing power of God's kingdom to those in need. Lk.10v9. Jn.14v12. Acts.10v8.

Paul states in 1Cor.12v4-31., that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are intended to operate in the Church through its leading ministries and various members; as the various parts of the human body operate together in perfect co-operation and co-ordination. When Christians work together in love, and the Holy Spirit's gifts operate in perfect co-operation and co-ordination through the various ministries and members of the body of Christ, as they did in the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem; then God can perform all the beautiful and wonderful things that He desires to do; and His kingdom will be greatly extended.

A. THE GIFTS OF REVELATION AND INFORMATION.

1. THE GIFT OF A WORD OF WISDOM. "Logos sophias."

Some have tried to give a human explanation of a word of wisdom. However, a word of wisdom is not natural wisdom sanctified to the service of God; or the ability to rightly interpret or preach the Scriptures. Nor is it a good administrative ability, or the ability to guide and counsel people wisely with mature Christian guidance. Usually the guidance for everyday affairs needs common sense and Christian wisdom. Ps.32v8-10. However, if we need a word of God's wisdom, He can break into our lives and routines, as He has done so often with His children in the past, and give His divine direction and guidance. A word of wisdom is a fragment of God's divine wisdom imparted to us; it is a supernatural revelation given by the Holy Spirit of the mind, will, plans and purposes of God, for the following purposes.

1. To reveal the eternal purposes, sovereign counsels, and oracles of God.

Through this gift God has revealed vital spiritual truths and general commands and principles for holy living, as well as His eternal purposes and sovereign counsels. This divine truth has been received as "the oracles of God," and as "God-breathed, Holy Scripture," and Jesus said that they could not be broken. Jn.10v35. Acts.7v38. Rom.3v2. Heb.5v12. 2Tim.3v14-17.

Some of God's secret purposes, or "mysteries," as they are called, have been kept hidden from the foundation of the world, but now God's wonderful "plan of the ages," has been revealed to His children. Eph.1v21. 2v7. 3v10,11. Mt.13v11,17-35. Lk.10v21-24. Rom.16v25,26. Col.1v26. 1Cor.15v51-53. Though the revelation of new truth ceased after the start of this age, God can still reveal His plans and purposes for individuals, communities, churches and nations, through the word of wisdom.

2. To warn and direct God's people in difficult and disastrous times.

In time of divine judgement, as in, Noah and flood. Gen.6v18-22. Abraham and Sodom. Gen.18v17-33. 19v12,13. Israel's captivity. 2Chron.36v15-21. Ezek.9v1-11. Is.10v5-27.

In natural catastrophe or national disaster. Pharaoh's dreams. Gen.41v1-44. The great woman of Shunem was preserved in famine. 2King.4v8-17. 8v1-8. Agabus warns of famine. Acts.11v27-30. Paul warns of a great storm. Acts.27v9-25,30-34,44.

3. To give divine direction and deliverance in time of persecution and danger.

David was protected from Saul. 1Sam.25v5,6. The three kings fighting Moab. 2Kings3v4-27. The wise men, Joseph, Mary were warned of Herod's intentions. Mt.2v12,13,19,20. Our Lord Jesus delayed His visit to Jerusalem to escape arrest. John.7v1-10,44-53. Paul was warned to flee from Jerusalem. Acts.22v17-21. Jeremiah's guidance from God was rejected; the result was death for all. Jer.42 and 43.

4. To give divine defence in trial or persecution for Christ's sake.

In persecution, we must not premeditate, but trust God to give His divine wisdom. Lk.12v11,12. and 21v12-15.

Sometimes God will inspire us to answer with Scripture truth, as our Lord Jesus did in Mt.22v23-33,41-46.; and Stephen did in Acts.6v10. and 7v1-60.; and Paul did in Acts.24v24-27... See Col.4v6. 1Pet.3v13-18. God may inspire us to give our testimony, just as Paul did in Acts.22v1-24. and 26v1-32., or inspire us to take advantage of a division among our persecutors. Acts.23v6-10. Christ said we must not rely on clever answers, but rather on divine illumination, as He did when His foes asked Him the source of His authority in Mt.21v23-27., and when they tried to trap Him over the lawfulness of offering tribute to Caesar in Mt.22v15-22... The divine wisdom and authority imparted to Peter and John gave them a boldness and assurance that amazed the Sanhedrin, they could only threaten them, they could not answer them. Acts.4v8-22. 5v17-42. The writer has had the experience of saying things that were not in his mind and outside of his knowledge. This divine defence gives us a tremendous assurance in facing the unknown future; we know that we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. God can deliver us, but if He does not, He is still with us, and if our foes kill us, they only send us home to heaven, to our Father, and our Saviour. In Phil.1v21-24., Paul states that death for a Christian is gain, and that life with Jesus in heaven is far, far, far better than life here.

5. To give divine direction in the work of God.

It can reveal and confirm a call from God to work for Him. Moses. Ex.3v1-13. Gideon. Judges.7v1-11. Isaiah. Is.6v8. Jeremiah. Jer.1v1-9. Paul. Acts.9v10-17. 13v1,2. It can reveal God's strategic plans. Elijah. 1Kings.17v1. 18v46. Joshua. Jos.5v13 to 6v5. Philip. Acts.8v26-29. Peter. Acts.10v1-48. Paul. Acts.13v2. 16v6-10. 3,000 missionaries. Acts.2v5,41. Acts.4v4. Christ's ministry was directed by revelation. Jn.5v19,20. It can reveal God-appointed leaders. Saul. 1Sam.9v16. David. 1Sam.16v6-13. The apostles. Lk.6v12-19. Paul. Acts.9v15,16. It can reveal or confirm the solution to Church problems, Acts.15v13-29.; and show the necessity of divine judgement on sin in the Church, or the correction of wrong attitudes so that God's work can prosper. Acts.5v1-11. 10v9-48. Rev.1 and 2. It can reveal blessings to come. Abraham. Gen.12v1-7. 17v1-8. Jacob. Gen.25v23. 28v15. Acts.2v16-21. with Joel.2v28-32. It can comfort and reassure troubled saints. Ex.33v12-17. Josh.1v1-9. Jer.1v4-10. Acts.23v11. 27v22-24. Rev.1v9-18. And give directions to meet our material needs. God loves to guide us in home, work and business life. 1Kings.17v2-16. 2Kings.4v1-7. Lk.5v1-11. Mt.17v24-27.

SOME STRONG WORDS OF WARNING, AND SPECIAL POINTS TO WATCH.

1. Directive revelations should be carefully examined, and often rejected.

Paul says we must test all prophecies in the fire, and reject the false. 1Thes.5v20,21. Don't accept revelations that claim to add to New Testament truth; we already have the foundation of Christian doctrine for this age. Eph.2v20. 3v5. Rev.22v19. 2Cor.11v3,4,13-15.

a. Do not let others direct you by supposed prophetic revelation.

This warning is absolutely necessary; for arrogant and pretentious false prophets, have given false revelations that have harmed, and even ruined, the lives of many people, and directed them out of God's will. It is true that Old Testament prophets enquired of God for people, and directed them; however, under the New Covenant this aspect of prophetic ministry has changed, we can all be personally led by the Holy Spirit, and are personally responsible to seek guidance for ourselves. We read in Rom.8v14., that New Testament Sons of God are personally led by the Spirit of God; and Heb.8v8-13.; states that under the New Covenant, "they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest." See Heb.10v19-22.

b. God-given guidance through others will confirm, not direct.

We should **NEVER** submit to guidance from others about which God has not already given us definite and well-confirmed guidance personally. Jn.14v16-26. 16v7-15. 21v20-22. Heb.4v12-16. Beware of strong personalities who would interpret revelation in the light of their opinion, and counsel you into their decisions. A word of wisdom can show us personally how to serve God, but this gift is not given to us to direct another person's walk with God, as Peter found out, when Christ corrected him for trying to get guidance for John. Jn.21v20-22. Confirmation of guidance can occur through others; in Acts.13v2. a word of wisdom confirmed what God had already told Paul and Barnabus, they received specific guidance direct from God, and others confirmed it in a general way. Take time to consider prophecies, and **NEVER** make instant decisions on them. Put them in the fire and thoroughly test them; note well 1Thes.5v20,21., where the verb "dokimazo," means, "to approve after testing," and can be used of testing metals in the fire. In the Septuagint of Prov.27v21., "dokimion," is used to speak of a crucible or furnace for smelting; and in 1Pet.1v7. of a process similar to that of metal refining, which produces in our characters something more precious than precious metals. True prophecies will stand a fiery test.

c. Warnings in emergencies through well-proven ministries should be heeded.

God can use trustworthy prophets, like Agabus, or spiritual Christians, like those at Tyre, to give warnings of danger by words of wisdom. Acts.20v22,23. 21v4,10-14. God gave Paul the same warnings through many Christians, in locations separated by hundreds of miles, so there was no possibility of contact or collusion between them. Through these Christians God gave Paul repeated strong warnings not to go to Jerusalem, which unfortunately he ignored; and so his ministry was permanently hindered, and the Church was badly damaged by the Judaizers as a result. The prophet Agabus warned of a famine in Acts.11v27-30.; this occurred

about A.D. 44 to 48, during which many people died of starvation in Judea; the church had about three years warning of the famine and prepared accordingly.

2. Do not expect even genuine words of wisdom to always happen immediately.

a. Never forget the time factor in prediction.

Remember the experience of the prophets in 1Pet.1v10-12... You may think a prediction or promise from God may happen quickly, when it may take years to come to pass, and be fulfilled, and this can be a great trial to our faith. Satan tries to take advantage of the delay between a revelation and its fulfilment; He even cast doubt on our Lord's future ministry, and taunted Him to prove His ministry by doing the miraculous. Lk.4v1-13. N.B. v3,9,10. Eph.6v10-20. Heb.6v12. 10v32-39. Even great prophets have been tried by delays in the understanding and fulfilment of prophecies that they have given. Ps.105.v17-19. Dan.7v15,16,28. 8v15,16,26,27.

b. Do not let circumstances overwhelm you, hold fast in faith.

Sometimes there are great discrepancies between circumstances as they appear and God's word of wisdom; hold on in faith. Lk.4v1-13. Eph.6v10-20. Heb.6v12. 10v32-39. Remember how the Word of the Lord tried Joseph's faith in God, and love for God, until His promises to Joseph came to pass over 20 years later. Ps.105v17-22. N.B. v19.

c. Don't try to force prophecies to come to pass, wait for God to fulfil His Word.

Don't try to bring a word of wisdom to pass unless God tells you to do so; wait until God fulfils His promises and purposes. Ps.37v7-9,34. 40v1-4. 42v1-11. 62v1-8.

3. Do not forget that God's purposes can be altered by repentance or rebellion.

A prophesy of judgement may not come to pass because people repent and put things right with God or man, or both. Jonah.3v9,10. Likewise a person may not die who God has said will die, like Hezekiah; because of a new consecration and prevailing prayer by themselves, or others. Is.38v1-22. Promised blessing may be withheld by God because of sin and sloth; and repentance and a new consecration can change circumstances, or stop God's judgement. Ps.95v8-11. Numb.14v35,35. Ezek.18v20-32. 2Cor.6v16 to 7v1.

4. Do not forget that abiding in Christ is the key to obtaining prophetic revelation.

Abiding in Jesus is the key to a profitable manifestation of the revelation and predictive prophetic gifts of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes to reveal things to come, He comes to glorify Jesus. Jn.16v12-14. God never intended us to divorce the manifestation of spiritual gifts from abiding in Christ, obeying God's Word, and prayerful communion with God, and this applies particularly to the word of wisdom. We have to walk close with God to have His important ways, will, and purposes revealed to you before they happen. Jn.15v1-17. N.B. v7,12,17. Acts.4v33. "God made His ways known unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel." Ps.103v7.

2. THE GIFT OF A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE. "Logos gnoseos."

A word of knowledge is totally miraculous. It is a small part of God's awesome omniscience. It is not any kind of natural ability or knowledge, or even a good knowledge of the Scriptures. It is a fact that is supernaturally given by God, of which the recipient has no previous knowledge, or it will confirm as a fact something that we have been told, felt, or feared, as when David asked God if the men of Keilah would deliver him up to Saul, God told David that they would. 1Sam.23v1-12. This gift covers all areas of knowledge except that covered by the word of wisdom and discerning of spirits. It can tell us of events and things in the past, present and future.

A word of knowledge can warn of dangers ahead. 2Kings.6v8-12. Mt.2v12,13. Acts.21v10-12. Failure to heed these warnings brings great trouble and defeat. Mt.16v21-24. 17v22,23. 20v17-19. with 26v55,56. Mk.16v9-14. Jn.13v36-38. 18v25-27. Lk.22v31-34,54-62. Jn.21v18,19. with 1Pet.1v13,14. and Acts.12v5-7,13-17. 2Kings.4v27. God can hide future trials from us if He thinks it best.

This gift can reveal a person's character and thoughts and intentions towards us when necessary, and warn us of deceitful people. 1Sam.16v6,7. 1Kings.14v5,6. Jn.6v70,71. Lk.7v36-40. 14v1-6. 5v22. It can expose the sinner's heart and bring them to repentance, 2Sam.12v1-9. Jn.4v16-19,29. 1Cor.14v24,25., or show the reason for divine judgement. 2Kings.5v20-27. Josh.7v1-26. N.B. v5,13,25. Acts.5v1-11. Rev.3v20-23. 1Chron.18v1-34. This gift can also reveal beautiful and trustworthy persons, Jn.1v37,40-42,46-51. Lk.6v12-16. Acts.9v17-25.; or seeking, or wounded hearts, and so meet their needs. Acts.9v10-19. 10v1-48. Jn.4v16-19,29. Is.61v1-3. Lk.4v18,19.

Words of knowledge can greatly encourage people and stimulate faith and action. 1Kings.19v14-18. Mt.28v6. Acts.18v6-11. 1Kings.13v2. 2Kings.21v25. Is.45v1-4. Jn.1v48,49. Many Christians have had prayer burdens laid on their hearts by the Holy Spirit, and have later found that those who they were praying for were in great need. Words of knowledge can reveal many different kinds of needs for prayer. Col.2v5. Mk.14v27-31,37,38,50. Rev.2 and 3., and how material needs in God's work and our daily lives can be met. Mk.14v12-16. 11v1-7. with Zech.9v9. Mt.17v24,25. 1Sam.10v1-8. 30v1-8,18,19. In the Scriptures words of knowledge were often manifested in conjunction with words of wisdom and the discerning of spirits. Words of knowledge

were an important part of the armoury of prophets, and confirmed their message, and they still have an important place as a sign and wonder. Dan.2v21-26. Jn.4v28-42.

3. THE GIFT OF DISCERNINGS OF SPIRITS. "Diakriseis pneumatou."

This is the seventh in the list in 1Cor.12v8-10... It is not a critical spirit, Mt.7v1.; or Christian discernment. Mt.7v5-23. 10v16. 1Thes.5v21. 1Jn.2v26,27.. It is certainly not evil occult manifestations as in Spiritualism, witchcraft, black magic, etc.; which the Bible condemns. Lev.19v31. 20v6. 2Kings.21v2,6. Exod.22v18. with 1Sam.28v6,7. and 1Chron.10v13,14. Is.8v19,20. 19v3. 47v13. Mal.3v5. Acts.13v1-11. 16v16-18. 19v19. 1Cor.10v20,21. Gal.5v19-21. 1Jn.4v1-5. Rev.21v8. 22v15.

The gift of discernings of spirits does not take the place of Scriptural tests of character and inspiration; Christians are to test people by the fruit of their lives, their love for people and God, their doctrine, particularly about Christ, and by their love of prayer and God's Word. Mt.7v15-23. 1Cor.12v3. Is.8v19,20. 1Jn.4v1-5. Jn.13v34,35. Ps.24v6. 1v1-6. Lk.24v53.

The gift of discernings of spirits is the supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to temporarily see into the spirit world. It can reveal a fragment, or a wide range of activity in the spirit world, either in the past, present, or future; it reveals the activities of either good or evil spirits. It is a plural gift, "diakriseis," "discernings." The gift of discerning of spirits can safeguard the spiritual life of a Christian or a church, for it can reveal Satan's attacks upon Christians and churches, by oppression, infiltration, seduction, and persecution, and so protect them from evil. Acts8v9-23. 5v3,4. 1Cor.1v10-17. 3v1-7. 2Cor.11v3,4,13-15. Eph.6v11. 1Tim.4v1-7. 2Pet.2v1-4. Jn.8v44. with Mk.3v22-30. 2Cor.10v4,5. Sometimes we need to know the spirit moving a person before we can know their lives or doctrine, and sometimes false prophets are so crafty that they hide their true doctrine and character under a sheep's clothing; through this gift the Holy Spirit can protect us from them. Acts.13v6-12. 16v16-18. This gift can reveal angelic ministries and the workings of the Holy Spirit, and this can save us from resisting the Holy Spirit, or from failing to discern a genuine move of the Holy Spirit.

SOME WORDS OF WARNING.

N.B. 1. Don't ascribe all sickness to the Devil.

This gift can reveal if demon power is causing sickness; the Bible tells us that some sickness is caused by demons. Mt.4v23,24. 8v28-34. 9v32-34. 12v22-24. 15v21-28. 17v14-21. with Mk.9v23. However, most sickness should not be attributed to Satan, for the Scriptures clearly distinguish between sickness and lunacy due to natural causes, from sickness and lunacy due to demon possession. Mt.4v23,24. 17v15-18. Godly people, like Job, have sometimes suffered sickness as a result of Satan's power, but this cannot happen without the permission of God. Job.1v9-11. 2v1-10.

N.B. 2. Concentrate on God, not on demons.

Whatever you do, don't suffer from "demonitis." That is, don't be always talking about demons, or go looking for demons, or blame everything on demons. Be positive, and concentrate your minds and talk on our lovely Father and Saviour. Heb.3v1.4v14-16. 12v1-3. Also remember that it is quite wicked to pretend that you have this gift, and to go around pretending to cast demons from every body, including good Christians. To hurt people by saying that they have a demon in them, when it is not true, is very wrong, and those who do this kind of thing will very definitely have to answer to God. The New Testament emphasis is upon good angels and God, not evil spirits, we should follow the New Testament example and emphasise the Lord not demons.

N.B. 3. Christ promised that Christians cannot be demon possessed.

Those who teach that Christians can be possessed by demons, do not realise that they are denying and attacking Christ's atonement, and the cleansing and protecting presence of the Holy Spirit. Titus.3v5. Jn.14v16. 1Jn.4v4. Christians cannot get a serpent, scorpion, or stone, because we are continuously guarded by God. Lk.11v9-13. Job.1v10. 1Pet.1v3-5. Demons cannot possess or grasp a child of God, we trample on them. 1Jn.5v18. Lk.10v17-20. The blood of Jesus gives us victory, and has translated us out of Satan's power and kingdom, into God's kingdom. Col.1v12-14. 1Pet.1v18,19. 2v9. Rev.12v11.

Christians may fail God because of temptation by Satan, but this is quite different from being demon possessed. Mt.16v13-27. 26v69-75. It is the apostate Christian, who has thrown all faith in Christ away, that gets possessed; however, apostasy must never be confused with even severe backsliding. Mt.12v22-32,43-45. Mk.3v22-30. Christ came to deliver mankind from Satan's power and malice, and came to destroy his evil works. Acts.10v38. Jn.8v36. 1Jn.3v8. Lk.4v17-21. 13v10-17. Heb.13v8.

The discernings of spirits can be the most powerful way that God can speak to man to bring about their conversion; Paul was converted by a vision of Christ, this accomplished what even miracles could not do. Acts.10v1-8. compare Rev.19v11-21. This gift can also be the ultimate in encouragement to the Christian, visions of angels, Christ, and the Father, give the ultimate in encouragement and the most transforming spiritual experience. This kind of revelation of God is indispensable for those with a difficult task to do for God; indeed, it was the revelation of God that enabled great men of God to fulfil their tasks. Exod.3v1-6. 24v9-18. 2Kings.6v17. Is.6v1-13. Ezek.1v1-28. Lk.1v10-38. 2Pet.1v16-21. Rev.1v20. etc. Paul had many wonderful "heavenly visions," of our Lord and angels; and these gave him the inner strength to perform his missions.

Acts.9v3-6. 18v9-11. 22v17-21. 2Cor.12v1-4. Acts.27v23-25. Our dear Lord Jesus experienced a most wonderful revelation of the Father on the "Holy Mount" of transfiguration; this was necessary to give him the spiritual strength to face the events connected with his suffering and death at Jerusalem. Lk.9v28-36. 22v23-26. Jn.3v13. Heb.2v9. The discerning of spirits can vary a great deal in its scope, from a simple and brief revelation of a demon, to the ultimate beatific vision of God.

B. THE THREE GIFTS OF POWER.

4. THE GIFT OF FAITH. "Pistis."

The gift of faith is not saving faith, the fruit of faith, or even a prayer of faith; however, these are the necessary basis of a gift of faith. The gift of faith is an act of divine power. It is a supernatural confidence and power imparted by God to meet a specific need through an act of His power. It is the operation of God's power in the spiritual realm, and acts upon angels and men. It is an out-shining of God's faith and power. It is certainly not a mere ritual, or pretence, it is the greatest of the power gifts.

The gift of faith can give divine protection in danger and persecution. Exod.3v10. 7v10. 14v19,20. Judges.15v9-20. 16v20. Dan.6v16-23. 3v17,18,25. Lk.4v29,30. Jn.7v44-46. 8v59. 10v39. Acts.5v17-26. 12v1-11. 27v18-44. It can give divine strength, comfort and peace in persecution and great need. Heb.11v35-39. Acts7v54-60. 6v15. Lk.9v27-36. 22v42-44. It can bestow spiritual blessings; and even mould and protect people's lives in the future. Gen.27v27-41. Heb.11v20. Gen.48v8-28. Heb.11v21. Mk.10v13-16. It can impart spiritual power and authority. Numb.11v24-29. 27v18-23. Deut.34v9. Exod.18v25. 2Kings.2v9-14. Mt.10v1-8. Lk.10v1-24. Acts.13v1-4. It can impart the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit, Acts.8v14-19. 9v17. 19v1-6.; and revival outpourings, Acts.2v1-4. 4v23-31. 10v44-48... It can remove hurts, wounds and scars inside people, and change their personality for good. 1Sam.10v6,11. 16v12,13. Lk.4v18. 2Cor.10v1-5.

N.B. It is difficult to put the casting out of demons under any other gift than the gift of faith; it is true that Mk.9v38,39., tells us that the casting out of a demon is "an act of power," however, every power gift is "an act of power," it is the sphere of operation which decides which power gift is in operation. The operation of spiritual power in the unseen spiritual world is certainly best described by the gift of faith, for it is a realm where we need faith to see and operate. We can certainly say that we have to live close to God to deal with evil spirits, as the apostles found out. Lk.9v1,2,37-42. with Mk.9v14-29. Acts.19v11-17,

God has judged people through the gift of faith, even during the New Covenant of grace. Acts.5v1-11. 12v1-5,21-24. 13v6-12. 1Cor.5v1-5. 1Tim.1v20. However, this was rare because Jesus came to save and bless, not to judge or condemn. Ex.9v8-12. 11v1-12v36. 2Kings.1v8-16. 5v25-27. Judgement is a "strange act" to a God of love. Is.28v21. Mt.5v44. Rom.12v14. 1Cor.4v12. 14v16. 2Cor.2v1-8. However, this age will close with a mighty manifestation of the gift of faith in judgement. Rev.11v5,6. Compare. Numb.23v23.

Some think that Elijah being fed by the ravens was a gift of faith, I feel that it was a working of miracles; I feel that miracles of provision such as Ps.78v24-25. Lk.8v1-3. and 1Kings.19v4-8., come within the scope of the gift of faith. However, it is foolish to be dogmatic over this, as the gifts do fringe upon each other in certain areas, and make definition difficult. The important thing is to enjoy our heavenly Father's miracles of provision, and His other good gifts; correct definition is of secondary importance, however, a correct definition is of real value when it acts as a key to the experience and regulation of the gifts.

5. THE GIFT OF WORKINGS OF MIRACLES. "Energemata dunameon."

In 1Cor.12v2. the ministry of workings of miracles comes fourth in the list and before gifts of healings; one needs greater authority from God to manifest this gift, than a ministry of healing. God may give a person the authority to manifest one gift, but not the authority to manifest another gift.

The working of miracles must not be confused with the other power gifts. A gift of healing is a miracle of healing; an act of dunamis, but it is not a working of miracles. All physical healing comes within the scope of the gifts of healings, even creative instantaneous miracles of healing. The gift of faith gives authority in the spiritual realm, where only faith can see; it gives authority over men and angels. The working of miracles gives authority and power over material things and nature, it effects mans environment. The gifts of healings give authority in the physical realm, over infirmity, disease and sickness.

"Workings of powers or miracles," or "activities that call forth miracles," "energemata dunameon," could well describe all the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, they are all the result of the operation of God's power, however, the Scriptures show us that workings of miracles acts on man's material environment.

A Definition of The Workings of Miracles.

The working of miracles is an operation of divine power that changes natural law and material things, and produces seen miraculous effects in man's material environment. The workings of miracles can interrupt, suspend, or control the laws of nature; it is the operation of the power of God upon material things, vegetation, and the rest of the living world apart from man.

The workings of miracles can be a mighty sign that displays the almighty power and majesty of God. Ex.6v6,7, 8v15, 9v16, 15v11-16. Deut.4v34, 5v115. Josh.2v9-11, 5v1. It has been used to confirm the message of God's prophets. 1Kings.13v1-10, 1Sam.12v16-25, 1Kings.18v36-39.

It has also been used to confirm God's word and call to a person. Judg.6v1-40, 7v9-14, 2Kings.20v1-11, Ex.7v10, with Numb.17v8, 2Kings.2v13-15, Lk.5v1-11, 1v20-23,63,64, 2v10-12,34. This gift can establish faith in people and powerfully confirm the Gospel message. Jn.2v1-11,23, 6v1-14,26,27, Mt.15v32-39, Mk.14v22-36, 16v15-18, Jn.5v19,20,36,44.

It has often provided food and other material needs for the children of God, when no human or natural resources were available. Ex.5v35, 16v13, 17v1-7, Num.11v31, 2Kings.2v19-22, 4v1-7,38,44, 6v1-7, 2v13-15, Mk.6v32-44,48, 8v1-9, Lk.5v1-11, Jn.21v3-11, Mt.17v24-27. It can deliver from danger. Exod.14v16-21, 15v23-25, Lk.8v22-25, Mt.14v24-33, 6v18-21, Acts.16v25-34.

This gift has sometimes been used in divine judgement. Ex.8v1 to 10v29, Numb.16v19-35, Josh.10v6-14, 1Kings.17v1, 18v1,42-46, James.5v14-20, Mk.1v12-14,20-24. The emphasis during this age of grace is upon God's love and mercy, and not judgement; however, at the end of this age the two witnesses of Rev.11v1-8, N.B. v5,6., and doubtless other Christians, will have authority and power given to them to bring judgement upon their evil foes through this gift.

God's power gifts gave Israel victory in war. The operation of the power gifts through Moses was greater than the military might of either Israel, or their enemies. Ex.17v11-13, Josh.6v20. The power gifts of Elijah and Elisha made them into "the horses and chariots of Israel," that is, the protective spiritual and military might of Israel, and their loss was deeply felt. 2Kings.2v12, 2Kings.13v14. Samuel's power gifts frightened the Philistines more than Saul's picked army. 1Sam.7v4-14, with 13v1-23. Men of God have always been able to defeat seemingly "invincible foes" through God's power gifts. Gen.14v1-17, Judges.7v16-25, 15v7-20, 1Sam.14v1-14, 17v11-58, 2Chron.14v9-13, 15v6, 17v3, 20v1-25.

When the apostles were delivered from prison by angelic ministry, we could say that there were three gifts of revelation and two gifts of power in operation, it was really one display of God's power and ability. Acts.5v16-24, 12v1-17. The resurrection of the dead also calls for the operation of what we would call several power gifts, in one burst of the power of God. 2Kings.13v20,21, 4v32-37, Lk.7v11, 8v41.

Is supernatural transport a working of miracles or a gift of faith? Is the faith active or passive? 1Kings.18v11,12, 2Kings.2v16-18, Ezek.3v12-15, 8v3, Acts.8v39,40, Jn.6v20,21, Rev.12v14. Was the harmless snake poison a working of miracles, or a gift of healing? Acts.16v1-6, Mk.16v18. Was Samson killing the lion, a working of miracles or a gift of faith, or both? Judges.14v5,6. Possession of this gift is more important than definition, particularly in these dark last days. Let us earnestly desire these precious power gifts of God.

6. THE GIFT OF GIFTS OF HEALINGS. "Charismata iamaton."

Gifts of healings should not be confused with medical care; however, Christians should be the last to disparage the work of doctors and nurses, who are dedicated to the relief of suffering. There is a very definite place for natural healing, indeed, God gave the Israelites sound medical advice on rest, food, hygiene, quarantine and sanitation, etc., which has been recognised by modern medicine. Divine healing must also not be confused with "healing" by Spiritualism, Christian Science, and other occult means, which are forbidden by God, those who go to them for healing are in very real spiritual danger. Lev.19v31, 20v6, Deut.18v8-20, Is.8v19,20.

WHY HEALING FROM GOD MAY NOT OCCUR, OR BE DELAYED.

a. Because of unbelieving, "not for today" preaching. 1Jn.5v14,15, James.3v1.

b. Because of the lack of faith and power in the person praying for the sick. Mk.9v14-29.

c. Because a sick person is not prepared to get right with God, or seek God for healing. Ex.23v25, Mk.2v1-12, Jn.5v1-9,14,44, 12v42,43, Ps.15v1-5, 24v3-6, 34v12-22, 66v18, Prov.28v13, Exod.15v26, Rom.8v11, Mt.11v20-24. There is divine sickness as well as divine healing. 1Cor.11v28-32, Ps.73 all, 119v67,71-75. True faith and repentance will always be rewarded. Heb.11v6.

d. Because gifts of healings do not enable us to avoid the consequences of intemperate living. Adequate food, rest and sleep are essential to good health. Ps.103.v3,5, 127v2, 107v17-21, 1Cor.6v20, Eph.5v29, Phil.2v25-30, Col.2v27.

e. Because of a wrong attitude to the person who is praying for the sick, either in the form of criticism, or in the form of idolatry. Mk.6v1-6, Is.43v8, Acts.3v12,13, 1Cor.1v26-31, with Jer.9v23,24.

f. Because God may desire to try to improve a Christian's character. Job.2v4-10. God tries and disciplines those who do well, as well as those who do badly. Heb.12v4-12, Prov.3v11, 12.

g. Because of the shocking state of some of the churches. In many churches the Christians are at sixes and sevens and have a bitter spirit toward each other, or they are prayerless, too spiritually lazy, and too worldly to defeat Satan, and sin in the camp often makes victory impossible. Josh.7v1-26. 8v1. 1Cor.3v1-3. Mk.11v22-26. Mt.18v15-35. Jn.13v34,35. 15v12-14. Elders often merely go through undemanding formal prayer, instead of praying through for the sick until a positive answer comes from God. We have to follow Elijah's example of persistent prevailing prayer to get results in divine healing. James.5v13-18. 1Kings.18v43.

h. Because a person's allotted span of life is reached; there is a time for even mighty men of God to die. Ps.90v10,12. 2Kings.13v14,20,21. Is.57v1,2. 1Kings.14v11-13. Deut.34v7. Josh.14v7-15. Phil.3v20,21. 1v20-24.

i. Because God knows that medical help, aided by the natural healing process He has put in the body, or a simple natural remedy, will produce healing. Prov.17v22. Ezek.47v12. 1Tim.5v23.

THE VARIOUS WAYS WE CAN RECEIVE HEALING FROM GOD.

Through personal prayer. Is.38v1-22. Jn.14v11-15. 15v4-14. Through church elders praying a prayer of faith for the sick. James.5v13-16. Through any believer who is full of faith and power. Mk.16v18. Acts.9v17,18. Through the apostolic, prophetic, and evangelistic ministries of the Church. 1Cor.12v28. 2Cor.12v12. Rom.15v18-20. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9.

A gift of healing can be ministered by the laying on of hands, Mk.6v5,6.; by a touch, Mt.8v13-17. 9v24,25,29,30.; by a word of commanding faith, Mt.8v8. Acts.3v6.; by Christians praying, even a great distance away, Mt.8v5-13. Jn.4v46-54.; by a "prayer cloth", prayed over and sent to the one who is sick, Acts.19v11,12. Mt.14v35,36. 2Kings.13v20.; by an act of obedient faith at Christ's direction, Mk.7v32-37. Lk.17v12-19. Jn.9v1-15. Numb.21v5-9. Each gift of healing is a separate gift, that is, if we pray for ten people and all of them are healed, ten gifts of healings have been ministered.

THE SCRIPTURAL ADVICE FOR THOSE SEEKING HEALING FROM GOD.

a. Ask Christians to pray for you, whose faith and ministry of healing are a proven success and not a proven failure. James.5v13-18. etc.

b. Repent of all known sin and come in sincere repentance to Christ; accept Christ as your Saviour, if you do not know Him as Saviour. Mk.1v15. Acts.3v19. Jn.6v37. Mk.2v5,9,10. 1Jn.3v21-24. 1Cor.11v27-32. Bitterness and enmity against others will hinder healing, so get right with God and man, and come in full assurance of faith for healing of soul and body. Mt.5v22-24. 6v12-15. 18v35. Mk.11v22-26. Lk.7v1-17. Rom.8v32. 1Pet.2v24.

c. Be absolutely positive in your faith in Christ and the Father. Heb.11v5,6. Mk.5v25-34. 6v56. Praise and thank God for His promise to heal you. Don't come to God with doubting hope, come to Him with positive faith in His goodness, and covenants and promises; let your confession of faith be as positive as the Word of God. Mk.9v22,23. 11v20-24. Jn.20v27-29. Rom.4v20. 2Cor.1v19,20.

d. Expect an instant miracle of healing. Mk.1v31,41. 2v12. 5v29,42. 7v35. 10v32. Acts.3v7. 9v32. However, do not limit healing to an instant miracle. Continue to trust Christ for healing, even when healing is not immediate, for sometimes healing is delayed or gradual. Job.42v10. Mk.8v22-26. Lk.17v12-19. Jn.4v52. 9v1-15. Jesus said that real faith never goes unrewarded, so imitate the persistent faith of the men and women who obtained the promises of God in the Scriptures. 2Kings.4v18-37. Mt.5v25-34. 2v1-12. Lk.18v35-43.

Realise that God is trying to make a change in you as well as in your body. There is no record in the Bible of God refusing healing to those who seek it, except for the reasons we have previously detailed under the heading why healings can be delayed; remember a delay in healing does not mean denial.

C. THE THREE GIFTS OF INSPIRATION AND COMFORT.

7. THE GIFT OF PROPHECY. "Propheteia."

The gift of prophecy is sixth in the list in Cor.12v8-10., it is the gift that Paul tells us to desire most in public gatherings, because prophecy can greatly edify, encourage and comfort fellow believers. 1Cor.14v1-3. The simple gift of prophecy must not be confused with predictive prophecy. All Christians may prophesy but not all Christians manifest the gifts of revelation. The simple gift of prophecy edifies, exhorts and comforts; whereas, the gifts of revelation, direct, predict and reveal.

Nor should the simple gift of prophecy be confused with the office of a prophet, all Christians may prophesy, 1Cor.14v5,24,31., but not all Christians hold a prophetic office and ministry, which is second only to apostolic ministry. 1Cor.12v28. Eph.4v11. The person with the simple gift of prophecy may sometimes manifest gifts of revelation, but that does not give them a prophetic office. The prophetic office is proved by the continual manifestation of the gifts of revelation and power on a high level of authority. Compare the prophetic ministry

of Agabus with the prophetic gift of Philip's four daughters. Acts.21v9,10. Prophets can vary a great deal in their authority. Numb.12v6-15.

ALL KINDS OF PROPHECY MUST BE DISTINGUISHED FROM PREACHING AND TEACHING.

The Old Testament distinguishes a preacher, "qoheleth," Eccles.1v1,2,12. 7v27. 12v8,9,10., from a prophet, a "nabi," or seer, a "roeh," or "chozeh." Gen.20v7. Ezra.5v1. Ex.15v20. 2Sam.24v11. 30v10. Ezek.13v9,16. Amos.7v12. The New Testament clearly distinguishes a prophet from a teacher. In the Authorised Version the Greek word "propheteuo," "to prophesy," is never translated as "preach:" nor is "propheteia," that is, "prophecy," ever translated as "preaching;" and "prophetes," "prophet," is never translated as "preacher." The Greek words for preaching are never used in the Authorised Version to speak of a person prophesying. Both prophet and preacher proclaim; the prophet from the impulse and sudden inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the preacher from the operation of the mind upon known truth.

ALL KINDS OF PROPHECY MUST BE PROPERLY REGULATED.

a. We must not surrender our right to judge prophetic utterances. 1Thes.5v19-21. 1Cor.14v29-33.

Important prophetic truth is always confirmed out of the mouths of two or three reliable witnesses. Deut.19v15. 2Cor.13v1. 1Cor.14v29.

b. We must not accept direction by prophecy, or direct others by prophecy.

God may speak through others to confirm guidance that He has already given, or He may use others to warn us in emergency or danger, just as Agabus and the Christians at Tyre warned Paul not to set foot in Jerusalem. Acts.20v20-23. 21v3,4,10,11. However, prophecies, which tell us what to do, should be regarded with caution and carefully examined, for in the New Testament, personal direction, usually comes direct to the sons of God from their Father. Rom.8v14. Heb.8v10,11.

c. We must not give prophecy precedence over Scripture.

The foundation of our faith is the Scripture. Eph.2v20. 3v5. No one can receive truth that will add to or supersede the New Testament revelation. Rev.22v18,19. Prophecies have to be checked by the Scriptures. 1Jn.4v1-5. We must not give a place to spiritual revelation that can only be given to the Scriptures. A correct balance between God's Word, sanctification, sanctified common sense, and spiritual gifts will preserve us from many heartbreaks and dangers. 1Pet.1v23,35.

d. We must not lose our self-control, propriety, or divine order. 1Cor.14v32,33,40.

The spirit of a Christian prophet is under their control, and is in marked contrast to the deranged and frenzied ravings of the prophets of Baal and other Heathen prophets. 1Kings.18v25-40. James.3v13-18. A prophet should not monopolise prophetic manifestations, see 1Cor.14v30., where Paul directs, "let the first hold his peace." We should also only have as many prophecies as we can judge, weigh, assimilate and remember. 1Cor.14v29,31. All may sometimes prophesy in small meetings, but definitely not in large ones.

When Paul said in 1Cor.14v24,31., that all the believers could prophesy, he was thinking of a comparatively small house meeting, and also of a much longer meeting than a short one-hour service. 1Cor.16v19. Col.4v15. Acts.2v2,46. 20v6v12. In a short meeting given to preaching or Bible study, ONE prophecy may be as much as we can thoroughly examine and remember, in a night of prayer we can profitably have many more. We can't restrict all services to three prophecies regardless of their type and length; nor can the number of prophecies depend on how many artificial breaks we make in a service, or day of fellowship. Paul's divinely inspired counsel is by far the best, we should have only as many prophecies as we can judge, weigh, discuss, and profitably assimilate. The maximum for consideration at any one time being three prophecies. 1Cor.14v29. The prophesying of Numb.11v24-29. 1Sam.10v10-13. 19v18-24. and Kings.2v3,5., seems to be the exception rather than the rule, for this mass prophesying seems more for personal edification than for public edification. It is not the Christian norm, but it may occur on rare and special outpourings of the Spirit.

e. We must not despise genuine prophesying. 1Thes.5v19,20.

Paul reminded Timothy of the importance of the prophecies that had been given for his personal comfort and edification. 1Tim.4v14,15. 2Tim.1v6-8. Heb.12v25. The idea that no real notice should be taken of prophetic utterances is quite perilous, and can have the most serious and tragic consequences, as the history of Israel and the seven churches in the book of Revelation clearly demonstrate. 2Chron.36v15-21. Rev.2 and 3. Alas, trembling at the written Word or prophetic word of God is comparatively rare. Is.66v2-5. Ps.2v11. Ezra.9v4. 10v3. Phil.2v12.

f. We must be careful not to misinterpret prophecy.

The apostle John had to correct the false interpretation of Christ's words in Jn.21,22,23. If there is any doubt over the interpretation of prophecies or revelations, it is best to be silent and let the Holy Spirit and time reveal their true import. Let us not jump to hasty conclusions. Prophecies may foretell something that is years ahead, and we should not insist on giving them a present application, they may need new circumstances to come to pass and the passage of time to reveal what they mean.

Even great Old Testament prophets were puzzled by their own prophecies, until God told them that they were for the distant future and not for themselves. 1Pet.1v10-12. 2Pet.1v20,21. Some prophecies are only understood by the person they are for, God veils their meaning from everybody else, He is discreet, wise, and loving; a perfect gentleman, who respects a person's desire for privacy, and so He will meet needs by general and ambiguous prophecy, rather than by specific detailed prophecy, to save people embarrassment. Let us not trespass or pry where God says, "Private, Keep Out."

THE IMPORTANCE AND USE OF PROPHECY.

1. Through Prophecy God edifies, exhorts and comforts His Church. 1Cor.14v3.

In 1Cor.14v3., "edification;" is "oikodome," which means to build up; "exhortation," is "parakleesis;" that is, a calling to one's side, a calling near, an invitation; "comfort," is "paramuthia," to speak near or close to anyone, with soothing and consoling words. This comforting love from our heavenly Father builds up faith, character, love and knowledge; it is full of strengthening comfort, gentleness, inviting mercy and grace. The Holy Spirit comes to speak very kindly to the people of God, to soothe and pacify, by speaking words of gracious persuasion, tender incentive, gentle love, and cheering and healing comfort.

Prophecy from our gracious Lord is not critical or harsh, Christ desires to encourage us, not to discourage us; there may be rebuke sometimes, as in Rev.3v16,17.; but Christ is merciful, loving and kind with His own, even in His disciplines; He even told the Laodiceans of His great love for them. Christ's strengthening comfort corrects as well as consoles, but His gentle humility and tenderness, and inviting mercy and grace are always apparent. Mt.11v28-30. Heb.12v5. The Holy Spirit comes to our side, to help us, not condemn us, we should rejoice in His strengthening comfort and gentleness. 1Cor.14v31. 1Tim.1v18.

2. Prophecy can be a channel of the gifts of revelation.

Prophecy is spoken of as "a light in a dark place;" it can prepare us for great blessing or great trouble. 1Pet.1v19. It can also be of great value in winning the lost, when it brings people face to face with God as the secrets of their hearts are revealed. The Lord Jesus used this gift with a word of knowledge in it, in a powerful evangelistic appeal to the woman at the well. Jn.4v15-42. 1v47-51. Paul advocates its use in evangelism in the Corinthian church. 1Cor.14v24,25.

3. Prophecy can be of great value in prayer, praise, worship and song.

The psalms of David abound with prophetic prayer and praise. In 1Cor.14v15. Eph.5v19. and Col.3v16., Paul is obviously thinking of prophetic songs, as well as ordinary songs and hymns. Note the outstanding prophetic prayer and praise of Hannah, Elizabeth, Mary and Zechariah. 1Sam.2v1-10. Lk.1v39-80. Prophecy is indeed a wonderful gift; it is no wonder that Paul has to use the word "zeloute", to describe how intensely we should desire this lovely gift of God. 1Cor.14v39. In the history of God's people, prophecy has made all the difference between victory and defeat, time and time again.

8. THE GIFT OF TONGUES. "Glossais."

This is spoken of in the New Testament as "new tongues," "other tongues," "divers kinds of tongues," and even as "the tongue of men and angels." Mk.16v17. Acts.2v4. 1Cor.12v10,28. 13v1.

The gift of tongues is certainly not gibberish, or unmeaning ecstatic utterance.

There is no Scriptural, etymological, or exegetical reason for supposing that speaking with tongues is an ecstatic language, or utterance without meaning. The articulate, meaningful, and understandable genuine languages of Acts.2v4., are no different than the tongues of Acts.10v6. 19v6. 1Cor.12v10,28. 13v1,8. 14v2,5,6m13,18,22,23,26,27,39. They are "the like gift," Acts.11v17.; the only difference is, that in Acts.2v4., some of the hearers happened to understand them. On the day of Pentecost the two Greek words that are used to describe "tongues" both indicate a genuine language; "glossai," i.e. "tongues," Acts.2v4,11. and "dialektos," the language or dialect of a district or country." Acts.2v6,8. Those who understood the languages were "beside themselves," "amazed" and "ecstatic," according to the writer of Acts, for the word "existemi" is used to describe their reactions in Acts2v7,12. (10v45) (For "ekstasis," see Acts.3v10. 10v10. 11v5. 22v17. Mk.5v42. 16v8. Lk.5v26.) The reason for this amazement, was that they heard Galileans, speaking fluently and powerfully of God's wonderful works, in their own local dialects, as only a native could, and they knew that this was, naturally speaking, quite impossible.

It was only the ignorant critics, who did not know or understand the languages, who said that speaking in tongues was drunken gibberish; those who did know the languages, said that they were perfect and inspiring languages and were converted as a result. The Christians who speak in tongues, experience transports of joy and praise, which to the unbelieving outsider may look like "drunken gibberish." However, Paul tells us, it is not nonsense, but the intelligent speaking of God's divine "musteria," that is, His glorious works, secrets, and purposes, being magnified in genuine articulate language. Acts.14v2.

Those who compare the gift of tongues with the incoherent, unmeaning, broken ramblings of some wild, false religions, and censure and malign God's gift of tongues, should remember there is no more serious sin than

ascribing the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan. The gift of tongues is an edifying gift, 1Cor.4v4., and is so divinely inspired that in Acts.2v4. the Greek word, "apophtheggesthai," (pronounced "apophthengesthai") is used to convey the fluency and forcefulness of the "utterance" of tongues under the Holy Spirit's influence; it is not used in the Septuagint of ordinary conversation, it is used for prophetic discourse. This word well conveys the impression of earnest, exalted, weighty, solemn, passionate utterance and divinely inspired discourse. Desire this beautiful gift of tongues, and forbid not to speak with tongues. 1Cor.14v1,39.

2. Paul recommended and made extensive use of the gift of tongues. 1Cor. 14v18.

The apostle Paul certainly did not despise or belittle the gift of tongues, he condemned the selfish and noisy user of the gift of tongues. In 1Cor.13., Paul does not say that the gifts are "nothing" without love, for they are given by the God of love, and are wonderful, it is the loveless possessor that is "nothing." Indeed, the gift of tongues is a companion of love, not an opponent of love; it is given for the express purpose of producing love and faith in us. 1Cor.14v2,4. This is why Paul used it more diligently than the Corinthians, who mistakenly used this gift, which is given primarily for private prayer, in a noisy, selfish and prolonged manner in their Christian gatherings.

Paul told the Corinthians that "in the Church" five words of prophecy are better for building up the listening Christians than 10,000 words in a tongue. Paul used the gift of tongues diligently in private prayer, and quietly "to himself and God" in public praise and prayer. Paul tells us from his own experience that the gift of tongues will build love, faith and spiritual strength in the possessor of the gift, when it is used diligently and devotionally. 1Cor.14v2,4,15-18. Why do some Christians belittle or despise the gift of tongues? Some are genuinely ignorant of the great blessing that this gift can bring. Some have a fear of the supernatural and cannot trust God to give them "good gifts" and preserve them from evil. Lk.11v13. Mt.7v7-11. Heb.3 and 4. Others love the praise of men more than the praise of God, and count the cost of losing anti-Pentecostal friends and so they reject God's lovely gift of tongues. Jn.12v12,43. 5v44. Some Christians, sad to say, have been put off by noisy, Corinthian-type Pentecostals. We should, however, judge the value of this gift from the Scriptures, and from the experience of Paul, the other apostles, and mature Christians, not from the experience of Corinthian type Christian babes.

3. We must not confuse devotional tongues with tongues given for a ministry to others.

It is a fact of experience that only a small percentage of Christians who speak in devotional tongues, speak out in a tongue that is interpreted in the church. It is this ministry that Paul is speaking about in 1Cor.12v30., when he asks, "Do all speak with tongues?" There are Christians who have been given outstanding ministries of speaking with tongues; their utterances are of such great beauty and carry such a divine benediction, that one feels that they are upon holy ground, even before there is an interpretation. In 1Cor.12v27-31. Paul is speaking of ministries that God has set in the Church, to build up the Church, Christians with a God-given gift for public ministry, and the ministry of interpretation of tongues is amongst them. Paul's desire, "I would that ye ALL spake with tongues," was an experimental fact amongst the Christians in the upper room, and among the believers in the house of Cornelius, and the disciples at Ephesus, for they ALL spoke with tongues. However, the majority of these tongues were for prayer and praise and not for interpretation. Acts.2v4. 10v44-48. 19v6. 1Cor.14v5,30. This ministry of tongues for interpretation demands a deep prayer life to be effective, uplifting and powerful.

4. The gift of tongues was not given for preaching the Gospel.

Though God intends the gift of tongues to be predominantly a devotional aid to the prayer life, speaking with tongues is a mighty sign to people when they understand the language. God does not intend the gift of tongues to replace the preaching of the Gospel, He uses it as a sign to gain the attention of the people and prepare them for the preaching of the Gospel, as on the day of Pentecost, when the tongues prepared people for the preaching of Peter. The colloquial Greek "koine" was understood throughout most of the Roman Empire, and was the common language of the nations around the Mediterranean, and so the gift of tongues was not needed to preach the Gospel to people in their own language. Many modern instances of Christians speaking in known languages have been recorded by reliable witnesses, the theme of the languages have been the same as in Acts.2v11., "the wonderful works of God."

5. The limitations placed upon the use of the gift of tongues.

The aim in church fellowships should be public and not personal edification; therefore, we should curtail noisy or excessive speaking in tongues and seek God for a prophecy. 1Cor.14v5,18,19. Though the whole church may on occasions burst out in praise and worship and sing and speak in tongues; in a church meeting, speaking with tongues should generally be quietly spoken between ourselves and God. 1Cor.14v28. Paul instructs us that when the unconverted or unlearned in spiritual gifts come into a Pentecostal meeting, the Pentecostal believers must act wisely and restrain themselves from any loud and concerted outbursts in tongues; otherwise the visitors will say that everybody is mad. Paul informs us in 1Cor.14v23-25., that prophecy is far the best gift to manifest under such circumstances. Paul desired the Corinthians to have a correct and sensible balance and to seek after gifts with a greater public ministry in their church meetings.

Though Paul said that we must not forbid speaking in tongues, he also said that tongues that are for interpretation should be limited to three utterances. If there is no interpreter in the church, there must be no

public utterances; the person must speak quietly to himself or herself and to God. 1Cor.14v27,28,39. It also seems from 1Cor.14v26., "everyone hath a tongue," that one person should give only one tongue, as in v29, Paul suggests that each prophet should only give one prophecy, so that the ministry of the gifts can be shared around. Further prophetic input can come in the process of judging and considering other people's prophecies. We should share the ministry of spiritual gifts. A selfish person loves to dominate and monopolise Christian meetings, love delights to share and give place to others.

THE VALUE AND USE OF THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

a. It is a divine aid to the prayer-life of the Christian.

By the simple act of speaking with tongues we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to pray and worship on the very highest level. Speaking with tongues enables us to have direct and close communion with God; it brings into play the highest faculty of the Christian, the born again spirit that God has given to each redeemed child of God. This is truly acceptable worship and prayer in spirit and truth. Jn.4v23,24. Rom.8v26,27. 1Cor.14v14-16. Acts.10v46. Mt.22v35-40. The gift of tongues enables us to exalt, worship and praise God, in a way that we cannot without it. The Holy Spirit Himself gives us the vocabulary and blessing to fully express the needs, feelings and desires of the soul and spirit; He frees us from the limits of human speech and knowledge, and enables us to pray and worship on the very highest level.

Paul states in 1Cor.14v15., that the balanced prayer life consists of prayer and singing in tongues, as well as prayer and singing in one's own language. The gift of tongues enables the Christian to pray on a new level, for it is God praying through us to perform things "infinitely beyond all our highest prayers, hopes, thoughts and dreams." Eph.3v18-20. Rom.8v26,27.

b. It is a divine aid to transform the character and personality.

Paul said that this gift is given to produce and build faith and love in the soul, to "edify," bless and transform the personality, character and life of the believer. 1Cor.14v4,18. It has the same edifying effect in the life of the believer as prophecy has in the church. It can relax and refresh the tired body as well as the soul. Is.28v11,12. with 1Cor.14v21. Rom.8v11.

c. It is a divine aid to deepen our ministries and spiritual effectiveness.

Those who diligently use the gift of tongues in the secret place can testify that it brings them very close to Jesus and our heavenly Father, and in deepening our love for them, brings a greater appreciation of spiritual things and a greater spiritual effectiveness. Loving Jesus and abiding in Him, is the only true source of a genuine fruitfulness, Jn.15v4-17.; the gift of tongues is given as a divine aid to abiding in Christ, and is of great value. Prayer and praise in tongues edifies the spirit and gives a spiritual insight into the Scriptures, which is often not found in the best commentaries. Indeed, it is only the tongue-speaking "charismata" manifesting Christian, who can really understand much of the experience of the early Church. Prayer and praise in tongues builds up the spiritual life of the Christian to the place where they are able to manifest the other gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's ministrations through this gift in the secret place will result in a blessing upon our public ministry and greatly increase our effectiveness for God. Mt.5v6. with 1Cor.14v2,4,18. and 2Cor.12v12.

Speaking in tongues is certainly not "infant prattling," it can deepen the effectiveness of even a mature Christian's ministry. Paul could hardly be called "an infant prattler;" in 1Cor.14v18., he had been a remarkable Christian for over 20 years. Through this precious gift, the Holy Spirit deepens our ministries, makes the soul strong, and attacks the hosts of evil spirits that dominate this present evil world.

d. It is a divine means of edifying the church when it is interpreted.

A powerful, love-laden tongue can greatly bless the church even before it is interpreted, and if the interpretation carries the same benediction, it can bring a veritable shower of blessing, in the form of comfort, solace, instruction, and edifying truth. 1Cor.14v5,27,28.

e. It is a divine sign to people when the language is understood.

When understood, the gift of tongues can convict and convert the sinner, and be a great encouragement to the believer. 1Cor.14v22. Acts.2v4-12. Mk.16v17-20. Though this is not the normal use of the gift, for the gift of tongues is predominantly devotional, it can produce remarkable results when God manifests this gift as a sign as He did on the day of Pentecost, when 3,000 people became Christians. Acts2v41. Many modern cases of this gift as a sign have occurred.

f. It is the divinely chosen evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

At the outpourings of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Acts.2v4. 10v45,46. and 19v6.; when Christians received the baptism in the Spirit, they all received the same initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit, they all spoke with tongues. The Holy Spirit did not give different spiritual gifts as the evidence of the baptism; He gave the gift of tongues to all. With the exception of the outpouring at Ephesus, we do not read of any other manifestations of the gifts, and they prophesied as well as spoke with tongues. Nor is the fruit of the Spirit the initial evidence of the baptism of the Spirit; the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, faith, etc.; are very important, but they take time to grow; so the Holy Spirit gave the prayer-gift of tongues. If the fruit of the Spirit was made

the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit, no one would be sure that they had received it, it would have resulted in endless argument, unhealthy introspection, and complete uncertainty; God made the easily discernible gift of tongues the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit.

HERE I WANT TO GIVE A VERY NECESSARY WARNING.

Remember, that though the gift of tongues is a wonderful and lovely gift from God; when you are seeking the baptism in the Spirit, you are seeking an encounter with Jesus, not just seeking tongues. The gift of tongues is the outflow of an encounter with the baptising Lord; it is the effect of the baptism in the Spirit, not the cause. In the New Testament the supernatural filling of the Holy Spirit, preceded the supernatural speaking with tongues. Acts.2v4. We should not try to get Christians to speak with tongues at any cost, so that they can be told, "You have received your baptism." Our whole emphasis should be on an encounter with Christ. The baptism in the Spirit does not come through physical or soulish techniques; it comes through living union with Christ. If there is an absence of soul-searching, consecration, thirsting after God, and soul-communion with Christ; Christians may well have an experience of the baptism in the Spirit, which does not reach or satisfy the deep yearnings of the inner depths of the soul, even though they may have spoken with tongues. This will give added power to Satan's inevitable faith-destroying attack on their experience. Mt.4v1-12. We should not be satisfied until Christians have received a deep, rich and satisfying baptism in the Spirit, which brings an overwhelming experience of the nearness and preciousness of our dear Lord Jesus and our heavenly Father.

The tongue, and the speech centres that dominate the brain, are the most rebellious and uncontrollable parts of the human body and personality, James.3v2-12., when a Christian speak in tongues, it is a sure proof that the whole personality has been immersed in the Holy Spirit. Acts.2v4. Since Spirit-filled Christians manifest spiritual gifts and face spiritual foes, they need to be able to spiritually edify themselves; this is the prime purpose of the gift of tongues. Let us recognise the value and importance of what God has given. How dare Christians criticise God's gifts, question and deride His wisdom, and refuse to obey His command to earnestly seek spiritual gifts as well as to pursue love? 1Cor.14v1. The gift of tongues is one of God's gifts, let us realise its great value and seek to use it as He intended.

9. THE INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES. "Hermeneia glosson."

This gift is the supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to interpret an utterance with tongues. 1Cor.12v10. 14v5,13,27,28. It has its place among the ministries of the Church, and fulfils a similar function to the simple gift of prophecy. 1Cor.12v28. 14v5. The interpretation of tongues can take the form of a prayer for heavenly help, a prayer of dedication, a statement of faith and assurance, an expression of praise and worship, a sacred song or hymn, as well as words of edification, exhortation and tender comfort. Interpreted tongue may be addressed to God, like the devotional tongues of 1Cor.14v2., however, like prophecy, it can also be addressed to man. 1Cor.14v3. Sometimes the "interpretation" can be the answer to the prayer, praise, and statement of faith, etc., that has been spoken out in tongues, and on these occasions it would perhaps be more accurate to call it a prophecy than an interpretation. However, we do not have to be too technical in our definitions; it is a powerful manifestation of the gifts that is of first importance.

The Greek word translated as "interpret" in 1Cor.12v30. 14v5,23,27., is "diemeneuo," which gives a much wider meaning than "translate;" it is used to speak of Christ explaining and fully expounding the Old Testament Scriptures in Lk.24v27. and Acts.9v36.. The Holy Spirit, can then, gives great variety in the manifestation of an interpretation; the interpretation may come in the form of a prophetic type utterance, or as a description of a pictorial vision, or as a conversational description of the facts the Holy Spirit has revealed, and sometimes as a heavy burden upon the heart and spirit. It can be received before, during, or after the utterance in tongues. A genuine interpretation of tongues is recognisable by the heavenly unction which rests both upon the interpreter and the listeners, any interpretation that lacks this anointing, lacks God's authority. 2Pet.1v21. This ministry should be shared, it is very wrong for one person to monopolise this ministry, this kind of selfish determination leads to false interpretation. The interpretation may be longer or shorter than the tongue due to the Holy Spirit's vocabulary, because the interpretation has an additional prophecy, or because of a partial interpretation. Sometimes through ignorance, wrong teaching, or a wilful determination to give an interpretation, which one does not possess, a false interpretation can be given. Spiritual Christians can easily discern extempore preaching paraded as interpretation of tongues, from true interpretation of tongues; true interpretation carries the power and blessing of God and greatly edifies the local church.

SOME SEARCHING QUESTIONS.

Are we satisfied with purely human ability and guidance in our services? Who controls and directs our services, God or ourselves? Is the Holy Spirit forced to be almost an idle bystander in our churches, through our determination to keep to our programmes? Is Christ's ministry being carried on in our churches by the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the full manifestation of all His gifts? Are we obeying the Word of God through Paul, and earnestly desiring our heavenly Father's gracious and lovely spiritual gifts? Failure to obey this command leaves the body of Christ spiritually leprous and paralysed, emaciated and powerless. Enter into the full inheritance that has been purchased for you with the precious blood of Christ, for your spiritual profit. 1Cor.12v7. 1Pet.1v18,19.

THE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

The Holy Spirit desires the baptism in the Spirit to be the gateway to the regular manifestation of His gifts; He desires to make us the channels of Christ's life, love, knowledge and power. Even our Lord Jesus, who was "full of grace and truth", did no public signs or miracles until He was empowered by the Holy Spirit at Jordan. Jn.1v14. 2v11. 3v34,35. 5v19,20. Lk.3v21,22. 4v1,14-23. How can we succeed and fulfil the Father's perfect will and meet the needs of fallen and suffering mankind, if we lack the spiritual equipment that the Father deemed essential for the success of the ministry of Jesus and the early Church?

Some believe that we receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit at conversion; however, this can be shown to be incorrect by many passages of Scripture. The apostles were converted before Pentecost; their names, like those of the seventy, were, "written in heaven," Lk.10v20.; they were "clean," Jn.15v2,3.; they were not of the world and belonged to God, Jn.17v6,9-16,23.; they had received Christ and were believers in Him, and so they were born-again children of God, and Christ owned them as His friends and brethren. Jn.1v12. 3v1-21. 15v15. 17v8. Mt.12v48-50. At Pentecost these born-again believers received the baptism in the Spirit that had been promised them. The Samaritans accepted Philip's sign-attested ministry and many became joyful baptised believers in Jesus; it was many days later, when Peter and John came to Samaria to lay hands on these born-again, water baptised converts, that they received the baptism in the Spirit. Acts.8v5-19. The Samaritans were full of faith and joy, but they were not baptised in the Spirit until Peter and John prayed for them.

Paul became a Christian when he met the Lord Jesus on the Damascus road, he owned Christ as Lord, and he said, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" Ananias was able to call him "Brother Saul," and was sent that Paul might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit; this was three days after Paul's conversion and new birth in Christ. Acts.9v6,9,17. The baptism in the Spirit of the disciples at Ephesus, also occurred some time after the conversion and their baptism in water, when the apostle Paul laid hands on them, a point that Paul reminds the Ephesians of in Eph.1v13., "after that ye had believed (again the aorist participle, "pisteusantes," as in Acts.19v2.) ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the house of Cornelius demonstrates the fact that Christians can receive the baptism in the Spirit a few seconds or minutes after believing in Christ as Saviour, and without having previously been baptised in water, and without having the ministry of laying on of hands. Acts.10v34-48.

God desires to give the baptism in the Holy Spirit to all believers. Acts.2v39. Lk.11v13. So:

1. Don't be anxious, trust God's Word to you, and rest in His great love for you. Heb.11v6. Jn.16v12-15,26,27.

2. Determine to obey God and walk humbly before Him. Acts.5v32. Mt.5v3. Micah.6v8.

3. Combine prayer with a joyful praising heart and praising lips. Mt.5v12. Lk.11v9-13. 24v52,53. Jn.7v35. Phil.3v1. 4v4. Heb.13v15. Ps.95v1-7. Ps.107v8,21. 118v24. Deut.30v9.

Praise God with instruments. Gen.4v21. Job.21v12. 30v31. (N.B. The Organ)

Ps.150v1-6. 1. Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty firmament!

2. Praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

3. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; praise Him with the lute and harp!

4. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!

5. Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with clashing cymbals!

6. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! (NKJ)

Ps.149v1-9.

1. Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD **a new song**, and His praise in the assembly of saints.

2. Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3. Let them **praise His name with the dance; let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.**

4. . or the LORD takes pleasure in His people; he will beautify the humble with salvation.

5. Let the saints be joyful in glory; **let them sing aloud on their beds.**

6. **Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand.**

7. To execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples;

8. To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

9. To execute on them the written judgment-- this honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD! (NKJ)

4. Seek God with other earnest loving Christians, and place yourself under mature spiritual oversight. Acts.1v14. Eph.4v7-16. 1Cor.12v28. Heb.10v24,25.

5. Seek above all things a revelation of Jesus and the Father to your soul. John.15v9. 17v3,23. Eph.1v15-23. 3v14-21. Phil.3v8-15.

Don't be content with men's minimum, earnestly seek God's maximum.

God's spiritual gifts reveal the awesome majesty and justice of God, as well as His wonderful character and His amazing love, grace and mercy.

THE GREEK WORDS GOD USES TO DESCRIBE HIS GIFTS.

1. Spirituals. "Pneumatikon."

In the Authorised Version of 1Cor.12v1. and 14v1. "pneumatikon" is translated as "spiritual gifts." In 1Cor.12v1. Paul informs us that Christians should not be ignorant about spiritual gifts; and in 1Cor.14v1., he tells us to eagerly seek spiritual gifts as well as pursue after love. Paul makes it quite clear that a spiritual person will seek and manifest spiritual gifts for their own and the Church's benefit. 1Cor.12v7. In Rom.1v11., Paul states his desire to visit Rome so that he could impart some spiritual gift to them, this was something which he could not do by teaching in an epistle; here "spiritual gift," is a translation of "pneumatikos" and "charisma," and so means "spiritual grace-gift." Spiritual gifts are part of our spiritual blessings in Christ. 1Cor.12v7. 14v37. Eph.1v3. Spiritual gifts help to build up the Church into a spiritual house, and help us to offer spiritual sacrifices, and sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God. 1Pet.2v5. Eph.5v19. Col.3v16. They are indispensable for serving God. Spiritual Christians will recognise the correct place given to both the fruit and gifts of the Spirit in the Scriptures. 1Cor.2v13,15. 14v1. Gal.5v22. The Law of God is spiritual; and love is the fulfilling of the Law, and obeying the moral Law is a vital part of being spiritual. Rom.7v14. 8v1-4. 13v10. Paul writes in Rom.8v7., "The mind dominated by the sinful nature is hostile to God;" and he warns us that some Christians allow themselves to be dominated by the evil carnal nature, and are "sarkikos," instead of being spiritual, "pneumatikos." 1Cor.3v1. Stephen makes it clear that a worldly and carnal person, who resists and opposes the wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit, cannot be called spiritual. Acts.7v51-53. Paul tells us that we have "to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" to successfully fight the spiritual power and wickedness of evil principalities and powers; **"the power of His might," is the realm of God's spiritual gifts.** Eph.6v10-22. N.B. v10-12.

2. Grace gifts. "Charismata." Spiritual gifts have an important place with God's other "charismata.

The other "charismata" mentioned in the New Testament are, God's gracious eternal purposes and callings, Rom.11v29.; God's gift of salvation and eternal life, Rom.5v15,16. and 6v23.; and the various kinds of ministries and spiritual gifts that God gives to His Church. Rom.12v6. Paul states that self-control can sometimes be a grace gift of God, as well as a fruit of the Spirit. 1Cor.7v7. Gal.5v22,23. Paul uses "charismata" to definitely speak of spiritual gifts in Rom.12v6. 1Cor.1v7. 12v4,9,28,30,31., and Rom.1v11., where both "charisma" and "pneumatikos" occur together, and possibly in 1Tim.4v14. and 2Tim.1v6. where some ministry gift or spiritual gift was imparted to Timothy by the prayers of godly and spiritual Christian leaders. The link between prayer and the "charismata" is also seen in 2Cor.1v10,11., where we read of Paul's deliverance from death by a divine grace gift ("charisma") in answer to the prayers of Christians. Spiritual gifts make us the stewards and channels of God's grace to a needy Church and world. 1Pet.4v10. They were the reason why the early Church served God so effectively; boldness in preaching came as a result of God's mighty workings and miracles. Acts.4v30,31.

3. Distributions.

a. "Merismois." In the Authorised Version "merismois" is translated as "gifts" in Heb.2v4., it speaks of "a sharing out, a dividing, and a distribution." In the New Testament "merismos" only occurs in Heb.2v4. and 4v12., where we read of the ability of the Word of God to divide and discern our innermost thoughts, motives and intents, and to divide between soul and spirit; a text which proves there is a difference between soul and spirit. See 1Thes.5v23. We need both the Word of God and the searching and purifying presence of the Holy Spirit, which is manifested through the distribution of His gifts. The early Church needed these mighty gifts of God, and in these even more godless and wicked days we need them even more than ever. 1Tim.4v1-3. 2Tim.3v1-9,13.

b. "Diaireseis." In 1Cor.12v4-7., Paul states, "Now there are different distributions and varieties of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit. v5. And there are different distributions and varieties of ministries, but the same Lord. v6. And there are different distributions and varieties of operations and activities, but it is the same God who energises and inspires them all in all. v7. But to each one there is constantly being given the clearly seen operations of the Spirit for the profit of all." All three, "different distributions and varieties," are the noun "diaireseis," from "dia," "apart," and "haireo," "to take;" which is akin to the verb "diaireo," "to take apart," "to divide into parts, to distribute."

In 1Cor.12v11., Paul writes, "All these gifts are inspired and energised by the one and same Holy Spirit, who distributes to each person individually and separately as He wills." "Distributes," is "dairoun," the present active of "diaireo," which shows the active and continual distribution and dividing of His spiritual gifts among the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. "As He wills," is "kathos bouletai;" "bouletai," the present indicative middle of "boulomai," "to will, to determine;" the present tense again shows the repeated and continual action of the Holy Spirit's giving. The Holy Spirit comes to bind the body of Christ together in love by the distribution of His gifts, so that each member feels the need of each other's gifts and ministries. 1Cor.12v11-27. There should be no competition over spiritual gifts, or monopolisation by one person of the manifestation of the gifts. Paul instructs us to recognise the divine source of each other's gifts; and informs us that our diverse spiritual gifts

are intended to complement each other, and bring dependence on each other, not division.

4. Ministrations. "Diakonion." 1Cor.12v5.

The noun "diakonia," has the general meaning of service. It is used to describe Paul's apostolic office and other ministries of the Church. Acts.6v4. 12v25. 20v24. 21v19. Rom.11v15. 12v7. 4v1. 5v18. 6v3. Eph.4v12. Col.4v17. 1Tim.1v12. 2Tim.4v5,11. In Rom.16v15., it is used of the household of Stephanas addicting themselves to the service of the saints. It is also used for aid to the poor. Acts.6v1. 11v29. 1Cor.16v15. 2Cor.8v4. 9v1. In Lk.10v40., both the noun "diakonia," "serving," and the verb "diakoneo," "to serve," are used of Martha's practical care for Jesus and His apostles. Martha was distracted and cumbered by much serving in her loving desire to give Jesus and His apostles a good meal to build up their strength; she complains to Jesus that Mary had forsaken her ("kateleipen," the imperfect of "kataleipo," "to leave, to forsake"). Jesus tells Martha that Mary had chosen the best part in listening to Him and that it was not going to be taken away from her. However, the use of "diakonia" here, shows Martha's lovely spirit of service, and the beautiful ministrations that can occur when loving hearts are aided by the Holy Spirit to minister the wondrous grace and love flowing from the great heart of God.

5. Manifestation. "Phanerosis."

"Phanerosis," is derived from "phaneroo," "to make manifest," it only occurs in 1Cor.12v7. and 2Cor.4v2.; and means, "a manifestation, a making known, a shining forth." Paul states that Christians should manifest the love and power of the invisible God by spiritual gifts as well as manifest the truth by diligent preaching, witnessing, and holy living. 1Cor.12v7. 2Cor.4v1-7. Jesus has come to manifest Himself in His Church through His spiritual gifts; He has not come to be an idle bystander, while we manifest our limited human abilities. It is sad that Christians can be as stubborn and rebellious as the children of Israel, and resist the loving will and manifestations of God.

6. Demonstrations. "Apodixis." 1Cor.2v4.

"Apodixis" only occurs in 1Cor.2v4. in the New Testament, and speaks of a manifestation, demonstration and proof. At Athens Paul tried to meet the people of Athens on their own ground and convert them by an intellectual appeal; he learned the valuable lesson that the best Christian oratory is limited in its success without the divine confirmation of the truth by miracles. So when Paul came from Athens to Corinth he knew that the gross evil of Corinth demanded more than human oratory and non-miraculous evangelical preaching and reasoning, so he determined to preach Christ and Him crucified, and relied on God to confirm the truth of the Gospel by a powerful demonstration of the miraculous. Paul compelled the Gentiles to believe in Christ and obey the Gospel through mighty signs, wonders and miracles. Acts.17v15 to 19v12. 1Cor.2v2-4. Rom.15v18-20. Jesus and Paul needed the full equipment and demonstrations of the Holy Spirit, and so do we.

7. Operations. "Energematon."

The singular "energema," speaks of, "that which is wrought through energy, the effect produced, operation;" from "energeo," "to work in, to be active, to perform, to energise and operate." "Energematon" occurs in 1Cor.12v6., where it speaks of the varieties of operation of ALL the gifts. In 1Cor.12v10. "energemata" is used with "dunameon" to speak of ONE of the power gifts, "workings of miracles;" these "operations of miracles, or acts of power," are used to speak of the operations of God's power on nature and man's environment. The gift of workings of miracles has a powerful and lasting effect on people and nations, this is clearly seen by the effect of the plagues on Egypt, and the opening of the Red Sea. Josh.2v9-11. Is.26v9. Many generations later ungodly nations were still trembling at the memory of these mighty miracles. 1Sam.4v6-8. Our Lord's nature miracles had a profound effect on those who saw them. Mk.4v35-41. Jn.6v14. We need to experience all the operations of the Spirit's workings. Christians can, and should, be energised by God and manifest His spiritual gifts.

8. Works. "Erga."

"Erga" is used in the New Testament to speak of the deeds of men, both good and evil; but it is also used, particularly by Christ in John's Gospel, to speak of the miraculous works of God. Jn.3v19-21. 4v34. 5v20,36. 6v28,29. 9v3,4. 10v25,32,33,37,38. 14v10-12. 15v24. 17v4. Acts.13v41. 1Cor.3v13-15. Rev.2v2. 20v10. etc.. God's normal works are mighty miracles, we should not limit the mighty workings of God by our small expectations and abilities; this was the sin of Israel, and it is often the sin of the Church. Ps.78v41. Eph.3v19-21.

9. "The works of power of the age to come." "Dunameis te mellontos aionos." Heb.6v5.

Paul tells us that spiritual gifts are a partial manifestation of the powers of the coming age. In 1Cor.13v8-13., Paul is certainly not saying that spiritual gifts would cease with the ministries of the apostles, or with the completion of the Scripture canon; for Paul tells us, in this very same Scripture, that spiritual gifts will continue until that which is perfect is come, that is, when King Jesus returns and the God of love sets up His kingdom up on earth. To say, as some do, that, "that which is perfect" is the canon of Scripture, does violence to the context, which speaks of a future full and perfect knowledge, "epignosomai," the future middle indicative of "epiginosko;" we can only experience this "full knowledge" when we die and go to heaven, or at the "perfect day" when God's kingdom comes to earth at Christ's second coming. Prov.4v18. In "A Bible Commentary For Today," edited by Howley, Bruce and Ellison, Paul Marsh states that "when the perfect comes" in 1Cor.13v10.,

anticipates the Parousia, the culmination of this age, and a "face to face" intimacy with the Lord as yet unknown. He states that there is no support for the biblical use of "perfect," or any of its cognate forms, that "perfect" refers to the completion of the Scripture canon. Marsh says this interpretation only exists because people feel a need to explain the absence of certain "charismata" from their churches.

Paul states that spiritual gifts only cease in the sense that the partial use of "the powers of the age to come," will continue until they are exchanged for the full, complete and perfect use of those powers in God's kingdom. The occasional manifestations of the power gifts will be replaced by the permanent, continual and complete manifestations of those powers. The permanent possession of power to do every kind of miracle will be a fact. The supernatural transport of Elijah and Philip is a rare and exceptional thing in the Scriptures, but it is the everyday norm in the kingdom of God. 1Kings.18v12. 2Kings.2v11. Acts.8v39,40. The partial words of wisdom and knowledge, and discerning of spirits, will be replaced by the continual and perfect revelation of the wisdom and knowledge that comes from face to face fellowship with God. The ability to know and worship in all the tongues of angels and men will supersede the ability to speak in and interpret unknown tongues. The partial revelations of a prophetic gift and ministry will disappear in the fullness and perfect revelation of face-to-face communion with God. Paul said that even his 23 years of mature Christian experience and knowledge was as babyhood compared with the experience and knowledge of the kingdom of God, when our present hazy image of God will be replaced by the glorious experience of a face-to-face vision of God. 1Cor.13v10-12. Ellicott confirms this interpretation, he writes on 1Cor.13v10., "This verse shows by the emphatic 'then,' that the time when the gifts shall cease is the end of this dispensation. The imperfect shall not cease until the perfect is brought in."

Those who insist that God has withdrawn spiritual gifts, must, if they are to be consistent, insist that God has removed them all. If the sceptics believe that spiritual gifts are not for today, then they should not pray for divine healing, for this is a gift of healing. They should not pray for illumination upon a problem, or guidance from God, for this is a word of wisdom, or a word of knowledge. They should not pray for preachers to receive the Holy Spirit's anointing, or for Satan's hold upon people to be broken, or for people to be blessed, for all these are in the sphere of operation of the gift of faith. They should not pray for a miraculous supply of material needs, for this is the province of workings of miracles; they should not pray for a revelation of God to the soul, for this is a discerning of spirits. They should not pray for God to inspire them in prayer, for this is the function of the gift of tongues and prophetic prayer. It is a fact, that Christians who say that spiritual gifts have been withdrawn, often pray for the manifestation of God's spiritual gifts. Those who reject spiritual gifts, would in reality totally remove God's influence from His Church. Let us accept the wisdom of God in giving His gifts, and not charge Him with folly, or frustrate His loving purposes through His gifts. "The powers of the age to come," are still available today, for God has promised to confirm His truth by signs and wonders until the great and notable day of our Lord's second coming. Acts.2v17-21,38,39. Heb13v8.

10. Signs. "Semeia." NT:4592

In the New Testament "semeion" speaks of a sign, mark, token, wonder and miracle. Spiritual gifts are a sign from God and a signpost to God. God desires to answer Satan's lying signs and wonders, and to show the world that He is the living God. 2Thes.2v9. Mt.24v24. 2Tim.3v8. Rev.16v13,14. etc.. In Mt.12v38-45., the Lord Jesus was not condemning miraculous signs through spiritual gifts, for He had given multiplied thousands of them; He was condemning the people who had such evil hearts of unbelief that they would not believe that He was the Christ, or even a prophet from God, after seeing a multitude of signs, wonders and miracles through His ministry. Christ's enemies refused to accept His signs, and had the affrontery to demand their personal proof and sign from God after seeing untold numbers of signs, wonders and miracles through the manifestation of mercy gifts of healing, and other gifts of the Holy Spirit. Jesus refused to grant the personal signs of His enemies, but He asked the people to accept the miracles and healings that He did as a proof of the Divine source of His ministry and authority, and He promised them more signs to help them believe. Jn.5v20,35-37. 10v37,38. Mt.11v20-30.

Signs, wonders, and miracles are a vital part of the armoury of the Church of Christ. Mk.16v17,20. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9. Acts.5v12-16. 8v5-8. Rom.15v18-21. 1Cor.2v4,5. 14v25. 2Cor.12v12. The early Church did not depend upon oratory, but upon the truth confirmed by the signs and wonders of God. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9. Mk.16v17,20. Acts.4v16. 5v12. 6v8. 8v5-8. 2Cor.12v12. Rom.15v18-21. 1Cor.14v25. Miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were certainly not just confined to apostles, or only transmitted by apostles; Christ made them available to every member of His Church as they had need of them. Paul told the Christians of each Church to covet earnestly the gifts of the Holy Spirit, for ordinary Christians needed these gifts as well as apostles. 1Cor.1v7. 12v31. 14v1,5,18,39.

The command to desire spiritual gifts is as binding as Paul's command to follow after love. 1Cor.14v1. 1Cor.2v4,5. This is why Paul told each local Church to covet earnestly the gifts of the Holy Spirit, local Churches needed these gifts as well as apostles. 1Cor.12v31. 14v1,5,18,39. Miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were certainly not just confined to apostles, or only transmitted by apostles; Jesus gives them to every member of His Church as we have need of them. Acts.8v5-8. 6v8. 9v10-18. 10v1-7. 1Cor.1v7. 12v7. Spiritual gifts and their accompanying signs and wonders are promised to the Church until God's kingdom comes upon earth at Christ's second coming. Acts.2v17-21,38,39. Jn.14v12-14. Rev.11v1-15.

The confirmation of the Gospel by mighty signs and wonders is a mighty appeal to the unconverted person, and Jesus said that unbelief and hatred of the God and truth in such circumstances can be a final act of spiritual suicide. Jn.15v21-25. The final defence of the sceptic who is confronted by an undeniable sign from God, is to say that it is a display of Satan's power. When Jesus confronted the sceptics with signs that could only come from God, they said that they were a manifestation of the power of Satan; Jesus said this response meant they were in danger of committing the eternal and unforgivable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Mt.12v22-32. Mk.3v20-35.

11. Miracles. "Dunameis."

"Dunamis" speaks of ability, power, strength, an act of supernatural power, it is used of works of a supernatural character and origin, which could not occur, or be produced by natural laws or natural agents. In the A.V. it is translated as "power" seventy seven times; "mighty work" eleven times; "miracle" eight times; "strength" seven times; "might" four times; "virtue" three times; "mighty deed" once; "ability" once; "wonderful works," once; etc.. Every gift of the Holy Spirit is miraculous,

12. Wonders. "Teras."

"Teras," occurs 16 times in the New Testament, and is always associated with either "signs," "semeia;" or "miracles," "dunameis." It is used to speak of God's wonders twelve times, Acts.2v19,22,43. 4v30. 5v12. 6v8. 7v36. 14v3. 15v12. Rom.15v19. 2Cor.12v12. Heb.2v4.; of Satan's lying wonders three times, Mt.24v24. Mk.13v22. 2The.2v9., and on another occasion, in John.4v48., Christ states that signs and wonders establish faith in otherwise faithless people. See John.5v19,20. Satan is doing many "lying wonders" through false cults, the Church has the complete answer to these "lying wonders," if it will seek and manifest God's spiritual gifts. Indeed, Satan and the powers of darkness fear the Holy Spirit's gifts, and try to stop Christians from seeking them; or try to make Christians fanatical and proud when they manifest them, even as Satan tried with the Lord Jesus. Mt.4v1-11. It is vitally important to realise that Jesus has guaranteed that as God's children, we cannot receive anything evil when we are worshipping God, or seeking God, for His gracious gifts. Mt.7v7-11. Lk.11v9-13. 1Jn.5v18. God has not left the field of the miraculous to Satan, we can still have the gracious gifts of Divine illumination and guidance, and Divine inspiration and power. God still does wonders, He is not "The Great I Was," He is "The Great I Am," The Great Yahweh, who changes not; He still manifests wonders, marvels, portents, and prodigies through His spiritual gifts.

13. Wonderful things."

"**Thaumasios.**" In Mt.21v15. the neuter plural of the adjective "thaumasios," "wonderful," is used as a noun, to speak of the "wonders, or wonderful things," that our Lord did in healing the blind and lame in the Temple, which really incensed ("aganakteo," "to much displease," see Mt.20v24. 26v8. Mk.10v14,41. 14v4. Lk.13v14.) the chief priests and scribes.

"**Thaumazo.**" a verb meaning, "to wonder at, to marvel;" it occurs 46 times in the New Testament, and shows well the astonishment caused by our Lord's life and ministry. People marvelled at Christ's birth and childhood. Lk.2v18,33. The apostles marvelled at the stilling of the storm in Mt.8v27. and Lk.8v25.. The apostles marvelled when Jesus walked on the water, Mark writes, in Mk.6v51,52., "they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure and MARVELLED, for they did not consider the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was in a settled state of hardness." "Thaumazo" is used to express the astonishment of the apostles when the fig tree withered. Mt.21v20. "Thaumazo" describes the astonishment of the multitudes at our Lord's miracles. Mt.9v8,33. 15v31. Lk.9v43. 11v14. Jn.5v20. 7v21.; and the effect of the miracles of the early Church, Acts.2v7. 3v12. 4v13.. It is used to describe how the people at Nazareth marvelled, even in their unbelief, at our Lord's gracious and beautiful words in the synagogue, Lk.4v22.; and how our Lord marvelled at the unbelief at Nazareth, Mk.6v6.; and marvelled at the faith of the Centurion in Mt.8v10. and Lk.7v9.. It is used to express the astonishment of Christ's critics at His gracious words and wisdom. Mk.12v17. Lk.4v22. 20v26. Jn.7v15.

THE STRIKING REACTION OF PEOPLE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MIRACLES.

Many remarkable Greek words are used to describe and express the awe, wonder, amazement, astonishment and fear, which people felt when they saw and reacted to the workings of God the Holy Spirit.

"**Thambeo.**" Is a verb meaning, "to stupefy with surprise, to astound, to amaze, to astonish," it only occurs in Mk.1v27. 10v24,32. and Acts.9v6., being translated either as "amazed, or astonished" in the Authorised Version. The noun "thambos," means "amazed, astonished, dumbfounded," it is probably derived from a root meaning, "to render immovable, to dumbfound," and is associated with terror as well as astonishment and amazement; it only occurs in Lk.4v36. 5v9. and Acts.3v10..

"**Ekthambeo.**" Is an intensified verb form of "thambeo," meaning "to be greatly amazed, to be greatly frightened," it only occurs four times in the New Testament, all in Mark's Gospel, Mk.9v15. 14v33., and 16v5,6.. In Mk.9v15., we read that people were "greatly amazed and fearful" when they saw Jesus after His transfiguration, it is obvious that they saw the residual glory and majesty of the transfiguration still upon Him after He came down the mountain and met the people, it reminds us of the experience of Moses. 2Cor.3v7-18.

Another deeply moving Scripture which uses "ekthambeo" is Mk.14v33., which tells us that Jesus began to be "sore amazed" and deeply troubled and depressed at the extreme conflict and pressure that came upon Him in the garden of Gethsemane; it gives the impression that the pressure was even worse than He expected. In Mk.16v5,6. we see the women who went to the tomb being amazed and frightened at the vision of the angel at the tomb, the angel tells them not to be frightened, but to realise that Jesus is risen from the dead.

"Existemi." This verb "existemi," means literally, "to stand out from, to be beside oneself," and so "to be amazed." It occurs 17 times in the New Testament. It occurs once in Matthew's Gospel, in Mt.12v23., in the imperfect tense "existanto," all the multitude were beside themselves with amazement and excitement at the deliverance of a demon possessed person. It occurs four times in Mark's Gospel; at the healing of the palsied man, Mk.2v12.; it is used in the aorist tense, "exeste," by Christ's family to say He was insane, in Mk.3v21., See Acts.26v24. and 2Cor.5v13. It is used with "ekstasis" in the raising of Jairus's daughter from the dead in Mk.4v52.. It is used in the imperfect tense in Mk.6v51., with "ekthaumazo," when the apostles "were exceedingly beyond measure in themselves were amazed" ("existanto"), and marvelled, ("ethaumazon"), when our Lord walked on the water. "Existemi" is used three times in Luke's Gospel. In Lk.2v47., it is used to show the reaction of people to Christ's understanding and answers in the temple at twelve years of age. In Lk.8v56. it reveals the reaction of Jairus and his wife when Jesus raised their daughter from the dead. In Lk.24v22. it reveals the unreasoning astonishment and unbelief of the apostles to the women's testimony that they had seen the risen Christ.

"Existemi" occurs seven times in Acts. In Acts.2v7,12. of the amazement over the gift of tongues. In Acts.8v9. of the astonishment (translated "bewitched" in the A.V.) of the people at the evil miracles of Simon the sorcerer; and in Acts.8v13. of Simon's astonishment at the great miracles that God did through Philip. In Acts.9v21. it is used of the astonishment caused by the testimony of the newly converted Paul on those who heard him. In Acts.10v45. the Christian Jews, bound by their Jewish traditions, were beside themselves with astonishment, that Gentiles had been given the Holy Spirit. In Acts.12v16., it is used of the loud exclamations of amazement and joy of the people praying for Peter's deliverance, when Peter came to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, after his deliverance by the angel. Acts.12v12. Paul uses "existemi" once in 2Cor.5v13.; where he says if he was beside himself it was for God; he certainly did many things that the world and some Christians thought was quite mad, just as Christ's family thought that He was mad. Mk.3v21.

"Ekstasis." The noun "ekstasis," is related to the verb "existemi," it means literally, "a standing out," it is derived from "ek," "out of," and "stasis," "a standing." It occurs 7 times in the New Testament. It is used in Acts.10v10. 11v5. and 22v17., when Peter and Paul became unconscious to everything else except the vision they saw. "Ekstasis" is used with "existemi" in Mk.5v42., when Jesus raised Jairus's daughter from the dead, and all were "astonished with great astonishment," and the parents were "besides themselves with great ecstasy." Lk.8v56. In Mk.16v8., when the angel told the women of the resurrection of Jesus, the women fled from the tomb "trembling and astonished," "ekstasis;" Matthew reads, "with fear and great joy." Mt.28v8. People were filled with wonder and ecstasy when the man born crippled was healed at the beautiful gate. Acts.3v10. In Lk.5v26., "amazement took hold on all," "Iambano," "to take hold of," is used with "ekstasis," to describe people being gripped by amazement, at the healing of the paralytic, and by fear, "phobos," when the widow of Nain's son was raised from the dead. Lk.7v16..

"Ekplesso." This verb is derived from the intensive, "ek," "out of," and "plesso," "to strike," and so means to be exceedingly struck in mind, and astonished. It occurs 13 times in the New Testament. It occurs 4 times in Matthew's Gospel. In Mt.7v28., the multitudes "were struck out of themselves;" the imperfect tense shows the continual buzz of astonished conversation at the authoritative teaching of Jesus. In Mt.13v54. His townspeople at Nazareth were likewise astonished at our Lord's teaching, wisdom and works of power; however, they were offended in Him, and refused to believe in Him; the imperfect passive shows the continual rejection of Christ. In Mt.19v25., the imperfect tense is used to show the disciples continuing mood of total astonishment when our Lord said that it is difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. In Mt.22v33. the perfect passive shows the settled state of amazement of the crowds at our Lord's teaching, they were amazed, beside themselves, and overwhelmed by it. "Ekplesso" occurs five times in Mark's Gospel; Mk.1v22. 6v2. 7v37. 10v26. 11v18.; three times in Luke's Gospel; 2v48. 4v32. 9v43.; and once in Acts; Acts.13v12., the temporary blinding of Elymas the sorcerer" by Paul, astounded the proconsul Sergius Paulus, and caused him to become a believer in the Lord.

"Phobos." A noun which originally had the meaning of flight through being frightened, then it came to mean the fear, dread and terror that caused that flight. It is used of the fear that came on people when they saw the divine miraculous. Mt.14v26. 28v4,8. Mk.4v41. Lk.1v12,65. 2v9. 5v26. 7v16. 8v37. 21v26. Acts.2v43. 5v5,11. Rev.11v11. "Phobos" is also used many times of the reverential fear of God, Acts.9v31. 19v17-20. Rom.3v18. 2Cor.5v11. 7v1,11,15. Eph.5v21. 6v5. Phil.2v12. 1Pet.1v17. 3v15. 1Jn.4v18.; and fear of death and eternal judgement, Rom.8v15. Jude.v23.; and the proper respect and fear of authorities and superiors in Rom.13v3,7. and 1Pet.2v18. In Acts.19v13-17. even a demon caused people to fear, and Christ to be magnified.

"Phobeomai." A verb akin to "phobos," which in earlier Greek meant, "to put to flight;" in the New Testament it is always used with the meaning, "to be afraid, to fear, to show reverential fear. In the Authorised Version it

is translated, "fear," 63 times; "be afraid," 25 times; "be afraid of," 4 times; and "reverence," once. It is used of the fear of the disciples when our Lord stilled the storm, Mk.4v41. When the demoniac of Gadara was healed, all who saw him were afraid. Mk.5v15. Jesus told Jairus to believe and not be afraid. Mk.6v36. The apostles were sore afraid in the mount of transfiguration, Mt.17v6,7.; The visitation of angels and our Lord, brought fear. Lk.1v13,30,50. 2v9,10. Rev.1v17.

When Jesus went up to Jerusalem just before His sufferings and death, the disciples were amazed ("ethambounto," the imperfect of "thambeo"), and afraid ("ephobounto," the imperfect of "phobeomai"), at the grimly determined way our Lord walked before them, and His whole grave and serious deportment. Mk.10v32. He steadfastly set His face like a flint to go to Jerusalem. Lk.9v51. Is.50v7.

"Phoberos." An adjective meaning "fearful," it is used in the active sense in the New Testament, that is, in the sense of causing fear, and so means, fearful, terrifying, or terrible. It only occurs in the New Testament in Heb.12v21., and 10v27,31.. "Phoberos" is translated as "terrible," in the Authorised Version of Heb.12v21., "And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceeding fear and tremble with terror."

"Ekphobos." An adjective, from the intensive "ek," "out of," and "phobos," "frightened." It only occurs in Heb.12v21. and Mk.9v6.. In Heb.12v21., Moses said, "I am exceeding fearful," even Moses was frightened and shaken by the manifestations of God's power and glory at Mount Sinai. Here, "ekphobos," "I exceeding fear," is used with "entromos," to tremble and quake with fear.

In Mk.9v6., it is revealed that the disciples were "sore afraid" at the revelation of the glory of God manifested at Mount Hermon, during the transfiguration of Jesus and the visit of Moses and Elijah. The verb "ekphobeo," only occurs in 2Cor.10v9., where Paul writes, "as if I would terrify you by letters."

"Entromos." An adjective meaning "trembling with fear," from the intensive "en," "in," and "tremo," "to tremble, to quake." It only occurs in Acts.7v32. 16v29. and Heb.12v21.. It is used in Acts.7v32., of Moses trembling with fear at the burning bush, and in Heb.12v21., of Moses trembling with fear at the manifestations of God's glory at Sinai. In Acts.16v29., the jailor trembled in fear at the heavenly earthquake that shook the prison.

We are told in Heb.12v28., to serve God with reverence, "aidous" and godly fear, "eulabeias:" and we are told in Heb.5v7. that our Lord's strong crying and tears were heard in Gethsemane because of His godly fear, "eulabeia," which speaks of a careful and watchful reverence in every circumstance of life.

"Empobos." An adjective, which literally means, "in fear," from "en," in, and "phobos," fear; and means afraid, terrified and affrighted. It only occurs in Lk.24v5,37. Acts.10v4. 22v9. 24v25. and Rev.11v13..

"Perieko." "To encompass, enclose, contain." In Lk.5v9. we read that astonishment encompassed and seized, "perieko," Peter and his companions at the catch of fish.

The strength and repetition of these words of awe, amazement, astonishment, wonder and fear, convey in the most striking manner the remarkable effect of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on those who beheld His miracles. People were compelled to listen and take heed to the Gospel by the "wonderful things" that God was doing; the same response occurs today where these gifts are manifested in power. The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness when God's power and judgements are manifested in the earth. Is.26v8,9. Rom.15v18-21. Divine miracles that arrested, gripped, and even frightened and terrified people, were the cutting edge of both Old Testament and New Testament evangelism. They revealed the awesome majesty and justice of God, as well as His amazing grace and mercy.

APPENDIX 5. AN EXTRACT FROM MY BOOK. "GOD THE HEALER."

Jesus is "Yahweh our righteousness," **Yahweh-Tsidkenu.** He brings to us all the blessings of salvation. Jer.23v5,6. 33v15,16. Rom.5v18. 10v3,4. 1Cor.1v30,31. 2Pet.1v1. All the redemptive names of Yahweh are available to us through Christ's atonement. **Jesus is Yahweh-Ropheka, Yahweh that healeth thee, because He died for us.** Ex.15v26. In 1Cor.10v1-4., and elsewhere, the deliverance from Egypt is used as a type of salvation from the power of Satan and sin, in Jesus we have the fullness of the type. The Israelites had the name Yahweh given to them as the sign of their covenant relationship and authority, we have the name of Jesus, that is, "Yahweh the Saviour," given to us on a covenant relationship. Through the name of Jesus, Yahweh the Saviour, we can ask anything of God the Father and receive it. Oh, the power of the name of Jesus, and what tremendous blessings and great deliverances He brings us. Jn.14v13. 16v23. 1Jn.5v14.

a. The original perfection of God's creation shows God's will for wholeness. the fall of angels and men made creation subject to "vanity" and unreality. In Rom.8v20., "vanity," is "mataiotes," from "mataios," empty, vain; creation no longer fulfils its original design, and is at present in a temporary unreal and depraved condition. "Mataiotes" only occurs in two other places in the New Testament, it is used in Eph.4v17., to describe the vain depraved attitude of mind of the unconverted Gentiles; and in 2Pet.2v18., of the "great swelling words of vanity" of morally depraved false teachers. Sin and sickness have made the whole creation groan, it waits in

hope for the manifestation of the sons of God. Rom8v18-23. Wholeness will be restored to creation at Christ's return, sickness will be permanently banished from God's eternal kingdom. Is.11v1-10. 65v17-25. Rev.21v4. 22v3.

b. God laid down laws of health in His law to preserve health. His desire is that man should be whole. He gave laws of rest, food, hygiene, sanitation and quarantine as well as the moral law. Prov.4v20-22. Ex.15v26.

c. The human body reveals God's perfect will of health, it is self-healing.

d. There is perfect health in heaven, and Jesus told us to pray that His kingdom would come upon earth.

e. Christ revealed God's will for good health by healing all that came to Him, and the early Church did likewise. Jesus said, Jn.20v21., "as my Father has sent me, even so I send you". cf. Jn.17v18. Today is God's day of salvation and healing.

f. The healing of sickness glorifies God, not sickness. It is the healing of sickness shows His perfectly loving will and character. Mk.2v12. Mt.15v31. Jn.11v4,40,45. The glory of God is His complete dedication and sacrificial love for His creation.

g. Christ's cross shows us that God's will for us is healing. Mt.53v4. with Mt.8v16,17. It is God's will to save us from sin and all the effects of sin, and to give us His good gifts and good things. Mt.7v11. Lk.11v13. We can clearly see that wholeness is the will and strong desire of the God of love for His creation; sickness and death are enemies of His perfect will. 1Cor.15v26.

N.B. Sickness is a captivity and bondage.

God says sickness is an oppression of Satan, Jesus came to destroy Satan's evil works and set his captives gloriously free. Acts.10v38. Jn.8v36. 1Jn.3v8. Lk.4v17-21. Job suffered a captivity of sickness at the hands of Satan, and after Job's faith was tested, God delivered him and healed him. A delay in healing brought Job spiritual enrichment of character, and increase in faith. Job.2v7-13. 42v10. Christ healed a woman who had suffered the bondage of sickness from Satan for 18 years, and made it quite clear to the hypocritical religious leaders of His day, that it was God's will to release people from the bondage of their sickness. Lk.13v10-17. N.B. v16. Jesus is just the same today; He will set you free from bondage to sin and sickness.

THE CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

A. The basic cause of sickness is the sin of Adam.

Because of the sin of Adam, we no longer have access to the tree of life, which kept the body in perfect health. Gen.2v9,16,17. 3v1-24. Ez.47v7-12. Rev.22v2. All sickness goes back to Adam's sin as the basic cause, it brought sorrow, sickness and death into the world. Rom.5v12-14. Human heredity passes on more and more physical weakness, and is in itself a major cause of sickness, so sickness may not be due to a person's own sin but to heredity.

B. Sickness can be due to a person's own sin.

Sin may be the cause of a person's sickness, but it is not necessarily so, as James.5v15. tells us, "IF he hath committed sins they shall be forgiven him". Children die of sickness before they have sinned, and some of God's saints have suffered sickness and physical infirmity, even though their lives were blameless. Job.2v3. Lk.1v6,7. Leaving these considerations aside we can certainly say that sin certainly affects the mind and body, things like bad temper and bitterness of spirit can cause severe sickness. 1Pet.4v1-5. Breaking God's moral law will bring disease. Deut.28v15,58-61. Mk.2v5-11. Bad living will certainly bring its evil reward. The doctors tell us that there are literally millions of people who become ill because they drink heavily, smoke, and lead immoral lives. Millions of people have died because they smoke tobacco, most of them with heart disease, but about half of this number die from cancer of the lung, throat and other organs. It pays to live a clean life for God. If a sick person has sin in their life, they should repent of it and come to Christ in humility and contrition for cleansing and healing.

Sins like envy, greed and bitterness, can be just as devastating to the health as the drunkenness, smoking, and immorality. Sins of the spirit are sometimes more devastating and more difficult to deal with than the sins of the flesh. Mt.21v28-32. The most dangerous sin of all is rebellion against God; this can bring sickness, or even death. Miriam. Numb.12v1-13. Asa. 2Chron.16v1-14.; Ananias and Sapphira. Acts.5v1-11.; The Corinthians. 1Cor.11v30.. See Ps.107v17. The strong desire of God is to deliver us from our sins and sickness, by bringing us into sweet communion with Himself.

C. Sickness can be due to Satan. Acts.10v38. John.10v10.

The Scriptures state that evil spirits can be a cause of some sickness, infirmity, deafness, blindness, dumbness, madness and epilepsy. Mt.4v23,24. 8v28-34. 9v32-34. 12v22-24. 15v21-28. 17v14-21. with Mk.9v25. Lk.4v31-36. But here we need to give a definite warning; to attribute every sickness to the Devil and demons is both unscriptural and unbalanced. Jesus Himself only considered some sickness to be caused by demons, for as we see in Mt.4v23,24. and elsewhere, ordinary sickness is clearly distinguished from demon possession.

Sickness can have a natural cause, and is seldom due to demon possession or oppression. Demons can oppress and afflict people with sickness without possessing them, and sometimes, like Job, even God's children may sometimes suffer physical trials of faith because of their activities. Job.2v4-7. Lk.13v11-16. 1Cor.5v5. Do not ascribe everything you suffer to demons or Satan, your sickness will usually have a perfectly natural cause. Evil spirits have other activities besides causing sickness, and disease of the soul is their main aim and their most dangerous work. Mt.4v1-12. 2Cor.4v4. Demons manifest themselves as unclean spirits, lying spirits, seducing spirits, familiar spirits and as spirits of infirmity that cause physical illness. Mk.1v23,24. 2Chron.18v22. 1Tim.4v1-3. Lev.19v31. 20v6. Deut.18v12.

N.B. It is an abomination to God, to say that a person has a demon when they do not have one.

Demon possession is rare even among worldly people, for God's decrees and kindness and care extend even to the worldling, "The Highest: is kind to the unthankful and to the evil." Lk.6v35. Mt.5v45. God puts an iron hand of restraint upon the powers of darkness and even protects the worldling from the malice of Satan and his angels. 2Thes.2v7. Acts.14v15-17. 17v27,28.

Some people who are praying for the sick say a person has a demon, just to cover up their ignorance of a true cause. This kind of thing can cause real agony of mind in a person who is suffering from some quite natural cause of sickness and is neither demon possessed or oppressed. Particular care has to be taken with people who may be nervous, run down, unable to cope with life, or suffering from some mental illness due to brain damage or weakness of the body. The Bible clearly distinguishes between "lunatic" and those "possessed with devils". Mt.4v23,24. All epilepsy, mental illness, or breakdown is not due to demon possession or demon oppression. A Christian praying for the sick has to be spiritually equipped to discern whether a person is suffering sickness as a result of demon possession, demon oppression, or natural illness.

We must distinguish between sickness, which is the result of oppression from outside of the body, and demon possession. The best Christian may suffer sickness as a result of an attack of demon oppression. Job.2v4-7. To hurt people by saying that they have a demon when they have no such thing, is very wrong, and for this kind of thing we shall have to answer to God. If a Christian has real power with God, it will cause the demons to manifest themselves if they are in a person. Very often a person praying for a demon possessed person, or a demon-oppressed person, will be able to deal with the demon without anybody else knowing it. The revelation of the demon influence and the removal of that demon influence, can take place through silent prayer in the heart of the person praying for the sick, without anybody knowing it, or anybody being hurt or disturbed. At other times when demons openly manifest themselves in public, they have to be dealt with openly. Christ never demanded faith from people who were mentally ill, or who were out of their senses because of the oppression or possession of demons.

Some people place an invalid emphasis on demons when dealing with sickness, we should be positive and talk about Christ. If we walk with Christ, God will give us the power to discern and deal with demons that are causing sickness and opposing the work of God. However, as Mk.9v14-18., makes clear, dealing with some evil spirits needs real faith and much prayer. whatever you do don't suffer from "demonitis," don't be looking for demons in everything, or blame everything on demons. There can be other causes of sickness, and very often sickness can be due to our own actions, which brings us to our next point.

D. Sickness can be due to neglect, abuse, or overloading of the body.

God's law was very practical; it gave directions on rest, correct diet, hygiene, sanitation, quarantine, as well as moral and ceremonial law. If we ignore God's laws of health we can expect to be ill. God will not allow us to overload our bodies, even in His service, without reaping the consequences, as Epaphroditus found out, overwork will bring ill health. Phil.2v25-30. 1Cor.6v13-20. Ps.107v8-15. ps.127v2. God expects us to be practical, wise, and sensible. Some people do not need healing; they need to exercise common sense in their activities, work, rest, diet and habits. Lack of sleep food, rest, and too much strain placed upon the body by fasting, work, or any other activity, will cause us to reap a harvest of sickness. We have to realise our physical limitations. Many good Christian men and women have made themselves ill by overloading their bodies in the work of God, and as a result have had to have long periods of recuperation when they could do little for God. For example, the Bible tells us "to fast and pray", not, "to fast and work". Excessive fasting and long fasts are definitely out for working people and busy ministers of the Gospel. Semi-fasting as in Daniel.10v1,2., is the rule for busy people. Many other people eat far more than is good for them, and do not eat the foods that are nutritious, and as a result are ill.

Many people are ill because of the neglect of others; nervous disorders can be due to lack of companionship or creative activity. They can also be due to a person not being able to cope with life and its difficult circumstances and emotional conflicts. In such cases a person may need not only healing but also help and Christian love demonstrated in a practical way. Let such people particularly remember the invitation of our Lord Jesus, "Come unto me and I will give you rest". Mt.11v28.

E. Sickness can be due to the natural ageing of the body.

This follows on very well from the last point, for if a person neglects or abuses their body in their youth, they will find sickness coming upon them as a result of this as they grow older. The natural ageing processes of the

body are the cause of much illness, particularly if there has been sinful indulgence in the form of smoking, drinking, surfeiting, and immorality, or the body has been weakened by overwork or neglect. As we get older we have to place less of a load upon our bodies, or we can expect to be sick. Divine healing does not restore the vitality of youth. The aged need more rest, and to be stayed upon Jehovah to have perfect peace and rest of soul to meet life's bereavements, and the weakness and problems of old age. Ps.90v10-12. Ageing causes the death of all people, organs of the body cease to function because they are worn out and the person dies. Until the kingdom of God comes upon earth and the ages of ages begin, it is appointed that men die. Heb.9v27.

We cannot expect Divine healing to make us young, or stop us from dying when our time has come to die, but we can still expect God to heal us and restore our health even in our later years. Not many have the physical vigour and strength in old age that Moses and Caleb enjoyed, but few have had the walk with God that these men enjoyed, and it was, without doubt, their deep communion with God and their obedience to His law that kept them physically strong in old age. Deut.34v7. Joshua.14v7-15. N.B.v10,11. However, as Ps.90v10. makes clear, this is not the lot of all, it states that the infirmity of old age can be a trial even to the child of God. Moses writes, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." (KJV) He lived until he was 120 so he knew what he was talking about. Very often death can bring a sweet release from pain and sickness. 2Cor.5v1-10. 2Tim.4v6-8. Philemon.v9. The limitations even of a healthy youthful body are indeed very great, and cause us to groan and long for our heavenly glorified body, a body like unto that of our glorious Lord Jesus. Phil.3v20,21.

F. Sickness can be due to bacteria and viral infections, and industrial poisoning.

The body can be invaded by viruses and bacteria and poisons or chemicals, these can cause temporary or permanent ill health, and even death. Working in certain industries results in many people suffering from the industrial disease associated with that industry. God laid down in His law, directions on quarantine, sterilisation and hygiene, to protect His people from infectious disease due to virus and bacteria. His desire was that His people should not only be healed from their diseases, but that they should avoid becoming ill by keeping the sound medical measures laid down in His law. God directs us to use preventative medicine, in the form of adequate rest, correct diet, sterilisation, hygiene, quarantine, and by having a heart full of the love and joy of the Lord. However, if we do become sick, our dear Lord Jesus can heal our every disease and sickness.

G. Sickness can be due to injury, accident, war, or the evil actions of others.

We are in a world full of imperfect and sinful men and women, and accidents can happen through folly, ignorance, wrong judgement or natural disaster, and people receive injuries that are fatal or produce permanent disability or sickness. War is another frightful enemy of health and well-being; millions suffer today because of this evil thing that comes out of the perversity of the human will. James.4v1,2. How wonderful to read of cases like that of the person in **Kathryn Kulman's marvellous book, "I Believe in Miracles". (Publishers, Oliphants,)** He was suffering and dying from severe and extensive war injuries, but he was instantly healed by the Lord Jesus in one of Kathryn Kulman's meeting. **If you want a real blessing get this book, it tells over twenty other such miracles, these were chosen because they were medically proven and had been proved by the test of time as well.**

There is not only injury of body but there is also injury of soul and spirit, a person can be so tried by the evil actions and words of others, that it makes them sick and ill, and can even result in organic disease. We read in the Hebrew of Ps.69v20., that Jesus Himself was made physically ill by the vicious opposition and reproaches of evil men. 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." AMP. Other translations make this same point, **see the NASU translation of Ps.69v20.**, "Reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy, but there was none, And for comforters, but I found none."

If the evil attitudes of others have made you ill, our dear Lord Jesus can make you whole and give you His peace, He has personally experienced horrendous persecution, and He really understands and sympathises with you. Sometimes Christians have to suffer this kind of persecution for their Lord's sake. Paul knew what it was to bear in his body the injuries received through serving his Lord. Gal.6v17. He had suffered persecution, beatings, stoning, and vicious opposition for his Lord, and he died a martyr's death for Christ. 2Cor.11v23-33. 2Tim.4v6. Torture and martyrdom has been the lot of multitudes of Christians throughout Church history, and it is the lot of many Christians today. When we suffer physically as a result of persecution for Christ's sake, we can and should rejoice. Mt.5v11,12. Acts.5v40-42. 13v50-52. As Peter, Paul, George Fox and others have proved, Christ can deliver us from the hatred of men, or heal us after that hatred has caused severe injury. Acts.12v1-23. Compare v2 with v11. Our dear Lord Jesus suffered torture and death for us, it is the privilege of Christians to suffer for their Lord's sake, as well as to minister to the needy the healing power and love of Christ. Rom.8v17. 2Tim.2v9-12. 1Pet.2v18-25. 3v14-18. Rev.2v10.

THE MEANS BY WHICH GOD HEALS A PERSON.

Having shown that the causes of sickness spring out of the fall of man, and that it is the intense desire of God to save, heal, and to deliver us from all the effects of the fall, we will now briefly consider the means by which

Christ heals a person. God communicates His healing power in various ways and so we need to be led by Him when we minister to the sick. Jesus healed the sick in various ways, He usually laid His hands upon the sick, but sometimes He said a word of commanding faith, or directed a person to perform a certain act. We need to be led of the Spirit like our Lord. Above all, remember that Divine healing is not achieved by employing spiritual techniques, formulas, or methods; it is achieved by a person meeting with God and partaking of His life. The following are the means by which the healing power of God can be received.

A. Healing from God can be received through personal prayer.

Through their own prayer of personal faith, directly from the Lord Jesus. Is.38v1-22. Jn.14v11-15. 15v4-14.

B. Healing from God can be received by the prayers of others.

This is usually accompanied by the laying on of hands. Healing can take place through the prayers of Spirit-filled, believers, who are powerfully filled with the Holy Spirit. Mk.16v17,18. However, in the Church it is usually the responsibility of the local elders, who should pray for the sick after anointing them with oil. James.5v14-20. The ministry of apostles, prophets, teachers and evangelists can also convey a gift of healing. Those who pray for the sick need to be powerfully filled with the Holy Spirit when they are praying for the sick. Acts.6v8. The Lord Jesus was so filled with heavenly healing power, that a touch from Him or His garments was all that was necessary for the healing of the sick on many occasions. Mt.9v29,30. 14v35,36. Lk.8v43-48.

C. Healing from God can be received by prayer cloths. Acts.19v11,12.

This was an unusual means, these were 'special miracles', that demanded living faith, real spiritual power and great compassion in the apostle Paul, and heart preparation in the sick person or their friends and relatives. The sending of prayer cloths is nothing more than a spiritual gimmick, if the person who prays over them has no real spiritual power and acts without God's direction. In Acts19v11,12., "special miracles" were performed to meet special needs and they were doubtless directed by special revelation. As Elisha's staff was no good in the hands of an insincere, powerless, and backslidden Gehazi; so imitations of Paul's prayer cloths will do little or no good unless the person sending them is full of the power of God and directed of God, and the person receiving the cloth is seeking God with their whole heart. 2Kings.4v25-37. N.B. v26,31. The great woman of Shunam had no confidence in Gehazi holding Elisha's staff, v29,30., she wanted and demanded the real thing, a man in touch with God, manifesting all the gifts of the Spirit, not a pretender, and the sick have the right to demand the same.

D. Healing from God can be received by the performance of a Holy Spirit directed action.

Naaman was healed by dipping in Jordan seven times at the command of God through His servant Elisha. 2Kings.5v9-27. The Israelites were healed by looking to the brazen serpent. Numb.21v5-9. The blind man was healed by washing the clay from his eyes in the pool of Siloam. Jn.v1-15. The ten lepers were healed as they went to the priests in obedience to the command of Christ. Lk.17v12-19. The deaf man with an impediment in his speech was also healed in an unusual way. Mk.7v32-37. God directed Jesus to heal in various ways, so we need to be prepared to let God guide us in the same way.

E. Healing from God can be received through a spoken word of commanding faith.

A word of commanding faith can bring healing to those who are sick, whether they are present or absent. It is a word of commanding faith based on the revelation of God's word, and perhaps on spiritual revelation by the gifts of the Holy Spirit as well. Cf. Mt.8v8. Jn.11v41-44. Christ spoke with a gentle voice to the widow of Nain's son and the daughter of Jairus, and with a loud voice to Lazarus, but the effect was exactly the same. A great voice is no indication of spiritual power; it is the results of our prayers that reveal our spiritual authority and power with God. Meeting with the very sick or a chronic invalid soon shatters any false pretence of spiritual power. To decree things in the name of Jesus, or to use the name of Jesus as a formula, without having any communion with God, or any God-given power and authority will produce little or no results. We have to abide in Christ to have results and fruit that remains. Jn.15v7,8,16.

Many preachers confidently assert that Divine healing and miracles are not for this day, when they have not a shred of Scriptural evidence to support what they say. However, their sceptical unscriptural dogmatic assertions keep many from receiving healing from Christ, and they can expect severe judgement for this. James.3v1. As one Christian man has well said, "Faith comes by hearing God's Word, and leaves by hearing men's traditions." The prayer of faith heals the sick, not an unbelieving, "If it be thy will." Refuse to listen to unbelieving sermons, for wrong teaching destroys faith, go where you can hear God's truth preached faithfully, and where God is doing great things. God is angry when unbelieving preachers tell sick people, that it is God's will for them to suffer terribly for years, and that they must bear it patiently. Like many theologians today, the Scribes and Pharisees of Christ's day systematically trained people in unbelief, and Jesus rebuked them for it. **See Luke.11v:52-54.** "Woe to you, lawyers (experts in the Mosaic Law)! For you have taken away the key to knowledge; you did not go in yourselves, and you hindered and prevented those who were entering. v53 As He left there, the Scribes and the Pharisees [followed Him closely, and they] began to be enraged with and set themselves violently against Him and to draw Him out and provoke Him to speak of many things, v54 Secretly watching and plotting and lying in wait for Him, to seize upon something He might say [that they might accuse Him]." AMP. This same opposition to God's miracles still happens today.

If you desire healing, direct your gaze to God, you have come to meet with Him.

Paul, in 1Cor.12v31., tells us that ALL Christians are to covet the greater gifts of the Holy Spirit, and all Christians can be used to heal the sick, Jesus, our great High Priest lives to meet our every need. However, God has set special ministries in His Church to heal the sick through prayer and faith. James.5v13-20. Mk.16v15-20. 1Cor.12v5-11,28. The greater miracles of healing, can, and should be, manifested through the most powerful ministries of the Church, the ministries of evangelists, prophets and apostles,. We see from James.5v13-18., 2Cor.12v12. and Rom.15v18-21., that Divine healing should be a manifest part of the ministry of the Pastor-Elders of the local Church, and the other outstanding ministries of the Church. We must respect the servants of God who have been entrusted with a ministry of healing, but remember that God is the healer and the glory belongs to Him alone. Peter and John denied that it was their power or holiness that had brought about the miracle on the crippled man at the gate of the Temple; they said he had been healed through the Name and power of the risen Christ. Acts.3v12. It is not being prayed for by "a great evangelist" that brings healing, it is meeting with God that brings healing. We have to respect a person who God has entrusted with great spiritual gifts, otherwise the sick will receive nothing from them, but they are only manifesting God's gifts, love and compassion. It is the prayer of faith that heals the sick, but the object of that faith is God. God will not give His glory to another. Is.42v8. 48v11,12. 44v6. with Rev.1v8,17. 22v13. 1Cor.1v26-31. with Jer.9v24.

Jesus and the Father intensely desire to heal the sick. God's redeemed children can expect the children's bread of healing from their heavenly Father. Mk.7v27. Jesus was so humble and gentle that He even washed the feet of His disciples, He is just as gracious today, His arms are open to receive and comfort you now. Jn.13v12-17. Mt.11v28-30. 20v20-28. He invites you to come to Him, He waits to meet your need. **Do you feel like the women with the issue of blood, who came to the end of herself before she met Jesus? Mk.5v25-34. Lk.8v43-48.** She tried all the doctors could do for Her, and they failed. Christ's ministry had inspired a positive faith in Him, she knew that she would be healed if she could but touch the hem of His garment, and the moment she touched it, His healing power and virtue instantly made her whole. Her positive attitude of faith in His Divine love and power brought her instant healing. She had no reservations, doubts or fears about His power and love, she had her point of contact with God settled, and God accepted it. Come to God with the same positive faith in His mercy, love and power and He will meet your need. The characters of Jesus and the Father assures you that they earnestly desire to make you whole. The Scriptures inform us that in these last days we can expect a great manifestation of God's saving and healing power through a renewed and empowered Church. Acts.2v16-21.

THE NAME OF JESUS GIFTS TO US ALL THE COVENANT NAMES OF YAHWEH.

The encouragement and power of the Divine Names.

When the great God of love wanted to reveal Himself to His people, He not only manifested Himself to the prophets and people in power and glory by His mighty acts; He revealed Himself through His Covenant names. God's covenant names are a promise of what He will be to us, and the things that He will do for us. The invocation of the covenant names of God by faithful believers has brought into operation the gifts of the Holy Spirit; for this is included in His covenant relationship with His people. The name of Jesus includes all that is revealed in the covenant names of God, and it has been given to the children of God as an instrument of His power and love. To realise fully all that is conveyed to us in the name of Jesus, we need to consider the covenant names linked with His name. Our study is limited to a study of the covenant names of "Yahweh."

THE DIVINE NAME, THE TETRAGRAMMATON. GOD'S COVENANT NAME WITH ISRAEL.

The sacred name of "Yahweh," or "Jehovah," depending on which form you prefer to use, comes from the Hebrew verb "to be," as Exod.3v14,15., states, "And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM, (Hebrew, EHYEH ASHER EHYEH), and He said, You shall say to the Israelites I AM has sent me to you. V15----- This is my name for ever, and by this name I am to be remembered to all generations." Hebrew scholars have stated that "EHYEH ASHER EHYEH" means, "I AM WHO I AM, AND WHAT I AM: AND I WILL BE, WHAT I WILL BE." A Jewish Rabbi told me that the name "EHYEH ASHER EHYEH and its context means, "I will be with you ALL the time, in ALL situations." However, I think it means more, God is saying, "I will be with you, at all times, and in all situations, **to be what I am to you.**" God comes to make His abilities and love available to us. The name of "Jehovah" or "Yahweh," whichever way you prefer to pronounce it, encapsulates the meaning of the great name of God, "EHYEH ASHER EHYEH," "I AM THAT I AM," and manifests the eternal availability, of God's love and power. The name of Jesus has been given to us, and when we call on His name, He comes to give us what we need, His Name carries all the Divine love, power and presence of the covenant names of God. Exod.34v6,7.

ABRAHAM DID NOT HAVE THE NAME "YAHWEH" ON A COVENANT BASIS." Ex.6v2-4.

We know from Gen.22v14., that Abraham knew the name "Yahweh," for he called the name of the place where God provided a sacrificial ram by the name "Yahweh Jireh," but he could not invoke it on the basis of a covenant relationship. For we read in Ex.6v2-4.; "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name YAHWEH was I not known unto them. And I have established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers." "Known," is "yada," which speaks of

an experimental relationship, they did not have the right of covenant invocation of the Divine Name, until it was given to Moses under the covenant of the Law.

THE COVENANT NAMES OF "YAHWEH," REVEAL THE INNER NATURE OF GOD.

In Exod.33v18,19., when Moses asked to see the glory of God, God answered, "I will make ALL MY GOODNESS pass before you, and **I WILL PROCLAIM THE NAME OF THE LORD before you.** From Exod.34v5-8., we see the clear link between the name and the mercy, grace, longsuffering and abundant goodness and truth of God. **The name reveals the inner nature of God, and invocation of the Divine Name makes all the inner glorious being and abilities of God available to us.**

Putting the name of God on people in blessing and protection truly works. Numb.6v22-27.

God commanded Aaron to use the sacred Name to bless and protect the Israelites. This blessing placed a hedge of protective Divine thorns about the people of God, the same kind of hedge that protected Job. Job.1v9,10. The invocation of the Divine Name turned God's face towards them in blessing. We read in John.17v6,12,26., that Jesus manifested the sacred Name to His disciples, and kept them in the Name, and declared the Name to them, that His and God the Father's Divine love might become part of their beings. All the people of Israel heard and could use that Divine Name, and so must Christ's Church.

THE JEWS HID THE GREAT NAME OF GOD AWAY, AND WOULD NOT REPEAT IT.

The sacred name was made up of the Hebrew consonants; Yude-Ah-Vau-Ah, or in English, Y, H, W, H; the Hebrew Vau being pronounced as W. **The Jews left out the vowels and hid away the sacred Name for fear that it would be misused.** They should have let God defend His Name and let Him deal with those who used His name in vain. This has resulted in the Divine Name being largely **unused**; for though the Rabbis know the sacred Name, they will not repeat it, or write it down. So the Divine Name, which was intended to be an instrument of power, blessing, and means of deliverance in the hands of ALL the people of God, has been hidden away and not used. What a tragedy! In the time of Moses, all the people could hear Aaron pronounce the Divine Name, and were able to invoke it for themselves.

The Jews invented a replacement for the Divine name by taking the vowels a, o, a, from the Hebrew "Adhonay," which means "Lord," or "Master," and then inserted them into the sacred Tetragrammaton, Y, H, W, H; and so made YaHoVaH, or as we pronounce it Jehovah. Many have suggested other variations of the sacred Name. Some Third Century Manuscripts from Egypt have stated the Divine name was "Yabeh," or "Yahweh." Clement of Alexandria in the third century A.D. said it was pronounced "Yaoweh." Theodoret of Cyprus in the fourth century said the Samaritans pronounced it "Yabeh" or "Yahweh."

Many scholars believe that the Divine Name is "YaHWeH;" for from the often-repeated exhortation to "Praise you Yah," "Hallelujah," we know that the first part of the sacred name was "Yah." The second part of the Divine Name starts with the Hebrew letter "Vau," which is pronounced as a "W," and ends with "H;" so "Yahweh" could be the Divine Name. The Hebrew "Halelu-Yah," "Praise you Yah," is not a single compound word in Hebrew, even though it has become a compound word in Greek and other languages. "Halelu-Yah," is derived from the abbreviated Divine name, "Yah;" and "halal;" to be bright, to shine, to praise, to celebrate, to glorify; it carries the thought of radiance and ebullience in praise and worship to God. The Greek "Allelouia," occurs in Rev.19v1,3,4,6.; where we see the saints and angels rejoicing that the kingdom of God has been set up, and that evil men and wicked angels have been judged and executed, and everlasting righteousness has been brought in, and prophecy fulfilled. Dan.9v24. Rev.10v7. Fifteen of the Psalms either begin or end with "Hallelujah," and Psalms 104 to 109 are called, "the Great Hallel," and were sung mainly at the feasts of Passover and Tabernacles.

The use of "Yah" in the expression of praise "Hallelujah," reveals that God accepts "Yah," as an abbreviated form of the sacred name, not only in praise and worship, but also as a name to be called upon for our defence and provision, and as an instrument of power in invocation. The Divine name conveys even more than God's eternal nature and immutability, "He who was, and is, and is to come." Gen.21v33. Exod.3v13-16. 6v6. Ps.83v18. Is.12v2. 26v4 with Rev.1v8. Nor is God just "The Almighty," "Ho Pantocrator," Rev.4v8. 11v17. 15v3. 16v7,14. 19v15. 21v22. Through Jesus, the relationship has become a personal family matter; we are now the sons and daughters of God. Lk.11v2,13. 2Cor.6v18. **Our Father is, "The Almighty I Am," and He will be to us what His covenant names say He is. "Yahweh," "The existing One," or as the French translate it, "The Eternal," will convey to us ALL HIS NAME IS, through the covenant blood of Jesus.**

The Great I Am, the Eternal, the Self Existent One, He who has always been, and always will be, is our Father. Ps.90v2. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." Jesus said in Jn.8v58., "Truly, truly, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I Am;" the Jews fully understood that He was claiming to be "The Great I Am;" and tried to stone Him, Jesus miraculously hid Himself, and escaped from them. Jesus is, "That eternal life that was with the Father," 1Jn.1v2. "Ten zoen ten aionion," literally, "the life, the eternal." "Which was with the Father," is "en pros ton patera;" not "egeneto," "came into being," but "en and "pros," "facing," with the accusative of eternal intimate fellowship, exactly as in Jn.1v1., "en pros ton theon," face to face intimacy with God the Father in eternal love and fellowship. The Godhead has made an eternal covenant with us, to share all they are in eternal

love and fellowship, with us. 1Jn.1v3,4. How unspeakably generous and kind they are!

THE NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME - JESUS - YESHUA.

The name "Jesus," is from the Greek "Iesous," which is derived from the Hebrew "Yeshua," the shortened form of the Hebrew "Yehoshua," the name "Joshua;" all of which mean, "Yahweh is salvation," or "salvation of Yahweh." Our Lord was named "Yeshua," because He was going to "save His people from their sins." Mt.1v21. Lk.1v31. In Is.45v22,23., the Name, which is above every name, at which every knee shall bow in heaven and earth, is said to be the Name of "Yahweh," and in Rom.14v10-12. and Phil.2v9-11. this Scripture is said to be speaking of Jesus, and the authority of His Name. The Divine covenant name that was given to Israel has been given back to us in the name of Jesus, with all its power and authority. These covenant names reveal to us what is included in the name of Jesus.

ALL THE COVENANT NAMES OF YAHWEH ARE GIVEN TO US IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

1. YAHWEH ELOHIM. The Lord our God. Deut.6v4. etc. This manifests the Trinity, Gen.1v26. "And God said, Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth. Elohim is plural, it is used to describe the plural evil Gods of the Canaanites, and the demon powers behind them. Exod.20v3. In order to try and deny this obvious reference to the Trinity, heretics, like "Jehovah's Witnesses," have tried to prove, but without any success, that "Elohim" is, "The plural of majesty."

2. YAHWEH ADONAI. Our Sovereign Lord. Gen.15v2,8. Often with "Lord of Hosts." Is.34v15. 10v23,24. 22v5,15. 28v22.

3. YAHWEH ROPHI. The Lord our Healer. Exod.15v26. Is.53v4. Mt.8v16,17.

4. YAHWEH JIREH. The Lord will provide, or equally correctly, The Lord will see and provide. Gen.22v8-14. It was a place in Jerusalem, later called Moriah. God provided His Lamb in Jerusalem, on the cross at Golgotha. Mt.27v33. Mk.15v22. Jn.19v17.

5. YAHWEH NISSI. The Lord our Banner and Conqueror. Exod.17v15. The battle cry of Moses. B.C. 1491. The uplifted hands of Moses, and the invoked Divine Name, defeated the Amalekites; Moses built an altar to commemorate this victory.

6. YAHWEH TSABAOTH. The Lord of Hosts. 1Sam.1v3. This battle cry of the saints occurs 281 times in the Old Testament. Ps.46v7,11. Our Lord said He could CALL for "twelve legions of angels," in Mt.26v53., it was part of His normal practice in His ministry to the multitudes. It seems Elisha also invoked the name of Yahweh for angelic help; "They that be with us are more than they that be with them." 2Kings.6v15-18. David beat Goliath by calling on the name of Yahweh. 1Sam.16v45.

7. YAHWEH SHALOM. The Lord our peace. An altar erected by Gideon about B.C. 1256. Judges.6v24. Gideon's act and expression of faith. It was also the Aaronic blessing on Israel; it brought physical, spiritual and material peace, blessing and well-being. Numb.6v22-27. "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." Jn.14v27. He gives us the peace of Heaven.

8. YAHWEH SHAMMAH. The Lord is present, or there. Ezek.48v35. The promised future kingdom presence.

9. YAHWEH MEKADDISHKIM. The Lord our Sanctifier. Exod.31v13. Lev.20v8. 21v8. 22v9,16,32. Ezek.20v12. etc.

10. YAHWEH RA-AH or ROHI. The Lord my Shepherd. Ps.23v1.

11. YAHWEH TSIDKENU. God our Righteousness. Jer.23v6. 33v6. Christ's atonement justifies us. Rom.5v1,2. 1Jn.4v9,10.

12. YAHWEH HOSEENU. God our covenanted Creator. Ps.95v6. Heb.3 and 4. Praise and worship give victory over foes.

13. YAHWEH ELYON. The Lord Most High. Ps.7v17. Supreme in love and power, he reigns in perfect justice over all.

14. YAHWEH ELOHEENU. The Lord OUR God.Ps.99v5,8,9. OUR God of joyful fellowship and worship. Acts.1v14. 2v1.

15. YAHWEH ELOKEKA. The Lord THY God. Exod.20v2,5,7. The eternal God with whose name we encourage each other.

16. YAHWEH ELOHAY. The Lord MY God. Zech.14v5. MY eternal God of personal encouragement.

17. THE COVENANT NAMES OF YAHWEH THAT DAVID CALLED ON, AND PROVED. 2Sam.21v1-4, 14v22. Ps.18.

A. YAHWEH IS MY ROCK. v2. The God of my rock. v3. B. YAHWEH MY SHIELD. v3.

C. YAHWEH MY SALVATION. D. YAHWEH MY SAVIOUR, "Thou savest me from violence."

E. YAHWEH who gave David victory over the giants and his other enemies. 2Sam.21v15-22. 22v1-3.

F. YAHWEH MY REFUGE, YAHWEH MY HIGH TOWER. YAHWEH MY FORTRESS AND MY DELIVERER. v2.

David proved that the Divine Name could be invoked at all times and in all situations; this was the reason for his victories. We see from 2Sam.22v1-3. 14v22. and Ps.18., that David took God at His Word and called upon, and proved, the Divine Name in defence and deliverance. Solomon realised the source of his father's victories, he had seen David prove the power of the invoked Covenant Names of God, and invoked and proved them personally for himself, he wrote in "Prov.18v10., "The name of Yahweh is a strong tower ("migdol," "a great tower"), the righteous runneth into it and are safe." The Covenant **Names of God are weapons of power and love for the children of God to use, they are all available to us, and are included in the Name of Jesus. Invoke His Covenant Names at all times, into all your situations, and He will be there to be to you, what He is, and what His Names declare Him to be.**

CALLING ON THE NAME OF YAHWEH.

Calling on the name of Yahweh was an Old Testament fact. The invocation of the name of God in blessing and protection is clearly seen in Numb.6v22-27. and Ps.20v1-4. We also read in Ps.50v14,15., "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay they vows unto the most High: and **call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.** However, Ps.50v16., makes it clear that the wicked cannot claim a covenant relationship with God. But we read in Ps.55v16., "But as for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me." We read in Ps.145v18., "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." We see that Joel.2v32., "Whosoever shall call upon the name of Yahweh, (Jehovah) shall be saved;" is applied in Acts.2v21., to calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus to be saved.

In the New Testament, we see people calling on the name of Jesus and the Father. "And they kept on stoning Stephen as he was calling upon the Lord and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Acts.7v59. "And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name." Acts.9v14. "Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem." Acts.9v21. "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" Rom.10v14. "With all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." 1Cor.1v2. "With them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 2Tim.2v22. "If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." 1Pet.1v17.

We see, then, that invocation of the name of Jesus, and the Father, covers all areas of the Christian life from faith for salvation and forgiveness, to grace for dying for Christ. It covers all the areas mentioned in the covenant names of Yahweh.

AUTHORITY TO USE THE NAME OF JESUS, IS FROM HEAVEN, AND NOT FROM MEN.

Jesus gave His twelve apostles and the seventy evangelists, authority to act in His name and work mighty miracles. The initial surprise of the seventy at miracles happening through them in the name of Jesus is clearly seen. Lk.10v17. It is clear that our Lord sought the guidance of His Father over who was to be given authority to use His name, for he spent a night in prayer before he chose His apostles. Mt.10v1-8. Mk.3v13-19. Lk.6v12-19. Paul tells us in 1Cor.12v28., that God sets the ministries in the Church, not men; and in Eph.4v7-16., he tells us that people are given ministries, "to the measure of the gift of Christ."

Authority in Christ's Church comes from Heaven and not from men. Mt.21v23-27. Lk.20v1-8. This authority from God inevitably presents a challenge to the authority of the religious kingdoms that men build out of God's past revivals. The religious leaders of Israel immediately went to challenge John as soon as his ministry started, they rudely asked him, "**Su tis ei,**" "Thou, who art thou?" Or in the language of today, "Who do you think you are?" John's humble reply caused them to ask, "Tis ei," "Who are you?" John.1v19,22. In Jn.8v25. Jesus was approached and asked in the same critical way, "**Su tis ei,**" "You, who are you." There is an inevitable conflict between those who have authority from Heaven, and those who rely on authority from men. The kingdoms of men feel threatened by those who have authority from Heaven, because it exposes their lack of spiritual qualifications and Divine gifting and ministry. The kingdoms of men are self-perpetuating, and they soon have enough machinery to continue without God.

INVOCATION OF THE DIVINE NAMES FOR FALSE PURPOSES IS FORBIDDEN.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless (and unpunished) that taketh His name in vain." Exod.20v7. Deut.5v11. In both Scriptures "vain," is the Hebrew noun "**shav,**" 7723, which means: -

1. Evil which is committed, and a desolating evil and calamity which anyone suffers. Both meanings are found in Job.15v31., 'let him not trust in evil (wickedness): he is deceived, for evil (calamity) will be his reward.'

2. Falsehood, a lie, a false report, false witness. 3. Emptiness, vanity, nothingness.

The word "take," is "nasa," which means, "to take up, bear, carry, lift up." Moses lifted up the Great Name like a sacred banner or standard for noble purposes, when Israel defeated Amalek in Exod.17v10-16.; in Jehovah Nissi, "nissi" is from the same root as "nasa." Thou shalt not lift up the name of the Lord for destructive or evil purposes. This lifting up and misuse of God's names has certainly occurred. Many occultists have used the names of God in their evil invocations, and in their magic circles; using God's name for evil like this is forbidden by God and puts the occultists under the control of demons, instead of under the protection of God. Deut.18v10-22. This misuse of the name could also speak of "vain repetitions" in prayer, Mt.6v7.; or to swearing falsely in the name of God, to deceive people in commercial transactions, which our Lord castigates in Mt.23v21,22.. Those who use God's name as a swear word will have to answer for it. It is important to realise that no one will get away with using and invoking God's name for evil, false or wrong purposes.

THE AUTHORITY TO USE THE NAME OF JESUS IS SUSTAINED BY COMMUNION WITH GOD.

Christians receive ministries from our Lord by Divine gifting, but they sustain them through communion with God, and by prayer and intercession. The apostles had been given authority to cast out Devils, but they could not cast the demon out of the boy in Mk.9v14-29., because they had neglected prayer and fasting. New Testament intercession is based on, and results in the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is based on the operation of God's power, not just in saying prayers. The explosion of ministries of healing in the New Testament was a result of prayer, intercession and communion with God; this sustained the authority that had been given to the disciples to use of the name of Jesus

The Holy Spirit is the director of intercession. It is only as He aids us that we can pray aright, the human intellect is not sufficient for the task. Paul, after being a Christian for over 20 years, said, "We know not how to pray as is necessary." Rom.8v26. In 1Cor.14v14-18., Paul gives us the secret of his own powerful manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit; he prayed with his understanding, and prayed with his spirit, that is with the gift of tongues. Paul thanked God that he prayed in tongues more than the verbose Corinthians. Paul edified himself spiritually with the gift of tongues, and this enabled him to powerfully manifest the other gifts of the Holy Spirit, and to use the name of Jesus with authority.

Our Lord's advice on prayer in Lk.11v1-13., shows the principles which guided His life of prayer, He let nothing stop Him from praying through for the ministry that would meet the needs of the people, and give them heavenly bread. In Lk.11v8., our Lord uses "anaideia," Strong 335, to speak of a similar kind of importunity and urgent persistence that is revealed in the word "pawgah," which is used for intercession in the Old Testament. "Anaideia," is derived from "aidos," which speaks of shamefacedness, bashfulness, modesty and reverence; but with the negative particle "aneu," which means, "without," the meaning is reversed, and gives the thought of "without shame, importunity and shameless persistence." By using the word "anaideia," Christ reveals the determined persistence that had characterised the whole of His prayer life, and which had been the source of His wonderful ministry.

In Ps.69v7-11,20,21., "the zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up," is speaking of Christ's zeal for prayer; His weeping, fasting and praying at Nazareth, and it cost Him great reproach. Jesus, who had lived a life of prayer, was angry with the religious leaders of Israel, who had made God's house of prayer, a den of robbers where people were fleeced of their finances. Jn.2v13-17. Mt.21v12-15. Mk.11v15-18. Lk.19v45-48. Such Scriptures as these, and Is.53v12. and 59v16,17., give great light on the intercessions of our Lord. In His earthly life Christ Jesus was the intercessor without equal, and He still is the incomparable intercessor, for "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." Heb.7v25. **Let us enter into the victories that His death and intercessions have won for us; and use all the power and authority that are in the wonderful name of Jesus. True Christians rejoice in the revelation of God's character and promises, which are revealed to us in His covenant Names, all of which are given to us in the Name of Jesus.**

TAKE THE NAME OF JESUS WITH YOU. By Mrs L. Baxter.

**1. Take the Name of Jesus with you, Child of sorrow and of woe:
It will joy and comfort give you. Take it then where're you go.**

Chorus. Precious Name, oh how sweet! Hope of earth and joy of heaven. Repeat.

**2. Take the Name of Jesus ever, As a shield from every snare;
If temptations round you gather, Breathe that holy name in prayer.**

**3. Oh, the precious Name of Jesus! How it thrills our souls with joy,
When His loving arms receive us, And His songs our tongues employ!**

4. At the Name of Jesus bowing, Falling prostrate at His feet;
King of kings in heaven we'll crown Him, When our journey is complete.

Chorus. Precious Name, oh how sweet! Hope of earth and joy of heaven. Repeat.

APPENDIX 6. THE BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT TITHING.

INTRODUCTION. The Curse and Evil Seed of a Fraudulent and Unscriptural Emphasis on Tithing.

I make no apology for this title, for I have seen people's lives devastated, through a distorted, fraudulent, and unscriptural application and emphasis on tithing. It is an appalling sin when an emphasis on Tithing robs the poor.

N.B. Tithing was an income tax instituted by God to provide finances for Israel's poor, and to care for the Levites.

The tithe was Israel's income tax, to finance Israel's welfare state, and was for the stranger, fatherless and widow, as well as the Levite. See Deut.26v12-19. N.B. v12. "When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the third year — the year of tithing — **and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled,** v13 then you shall say before the LORD your God: 'I have removed **the holy tithe** from my house, **and also have given them to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me;** I have not transgressed Your commandments, nor have I forgotten them. v14 I have not eaten any of it when in mourning, nor have I removed any of it for an unclean use, nor given any of it for the dead. I have obeyed the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that You have commanded me. NKJV. N.B. See Deut.14v29. 16v11,14. 24v19-22.

God cursed the Jews for not tithing in Mal.3v9., because they had robbed God, by not providing for the poor and the Levites. Neglect of the poor made God angry. See Mal.3v5,9,10., "And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, **Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien —** Because they do not fear Me," Says the LORD of hosts. v9 You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation. v10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, **That there may be food in My house,** And try Me now in this," Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing, that there will not be room enough to receive it." NKJV. We read in Deut.14v23-29., that the tithes were used to meet the needs of the widow, the fatherless, and the stranger, as well as the Levite, and that the tithes even provided these people with religious holidays in Jerusalem at God's expense. The curse of Mal.3v7-12., came upon people for not caring for the destitute.

THE LOVE OF MONEY HAS OFTEN CONTAMINATED AND CORRUPTED THE TEACHING ON TITHING.

Love of money has been one of the major means, which Satan has used to keep Christians out of their spiritual Canaan, and destroyed their communion with God and the effectiveness of their priestly ministry. I am not a recent convert to the thoughts expressed in this study. I have been very concerned for almost fifty years by the way that some preachers have fleeced, Christians of their money, by a twisted and false exposition of the Scriptures. The truth has been corrupted by various evils, ignorance, party spirit, pride, a love of power and money, a false prosperity gospel, personal kingdom building, and a stress upon buildings. I appeal for a return to Biblical financial integrity; where being of one accord, having all things in common, and a caring love that ministers to the poor, are the most important priorities for Christ's Church. The millions of Christian martyrs in China were certainly not lacking in faith in a prosperity gospel, they followed the noble army of martyrs in the early Church.

I want to make it very clear that I am not against church organisations, for there are many good churches and godly ministers that are worthy of financial support. I believe in generous giving, or tithing, for those who can afford it, and feel that they should tithe, particularly if these gifts are used to help the poor, as they were in the early Church. Acts.4v33-37. 1Cor.16v1-3. Jesus commanded us in Luke.6v35,36,38.. "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. v36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.v38 **Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.** For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." KJV. Those who obey Jesus here and give to the needy, even our enemies, will find an abundant earthly, as well as a heavenly return. Mt.5v42-48. 6v19,20.

However, I am appalled that some preachers have distorted both the facts of Church history and the Scriptures, by saying that God commands all Christians to tithe, and that even poor Christians are under a curse if they do not tithe. Compassionate Christian leaders will appeal to Christians to give to worthy causes because of the constraint of the love of Christ, not by threats of curses and judgement. I wrote

this study when I heard that some old age pensioners, had been without food, because they had been told that they were under a curse if they did not tithe. Such oppressive demands are intolerable, and the authority for them certainly does not come from the Scriptures. God desires to bless, not burden people, His yoke is easy and kind, and His burden is light. Mt.11v28-30. **It is an historical fact that giving in the early Church was on a voluntary basis, and that there was no tithing in the Church for several centuries.** For though tithing was later practiced in the Western Church, it was **never** practiced in the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Jesus said the Scribes and Pharisees were full of extortion ("**harpage,**" **robbery**) and unbridled greed, and pronounced repeated woes upon them. Mt.23v14,25,27,28. **Woe to those who follow their example,** for Jesus warned that judgement and Hell await religious robbers who make merchandise of people in God's name. Jn.2v16. Mt.21v12,13. 23v4,14,23,33. The name of God and the Gospel are blasphemed among worldly people by such financial extortion and wickedness. Rom.2v4. Jesus said in Mt.7v21-23., that people can work miracles in His Name, but if they consistently practice iniquity, on judgement day He will bear legal witness against them and publicly proclaim ("homologeso," see Mt.10v32.), "I never knew you, depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." In Mt.7v23., "knew," is "egnon," the aorist of "ginosko," to know by experience and relationship, so Jesus was saying, "I never at any point of time have been in any relationship with you, or recognised or approved you as my servants." Mt.7v21-23. To use God's gifts and twist God's Word, to dishonestly fleece people of their money is a very serious sin. Jesus warns us that we have to do God's will and obey His Word, and bear genuine fruits of character to stand on the day of judgement. These fruits include the weightier matters of the Law, which are, judgement, mercy, faith, genuine love of people and a burning love for God. Mt.7v16,21,24. 23v23. Lk.11v39-44.

We should not be surprised that there are ravenous wolves in God's Church, for our Lord, Paul and Peter have warned us about them. Mt.7v15-20. Acts.20v28-30. In 2Pet.2v1-3,15-17. Peter warns us that there are plausible false prophets and teachers in the Church, "who motivated by covetousness and greed for money; will, with forged words and cunning false arguments, exploit and make merchandise of you: for whom their long pronounced sentence and judgement does not linger, and their destruction is awake and ready to seize them.-to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever." **In 1Pet.5v1-4.**, Peter exhorts Christian leaders, "Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint, but willingly, not from the motive of fondness for dishonest gain, but eagerly and willingly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock." Some methods of extorting money from Christians are positively evil. Peter's warning about correct financial motivation in Christian service needs to be heeded.

Unreasonable demands for money usually spring out of personal kingdom building.

Some Christians have been put under extreme financial pressure because their leaders have had big plans for building and expansion, and have claimed divine inspiration for these plans. These leaders feel that to have influence, they have to imitate the building programmes of other denominations. They forget that our Lord, His apostles, and Paul, never built any church buildings, and never said that they should be built. **Paul said that he had never coveted other people's gold or silver; indeed, coveting and using other people's money and resources to put our plans into operation is a sin. Acts.20v33-35.** How often people claim that they are building for the glory of God, when, in reality, they are only building a kingdom for themselves, and a monument to their pride. **God hates the pressure that is put upon Christians through excessive building plans; the real motives for these building plans will be manifested on judgement day.**

We read in Acts.20v28-31., that Paul warned the Ephesians with tears for three years, that after his departure fierce wolves in would enter in and ferociously attack the flock, but, unfortunately, they did not heed his warnings. False teachers appear to have succeeded in turning all the churches in Asia against Paul. Mt.7v15. 2Tim.1v15. Paul also warned the Ephesians that some from among them would want a personal following, and would draw disciples after themselves. A great deal of church building and denominational expansion is tainted with this doubtful motivation of kingdom building. Two people can preach exactly the same truth, but with totally different motives, one can preach to build a kingdom for men, or themselves; another can preach out of love for God, purely to bless people and build God's kingdom.

The costly nature of competition and duplication in Christian circles.

The competition and duplication of effort between different Christian groups has been very costly and used up vast amounts of finances. The need to pay for the building and upkeep of competing religious structures and ministers, has resulted in excessive and unscriptural demands being made of Christians to give finances. The people of Israel desired to be like the nations about them and have a king and kingdom. In 1Sam.8v6-22. N.B. v17,18, Samuel solemnly warned Israel that kingdom building is a very costly business, and that they would groan under the burden of it. Israel did groan under the demands that were made upon them by Solomon's expensive building projects, and one can hear the groans of Christians who have been over-burdened by expensive church structures. The grievous yokes of Solomon and Rehoboam resulted in the division of Israel; and some Christians have also rebelled against similar heavy yokes and financial extortion, and have voted with their feet and left the churches that have laid these appalling unscriptural demands and burdens upon them. See Mt.23v4. 2Chron.10v3-19. N.B.v4,10,19. Lk.11v37-54. N.B. v46,47. Let us return again to biblical

simplicity, honesty and integrity.

Satan put an evil seed into the Church in the form of a pursuit for wealth and money and an emphasis upon bricks and mortar and personal kingdom building, it resulted in an unscriptural emphasis on the practice of tithing, and tithing was instituted and made Law in some churches. Tithing came about in the Church, not because of the constraint of divine commands, for it was never instituted in the New Testament Church by the Lord Jesus, the Apostles, or the early Church. **It was not instituted into Church Law of part of the organised church until the council of Macon in 585 A.D.** However, tithing was instituted because of the pressure of heavy demands for large amounts of finances to build and upkeep their church buildings and organisations. So the Devil used this excuse to draw the Church further away from the pure streams of the truth and simplicity of the Gospel, as practiced by the early Church on this very important issue. **We need to remember that the sixth head of the Beast, mentioned in Rev.17v10., was Rome, and that Constantine was part of the Beast, and was under the direct control and influence of Satan himself, and this explains why Constantine's Edict of Toleration in about A.D. 313, had so many evil consequences for the Church.**

The following is a synopsis of the facts stated in "The New Catholic Encyclopaedia in its article on "Tithes," on page 174, of the 1967 edition. It states that the early Church did not have a tithing system. The Old Testament tithing was regarded as being abrogated by the New Testament law of Christ. However, as the church system expanded and became more complex and was more financially demanding, it became necessary to introduce a definite rule on giving which people followed out of a sense of moral obligation or by enforcement of law. The Old Testament practice of tithing was an obvious model, and it began to be taught, mainly in the Western churches, that believers should give tithes of their income. When this view had gathered sufficient support, it was given legal support in parts of the Church. **In A.D. 585, the council of Macon threatened excommunication on those who refused to pay their tithes.** Other local councils made similar decisions, but the repeated warnings of penalties that were to be imposed on those who failed to pay their tithes suggests that they were paid irregularly and reluctantly. **End of synopsis.**

A Synopsis of the 15th. 1992 edition of The New Encyclopaedia Britannica contains the following interesting facts.

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica states that there was serious resistance to tithing as Christianity spread across Europe. We learn that it was as late as the sixth century before it was enjoined by ecclesiastical law, and was enforced by secular law in Europe as late as the 8th. Century. It was only in the 10th. Century that payment of tithes was made obligatory in England under threat of ecclesiastical penalties by Edmund 1st., and with temporal penalties by Edgar. To control abuse of tithing, lay ownership of tithes was outlawed in the 14th. Century by Pope Gregory 7th. Gradually opposition to tithing grew. France repealed tithing after the French revolution (April 4th. 1789), and no compensation was given to tithe holders, and other countries later followed suit. Tithing ended in Italy in 1887, and was abolished in Ireland in 1871, when the Anglican Church was disestablished there. It was 1936 before the tithe rent charges, based on the price of grain, was abolished in England. Tithing was never made a legal requirement in America. The Eastern Orthodox churches have never accepted that tithing was obligatory upon them, and have never paid them. **End of synopsis.**

The 1957 Edition of The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge states about "Tithes," on page 454,455.

That after the reformation the Protestant Churches took over the tithes that had been paid to the Roman Catholic Church, the Catholic Church suffered momentous losses in tithes in consequence of the Reformation. The reformed churches took these tithes, and hardly anyone stated that the exaction of tithes was reprehensible. **Only the Swiss Anabaptists maintained that Christians owed neither tithes nor interest.** It was surprising that the German peasants did not deny their obligation to tithe in their twelve articles of A.D. 1525. **Luther looked upon tithes as a practical and expedient form of taxing, but felt that they should be paid to the temporal sovereignty, but it appears that Luther was overruled, and the Evangelical State Churches retained tithes, but with more strictly redefined adjustments.** **End of synopsis.**

Some Christian leaders have been driven by a strong desire to evangelise as much as it is possible, and they feel that this gives them a good reason to constantly appeal for vast amounts of money. Because of the huge financial demands of Television and Satellite evangelism, there have been excessive demands for finances over the air, and appeals for Christians to sow their biggest seed. One compares these huge demands with the simplicity and financially undemanding evangelism of Jesus and His early Church. When worldly people see money hungry churches, they say with feeling, and with good cause, "It is your money they are after." Worldly kings and rulers may well admire large church power structures, just as Solomon's kingdom was admired by the rulers of the worldly nations around Israel, however, seeking hearts, who are looking for spiritual reality are not deceived by them. Greedy, "grab-all," man-made structures, do not manifest the "give-all" love of God, and, like Israel's religious robbers, they hinder people from knowing and following God. 2Chron.10v4. Mt.21v12-14. Rom.2v23,24.

Christ and his apostles did not start one building project, nor did they make any appeals for finances for their

ministries. **The financial integrity and simplicity of Christ's wonderful ministry is seen in His instructions to His apostles, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Mt.10v8.** The Christians in the churches of Macedonia abounded in liberal giving, even in their poverty, **in order to "minister to saints,"** who were in even greater need. 2Cor.8v1-6. There is no such constraint of love upon Christians when great financial appeals are made for bricks and mortar.

For centuries the Church was based around the homes of believers, and it is a fact of history that the emperors did not allow church buildings to be built until Constantine made his "Edict of Toleration" in 313 A.D., after he "supposedly became a Christian just before his victory in the battle of Milvian Bridge on October 28th. 312. It was at this time that he gave wealth and power to the church leaders. **John Wesley**, and many others, say that this was a disastrous day for the Church, when it lost as much purity, holiness and power, as it had gained in wealth and influence. Up to this time most of the fellowship and evangelism of the church, had been based around the homes of believers. This had resulted in wonderful fellowship between Christians, and a remarkable growth of the Church. Acts.2v1,2,46. 5v42. 12v12. 17v5. 18v7. 20v20. 28v23-31. 10v22. Rom.16v5,23. 1Cor.16v15,16,19. Col.4v15,16. Philemon.v2

Because early Christians met in homes, and did not build churches, financial demands for church buildings did not occur, and this meant that real financial aid could be given to the poor. Paul tells us in 1Cor.16v1,2., "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: v2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. NKJV. **Paul states that the homes of Christians are God's storehouses for the poor.** Bloomfield translates 1Cor.16v2., "'Par heauto,' 'by him.' French, 'chez lui,' 'at home.'" **End of quote.** Vincent translates 1Cor.16v2., "Lay by him in store," "par heauto titheto thesaurizon," Literally, 'put by himself treasuring.' Put by at home." **End of quote.** A.T. Robertson translates 1Cor.16v2., "Lay by him in store," "By himself, in his home." **End of quote.** Barnes states on **1Cor.16v2.**, "Lay by him in store," "par' heauto titheto thesaurizon." Let him lay up at home, treasuring up as he has been prospered. The Greek phrase, "by himself," means, probably, the same as at home." **End of quote.**

When we compare the practice and teaching on giving in the early Church, with the practice and teaching on giving today, we see a great difference in both the amount of requests for money, and the purposes for which it is requested. This great divergence of practice comes from either a failure to realise, or a failure to obey, the New Testament principles of giving. Our Lord's apostolic band did not appeal for money for their mission, or for themselves, there were no collections from their congregations, indeed, they carried a bag of money, which they gave to the needy poor. The vast majority of finances in the early Church were given in response to appeals for the poor, which is certainly not true in most churches today.

Is it a sad fact that the Heavenly places in Christ are experienced by very few of His people today!

When we compare the New Testament practice of giving with the giving demanded today, it becomes obvious that the reason for this difference of practice is a result of a difference in motivation and priorities. The delightful spirit of "one accord," and "having all things in common" is, sadly, usually missing. **Concern for kingdoms has taken the place of concern for people.** The change in the practice of giving is not just due to the fact that the circumstances and patterns of life have changed, it is due more to the many competing church organisations. These often look and act like the kingdoms of the world, and often have a closed-shop attitude to Christians outside of their groups or denominations. Paul says that Christians who manifest a sectarian bigotry are dominated by their evil carnal nature, and are spiritual babes. 1Cor.1v11-13. 3v1-4. 2Pet.1v9. **There are, thank God, many exceptions in all denominations to this blinkered and myopic sectarian outlook; large-hearted leaders recognise other Christians groups beyond their own, and work within the framework of the whole body of Christ.** However, many others compete with an ungodly and worldly zeal for people to be members of their churches. David's sin of numbering the people is executed weekly by many Christian leaders. 2Sam.24v1-25. 1Chron.21v1-30.

Through the pressures of many unscriptural financial demands, the Devil has got much of the Church going after mammon, and this, like the thorns and briars in the parable of the sower, has choked the fruitfulness of the Word of God, and seriously hindered the spiritual growth of the Church. and hindered people from seeking after God and what He can do for them. Mt.6v24. Heb.11v6. It is a great shame that Paul's strong warning, and the beautiful promise to the Hebrews, has gone unheeded by the vast majority of the Church for over 1600 years. **Paul states in Heb.13v5.**, "Let your character or moral disposition be free from love of money [including greed, avarice, lust, and craving for earthly possessions] and be satisfied with your present [circumstances and with what you have]; for He [God] Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. [I will] not,[I will] not, [I will] not in any degree leave you helpless nor forsake nor let [you] down (relax My hold on you)! [Assuredly not!]" (Amplified Version)

Particularly note the paraphrase of Heb 13v5., "I will never fail you nor forsake you," (which is quoted in Gen.28v15. Deut.31v8. Josh.1v5. 1Chron.28v20.), is, "I will never, never, fail thee, let thee sink, or not uphold thee, I will never, never, never, forsake thee, abandon thee, or leave thee in straits." **The Greek of Heb.13v5., has two negatives followed by three negatives.**

It is a tragic fact that very few Churches are places, where hurting and needy people can go and receive help from the Lord Jesus, through His Body, the Church. Jesus greatly desires to continue His earthly ministry, and manifest His power and great love through His Church. See Luke.4v18,19. "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; v19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." NKJV.

See Luke.24v45-49. "And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. v46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the 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 to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. v48 And you are witnesses of these things. v49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." NKJV

It is an historical fact that the Devil used money as the "object of desire" to cause both the Old and New Testament Churches, to go into sin, after having entered their "respective" Canaans. Their spiritual conquest came to an abrupt halt, and Divine judgement was carried out to deal with the guilty parties. In the Old Testament incident, it was the case of **Achan**, who with the full knowledge and participation of his family, taking "the accursed things." This sin by one family brought defeat to the whole of Israel, and caused the Army of Israel to flee defeated from the men of Ai. Joshua.6v18. 7v1-26. Neither Achan nor any member of his family owned up to the sin, when it came to light that this was the reason for Israel's defeat at the hands of the men of Ai. It took an investigation, with all the tribes, families, households, and man-by-man, having to pass before the Lord, and it was only when Achan stood before the Lord that he confessed his sin. Joshua.7v20,21., states: "And Achan answered Joshua and said, "Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I have done: When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, **two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels**, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it."

The result was that Divine judgement was carried out, we read in Joshua.7v24-26., "Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day." So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. Then they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day." **It was ONLY after the sin had been dealt with by the whole of Israel that they were then able to have victory from the Lord and conquer their enemies.** The people of Jericho were obviously infected with some very serious diseases for God to give such strong quarantine instructions. They could have been polluted with advanced cases of aids, it is a fact that in Africa many villages have been almost wiped out with aids.

The New Testament occurrence is that concerning **Ananias and Sapphira**, Acts.5v1-11., who, having sold a property, agreed between themselves, to keep back some of the money for themselves, and give the remainder to the Church, but then lied saying that the sum given was the total amount that they had sold the property for. Acts.5v1-3., states: "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And **kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said,** Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" Peter says that the "idea" to keep back some of the money, came directly from the Devil. The Devil had found in the Church at Jerusalem, two persons whom he knew, after having sold the property would want to keep some of the money for themselves, and give the rest to the Church, and because they wanted to "look better" in the eyes of other Christians, instead of just saying they had kept some money back for "such and such," they lied and said that they had given all of the money that the property had been sold for. God knew that this sin would go on to infect much of the Church and so He had to act.

It should be noted, that **neither** Ananias nor Sapphira were possessed by the Devil (or any other evil spirit for that matter). The Devil simply "energised" his evil plans into their minds, with strong seductive power. Ananias and Sapphira could and should have resisted this attempt to bring deceit into the Church, and **NOT** yielded to, but they foolishly cooperated with the Devil. Eph.2v2. 6v12. James.4v6,7. This was a serious attempt by Satan to corrupt the Church, He intended to use them to get others to follow their example, and so bring serious sin and deception into the Church.

In this instance God acted directly, and Ananias and Sapphira died instantly, when both were separately confronted by Peter, who had had their sin revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. If God had not acted in this way, the beautiful fervent love, unity and fellowship of the Church would have been completely destroyed, and done the Church great harm. But the result of God dealing by Divine judgement with this incident is recorded in Acts.5v11-16. "**And great fear came upon all the church**, and upon as many as heard these things. And **by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people;** and they

were all with one accord ("**homothumadon**" 3661, **same minded, with one mind**) in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. **And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.** There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: **and they were healed every one."**

There was a real "healthy fear" of God in the early Church at Jerusalem, the beautiful love, unity and fellowship had been fully preserved, with the result was, that there was an even greater manifestation of God's presence and power through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Such was the anointing on Peter, that when sick people were close enough to Peter for his shadow to fall upon them as they were lying upon their beds in the street, they were healed, and absolutely everyone who was sick was healed. Acts 5v16, "**and they were all healed."** NKJV.

The Lord Jesus fulfilled the promise of **Psalm 133** to the Church at Jerusalem in an even greater way, than before the Ananias and Sapphire incident. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren **to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."** Please Note: "**there the LORD commanded the blessing,**" it is not just a promise of blessing, but a promise **with** a command of blessing from the Lord. So we can see that this beautiful love, unity and fellowship that distinguished the Church at Jerusalem was very pleasing to the Trinity. This beautiful love, fellowship and unity, is a fulfilment of Our Lord's prayer in John.17v21-23., it is this lovely oneness and unity that enabled the Lord Jesus to give His glory, which is His Presence and power, to the Church at Jerusalem, and if the Lord's Church today imitates the early Church at Jerusalem, this will again enable the Lord Jesus to fill His Body, the Church, with His Presence and power, to answer the earnest requests of a needy world and Church. This is truly the "more excellent way." 1Cor.12v31. 14v1.

The Lord Jesus sums it all up in Mt.6v24-33. esp. v24,31-33. "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon...**Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **For after all these things the Gentiles seek.** For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."** NKJV.

The individual believer or Church who seeks after money and wealth instead of seeking after God, becomes in His eyes like a Gentile, and He will certainly not take this believer or Church into their Heavenly Canaan and anoint them with the power of the Holy Spirit, for "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." Mark.4v19. The Devil used the desire of money and wealth again on another occasion with devastating consequences when Solomon had died, and his son Rehoboam was to be crowned king over the 12 tribes of Israel. 1Kings 12v1-24. **We read in 1Kings.12v4.** "Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his **heavy yoke** which he put on us, and we will serve you." NKJV. The "heavy yoke" referred to consisted of two things mainly, heavy taxation and forced labour. 1Kings.4v19-23,27. 1Kings.5v13,14. Rehoboam dismissed the people of Israel for three days, until he consulted his advisors, who were the elders who advised his father Solomon while he still lived, and the young men who had grown up with him. The elders advised him to lighten the yoke that his father Solomon had put on them. **1Kings.12v7,9.** But the young advised the exact opposite, and suggested that he should say, **1Kings.12v10,11.;** "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist! And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!" After three days Rehoboam and all the people of Israel assembled before Rehoboam again, and when Rehoboam had told them his decision, we read in 1Kings.12v16,19., "So when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying: "What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, O David!" So Israel departed to their tents. **So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day."**

Rehoboam's loveless greed and total disregard for the welfare of his subjects, resulted in the ten Northern tribes of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) splitting from Judah and Benjamin (the Southern Kingdom), and they became two completely separate kingdoms. Even after this rash stupidity, Rehoboam still went ahead to collect the taxes of the Northern Kingdom, by sending Adoram, who was promptly stoned to death. This prompted Rehoboam to come back to Jerusalem, assemble a large army with the intention of going to war against the Northern Kingdom, in an attempt to bring them back under his control, but the word of the Lord through Shemaiah, the man of God, put a stop to this. 1Kings.12v23,24. "Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel. Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from Me."

The acquisition of great amounts of gold and silver by Israel's kings, was strictly forbidden by God in the Law. Deut.17v14-20. esp. v17 "nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself." However, Solomon had gathered vast amounts of Gold and silver to himself, and Rehoboam proposed to continue this to an even greater extent.

The prophet Samuel had warned all Israel that if they had a king set over them, that this king, **1Sam.8v1-22., esp. v14-17.**, "will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants."

This is exactly what happened, Israel rejected the loving compassionate rule of the God of Love, whose first name is "Merciful Compassion." **Exod.34v6,7.** "**Rachum,**" "**The merciful Being,**" "**who is full of tenderness and compassion.**" They desired a king like the nations around them; and they got what they desired, a worldly-minded king, who became dominated and used by the Devil. 1John.4v16. 1Sam.8v6,19. The effect upon Israel of their rejection of the Lord, in preference for a king, bears a strong resemblance to what happened to the Church when Constantine "supposedly" got converted. In both cases the people of God started to trust in earthly things, money, wealth, power etc, and not in the Lord, or what He could do for them.

The pattern of Government under the Judges, when Israel went into and settled in Canaan, was Divine in its origin, just as the informal fellowship meetings, patterned on the Last Supper were. **So in both cases, the Divine Order became replaced by man's order.** The Judges who judged Israel were always Divinely appointed, whereas, the kings of Israel were generally appointed by heredity, and at times by murder and other evil means, to gain kingly power.

Before Constantine the ministries of the early Church, were largely appointed by the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus, and empowered by Him to fulfil their ministries. However, afterwards the different Church offices were appointed by carnal and spiritually dead men, who in turn appointed other spiritually dead men, which really was the case of the "blind leading the blind." Mt.23v1-39. esp. v16,17,19,24,26. It was undoubtedly the Devil who gave Constantine a false and lying vision which brought about his "supposed" conversion, for Satan then used him to give great wealth, and power to the Church, and used this to corrupt much of it, with the result that the Church then only had a "form of godliness but denied its power." 2Tim.3v5.

Why did this happen? The answer must be that the vast majority of the leaders of the Church had failed to teach their converts truth and lead them into a living experience of that truth, and a real walk with God. The result that they didn't know the presence and power of the Lord Jesus either in their lives or in their fellowship meetings. This is exactly what happened to Israel after they partially conquered Canaan. Joshua, the Elders, Priests and Levites had failed to teach truth to the next generation, and lead them into an experience of God and His truth, and they spiritually perished as a result. Hos.4v6.

We read in **Judges.2v7-12.**, "So the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel. Now Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died when he was one hundred and ten years old. And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, **another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work, which He had done for Israel. Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers....**" Moses had succeeded through his prayers, intercessions, and mighty signs and wonders, to lead the first and second generations into an experience of God, and His Truth, Presence and Power. However, the first generation failed to continue to walk with God, and sinned greatly, and apostatised, except for Joshua and Caleb. Heb.3v16-19. After the death of Moses Joshua, the Elders, Priests and Levites failed to manifest the glory of God to the people, and when they died the people backslid into idolatry. Judges.2v7-14. **Samuel** tried to bring a revelation of God to the people, and started training young men, so they might "imbibe" of his spirit and enter into their Heavenly Canaan, and experience the power of God, and exercise prophetic ministry. 1Sam.19v20. It was the inspiration of the example and mighty prayers and intercessions of Samuel that achieved their development into prophetic ministry.

Other Old Testament examples of this are, **Elijah and Elisha.** Elijah was a truly great prophet, and was responsible for developing the prophetic ministries of "the sons of the prophets." 2Kings.2v1-7. Elijah, through his prayers and intercessions, also developed Elisha's prophetic ministry over a 10-year period, so that when Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elisha received a "double portion" of the Holy Spirit. The "double portion" here referred to is that of the "first-born" (eldest) son. Deut.21v17. Elisha wanted God to show by the anointing upon him that he was God's appointed successor to Elijah, and had a far greater ministry and anointing than any of the other "sons of the prophets." Elisha desired the same anointing and power of the Holy Spirit that Elijah had, so that all would know that after Elijah's transportation to Heaven, he was now the foremost prophet in Israel, and he certainly received that "double portion." **See 2Kings.2v9-15. esp. v9 &**

15. "And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me...Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him."

We see the perfect example of this in the short earthly life and ministry of the Lord Jesus, who was a prophet like unto Moses. Deut.18v15. Acts.3v22. 7v37. Jesus, during His earthly ministry, like Moses, through His example and strong fervent prayers and intercessions, carried the Apostles and the rest of 120 in the Upper room through into the experience of the great power and presence of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. This enabled His Church to witness powerfully to the Gospel, and tell of His resurrection and ascension into Heaven. Luke.24v29. John.7v37-39. Acts.1v8. 2v1-47.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON TITHING.

I recently read a book on tithing, which contained some of the questions that people ask about tithing. I have on many occasions been asked most of the very same questions about tithing and giving. **However, my answers to these questions have usually been quite different from those given in the book that I read. I almost wondered if we read the same Bible. I fear that some of the answers that these advocates of tithing give to these questions, are the result of a coveting of people's money that would make Scrooge and Marley jealous.** I briefly state the answers that the book on tithing, and many preachers who believe in tithing, give to these questions, and then show why these answers are unscriptural and untrue.

In many churches tithing is demanded from all, rich or poor alike, and those who challenge the Scriptural truth of this practice are looked upon as unspiritual rebels. The greedy religious leaders of Israel had increased the financial demands upon God's people, until in Christ's time they taught that God demanded a double tithe each year from God's people, and a triple tithe every third year. Many preachers today say that God demands a tithe from their congregations, and state that Christians who do not tithe are under a curse; some even advise Christians to follow the extortionate Jewish demand of double tithing. I wish to expose these appalling teachings, which have deeply troubled and financially and spiritually injured many dear Christians.

1. Should we tithe on our gross income or net income?

The advocates of tithing completely distort the Scriptures when they say, that those who tithe only on their net income after deductions are forgetting that the deductions ultimately belong to them. They falsely say that tithing only on the "net" income after deductions is giving grudgingly and undermines and militates against God's promise of blessing, and shows a person does not really believe that they cannot out-give God. **This is a complete distortion of the Scriptures.** The deductions that governments make are not ultimately for the person who gives them; they are for the welfare state and other government expenditure. **These preachers ignore the fact that the tithe was Israel's income tax for their welfare state, and that those who tithe on their tax are paying tax twice on the same money. Since Israel's tithe was the tax for the welfare state of Israel, so tax paid to our country for the welfare state must be taken into account in our Christian giving.** Some people I know have had real financial problems, because they were paying half or more of their income in tax, and were trying to tithe on their gross income. They were already paying over five times Israel's tithe towards the poor and needy and other needs of their country, and this must be taken into account in deciding the amount they give to the needs put before them. **Demanding a tithe from the net income of Christians in such circumstances is a sin; and asking them to tithe on their gross income is even more wicked. What a Christian pays in tax has to be taken into account in their giving to God's work.**

2. Many preachers rob the poor by saying that the poor should tithe, or they rob God.

a. Should I tithe when my tithe is small?

Many preachers quote the story about the widow's mite in Mk.12v41-44., to justify taking tithes off poor widows. Our Lord said that in God's eyes the widow's gift of two mites amounted to more than all the other gifts put into the Temple treasury. God sees the heart, and not the amount that is given. This widow gave out of love for God, but she should, by command of the Law of God, been receiving tithes, not giving them. Tithes were to be given to the widow, poor, fatherless and stranger, not taken from them. Deut.10v18,19. 14v29. 16v11,14. 24v17-22. 26v12-15. God certainly did not want this poor widow to give all her money and living into the Temple treasury. It is quite intolerable and wicked to make the story of the widow's mite, a pretext for demanding tithes from widows and the poor. A curse comes upon those who oppress widows and the poor in this way. Deut.27v19. Is.1v17,23. Jer.7v6,7. 22v3-5. Ezek.22v7,8. Zech.7v9-14. N.B. v10. Mal.3v5. Our Lord said the religious leaders of Israel were going to Hell for their robbery of widows. Mt.23v14,33.

b. They blatantly and shamelessly say that it is not a hardship for the poor to tithe.

Some preachers say that the poor rob God if they do not tithe, and that it is fair, reasonable, and a high privilege for them to tithe, and no hardship. They promise the poor that tithing will bring them into a potentially intimate relationship with God. **This is a wicked doctrine! It is the very opposite of the truth,**

for God clearly states that the poor should receive tithes, not give them. God provided for the poor through the tithe. Lev.23v22. Deut.10v18. 14v29. 16v11-14. 24v19-21. 26v12,13. Ps.82v3. Is.1v17. English law recognises that it is not fair or reasonable for the poor to pay taxes, and this is reflected in personal allowances. God's law is much more thoughtful, kind and just. Extortionate demands for tithes certainly does not bring the poor into an intimate relationship with God, this unreasonable burden produces a spiritual barrier between the person and God, rather than spiritual intimacy. When the poor pay tithes they groan under a heavy yoke and burden, they do not think that it is a high privilege. N.B. 1King.12v3,4,13-15. 2Chron.10v4. **It is positively wicked to suggest that this heavy and grievous financial yoke is put upon the poor by our Lord, for we know that His yoke is gentle and kind. Mt.11v28-30.**

In Mt.23v13-39., our Lord castigated the Scribes and Pharisees for hypocrisy; He said in v23, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." **Our Lord warns that a person can tithe diligently, and yet be a hypocrite and totally estranged from God, and bound for Hell. Mt.23v33.** When Jesus said in reference to tithing, "these ought ye to have done;" He does not mean that all should tithe; He was addressing the rich and covetous Scribes and Pharisees, who loved, and made, a lot of money. When Jesus warned them, "You cannot serve God and Mammon," they turned up their noses at Jesus and treated Him with contempt and derision. Lk.16v13-15. **In Lk.16v14., "derided" is "exemukterizon,"** the imperfect of "ekmukterizo," to turn up the nose, to sneer and scoff at, to show disrespect and contempt. Those who say that God demands tithes from the poor are following the example of these unjust and greedy Scribes and Pharisees. Jesus said the religious leaders of Israel had made God's house a den of robbers, and were bound for Hell because of their wickedness. Mt.21v12-15. 23v33. By claiming God's authority for their unjust and heavy financial demands on the people, the religious leaders of Israel had likened God to an unjust tax collector who extorted money from the poor.

It is a terrible lie and grievous sin to say that the poor, who do not tithe, are robbing God, and are under His curse. Indeed, the very opposite is true, Paul said, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law." Gal.3v13. **To accuse the poor of robbing God is a religious blackmail of the worst kind, and an appalling slander of the character of God; He is the defender of the poor. Ps.146v5-9. Those who mercilessly extort tithes from the poor can expect severe judgement from God.** Judas deprived the poor of money by stealing from the poor bag, his love of money ended up in apostasy and eternal judgement. Jn.12v6. 13v29. **In Mal.3v7-10., the Jews were robbing the poor as well as the Levite of their sustenance, and this is why God said that they were under a curse for not tithing. There was no food in the storehouse for the poor and needy, they were robbing the poor by not giving them the tithes. It follows, therefore, that Churches which demand tithes and fail to minister to the poor from their financial resources are under a curse.** In 1Cor.16v1-3., Paul said that only Christians who prospered should give, not the poor, for they received gifts. Paul tells the Christians at Corinth, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him." **The home of the prosperous believer is now the place, where finances are stored for the poor.** On this occasion the gifts were for the poor at Jerusalem; and even in this good work Paul tells the Christians not to give to such an extent that they are overburdened through relieving the poor. 2Cor.8v12,13.

It is a striking fact that the gifts and offerings, which were requested by the apostles in the New Testament, were used for the poor. Act.2v44,45. 4v32-37. 6v1,2. 11v27-30. 1Cor.16v1-3. 2Cor.8v1-9. Compare 1Cor.9v7-18. Jesus never asked for tithes or gifts from anyone, indeed Christ's apostolic band carried a bag of money to provide for the poor. The early Church followed Christ's example and aided the poor, this practical expression of love was one of the major reasons why the revival started and continued with such power. Churches cannot expect revival blessing if they fail to imitate this one accord love, which produces financial aid to the poor. **The early Church chose to minister to the poor rather than build expensive church buildings.**

c. Should we tithe when we are in debt? Should we not pay our debts first?

Many preachers say that it is a high crime and sin not to pay our tithes even when we are debt. **This disgraceful religious extortion totally ignores the facts on giving in the Scriptures.** God commanded Israel to feed the poor, and meeting the needs of the poor was a major priority of the early Church. Deut.14v22,28,29. 26v12-15. Gal.6v10. These modern extortionists do not differentiate between the wealthy and the poor, they are usually only interested in building their religious kingdoms; and they wilfully ignore the scriptural practice of giving food, and shelter to the poor and homeless. Thanks be to God there are many, like "The Salvation Army," who are shining examples of dedicated caring for the poor and homeless. Those who demand tithes from the poor have made the commandment and Word of God of none effect by their unscriptural tradition and doctrine on tithing. This was the very sin of the Scribes and Pharisees, they laid aside and rejected the commandments of God and taught as doctrines the commandments of men. Jesus shows the permanent and continuous rejection of God's Word by the Scribes and Pharisees by using "akurontes," the present active participle of "akuroo," which means to cancel or revoke, to render null and void. Mk.7v6-13. Mt.15v1-9. N.B. v6,9. **Woe to those who make void God's care and concern for the poor.**

Teaching on giving cannot be Biblical when it omits any reference of giving to the poor, and contradicts the Scriptures on so many points. Paul informs us in 2Cor.8v12-15., that giving should be

according to our resources, and that we should not give, if by easing the burdens of others, we ourselves are overburdened. 2Cor.8v12,13. Paul makes it very clear, that cheerful giving is for those who have the resources to do so; and that the giving that is mentioned here, is giving to the Christian poor. 1Cor.8v14. 9v9.

d. Should children or teenagers tithe?

Even those who believe in tithing should recognise, that if a child's parents tithe, then as a child's income is received from their parents, it has already been tithed upon. Some preachers say that children should tithe, because God expects them to learn to tithe. **This is in direct contradiction to God's Law for Israel, which stated that only the head of the house should tithe. Deut.26v11.** Insisting that young people should give tithes to their church could put them off Christianity altogether, and make them feel that God, and their church, are only after their money.

e. Should a pensioner tithe their pension?

Many preachers state that pensioners should tithe, and say that a Christian would want to tithe to their last breath, even if their retirement income had already been tithed upon. This disgraceful statement reveals the covetous spirit of those who believe such things. I know of pensioners, who out of pure love for God save up their small finances in order to go to foreign countries to evangelise, these dedicated souls should be supported in their ministries, not expected to tithe. We are to honour such people, not rob them. Lev.19v32. The poor should receive tithes, not give them, just as they did in Israel. Deut.10v18. 14v29. 16v11,14. 24v19-21. 26v12,13. 27v19. Those who extort money from the poor never mention these Scriptures.

f. Should students tithe their grant? Some preachers challenge students to tithe on the net amount, which exceeds tuition fees, like a person in business would do. It is quite unjust to expect the same response from a poor student as a prosperous businessman. Most students are poor and often leave college or university thousands of pounds in debt; it is quite unreasonable to ask them to tithe. **Those who preach that students should tithe their grant are oppressing the poor.**

3. Should we keep personal records of our giving?

Many preachers say that Christians should keep records of their giving, however, this is often only a means of ensuring that all the tithes come their way. Jesus tells us that when we give, we are not to let our left hand know what our right hand is doing, and that our giving must be in secret, or we have no reward. Mt.6v3,4. In many churches everyone knows exactly what people give, because a record is kept of the numbered envelopes, and there is a weekly checks on a person's giving. Can present day expediency cancel out this command of Christ? Many preachers advocate covenant giving, and tax returned can help needy causes, but covenanting can cause problems, for it can take away our flexibility of giving for several years, unless the charity that the money is covenanted to is one that allows you to direct your giving in the way that you desire. As we have seen, giving in the early Church was voluntary, so the keeping of records of giving is not necessary.

4. Should our tithes be paid weekly or monthly? Should we pay back tithes?

Many preachers say that we should tithe weekly if we are paid weekly, or monthly if we are paid monthly. This contradicts the Law, which said the head of the household should pay a tithe on their increase once a year. Some preachers say that back tithes should not be paid, for when God forgives, He forgets. **However, we do not need to ask God for forgiveness over failure to tithe, for it is a fact that the early Church did not practice tithing, the demand to tithe was not made until five centuries later, and then only in some Western churches.**

5. Has the New Testament ministry to be supported like the Old Testament priesthood?

Many preachers say that the New Testament ministry succeeded that of the Levitical priesthood, and that it has the right to be sustained in the same way as the Levitical priesthood. While it is quite true that, in 1Cor.9v9-14., Paul compares support of the Levitical priesthood with the Christian ministry. However, it is not true to say that the Levitical priesthood has been replaced by a Christian priestly ministry, for the Scriptures clearly state that in this age, ALL Christians are kings and priests, and have a priestly ministry with our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus. 1Pet.2v9. Rev.1v6. Heb.13v15. 1Tim.2v1. Col.4v12.

In Gal.6v6., Paul states the principle of Christian ministry support, "Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches." In 1Cor.9v13,14., Paul quotes from such Scriptures as Lev.6v16. and Numb.18v7-21., when he states; "Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the Temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? v14. Even so has the Lord commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel." "Commanded," is "diatassen," the aorist indicative active of "diatasso," to give an order, to command. The aorist tense shows it was referring to a past command by Jesus. Paul could be referring to Mt.10v8-10., and Lk.10v4-8., or some unrecorded saying of Jesus, such as Acts.20v35., where Paul quotes, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

In 1Cor.9v9., Paul uses Deut.25v4., "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treads out the corn;" to justify support for the Christian ministry. In 1Tim.5v17,18., Paul again quotes Deut.25v4., and then writes, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour with wearisome toil in the Word and teaching. v18. For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle the ox that treads

out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his hire." **In Lk.10v7.** our Lord said, "The labourer is worthy of his hire," with exactly the same Greek construction as in 1Tim.5v18., "ho ergates tou misthou autou." **In Mt.10v10.**, Jesus says, "The labourer is worthy of his food," using "tes trophes," i.e. food, instead of "tou misthou," i.e. hire, or wages. Paul quotes the words of Jesus to show the authority for his teaching. However, Jesus and his apostles were content to live at subsistence level for the Gospel's sake; this is totally different from the demands and expectations of many modern preachers. **Paul does teach that the Christian ministry has a right to financial support; however, Paul was speaking of the simple and financially undemanding structure of the early Church, not the financially demanding, complex and competitive church structures of our present day.**

Those who reject the organisational simplicity of the early Church and build expensive personal and denominational kingdoms will find, as Samuel warned in 1Sam.87-22., that religious kingdoms can be very expensive to run and upkeep. However, those who make this choice, and employ full time Pastors should support them. 1Cor.9v14. Sadly, some Pastors are badly treated by their congregations. God is certainly very upset when godly and devoted servants of God are defrauded of proper support by the Christian congregations that employ them. It is a fact that some members of churches have tried to, "Starve out," genuine servants of God by withholding financial support from them. God is very displeased with this, and it can result in Divine judgement. In Mal.3v5., God says that the sin of oppressing the hireling in his wages and the widow, the fatherless and stranger, is as bad as sorcery, adultery, and perjury; we read, "And I will come near you for judgement; I will be a swift witness against sorcerers, against adulterers, against perjurers, against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, and against those who turn away an alien; because they do not fear Me," says the LORD of hosts."

James makes a similar statement in James.5v4., we read, "Indeed the wages of the labourers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." See Lev.19v13., "You shall not cheat your neighbour, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning." See Jer.22v13., "Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by injustice, who uses his neighbour's service without wages and gives him nothing for his work,"

It is lovely to see the sacrificial leadership of Nehemiah; he fed 150 people every day, and for 12 years did not take a penny for being the governor of Israel. Neh.5v14-19. Nehemiah, like Paul, did not take advantage of his rights; such people are a shining example of sacrificial service. Our Lord was the supreme example of this sacrificial love and service. Let us imitate Him.

6. Is the storehouse always the church you attend?

Almost all preachers say the storehouse is the church that people attend, and that it is wrong to give tithes to ministries like a missionary society, a Bible Society, a Christian organisation, or a Television ministry, or even the poor. They say that the local church is the storehouse and the tithes should be given into it, and that only offerings beyond the tithe can be given outside the church. This viewpoint ignores the fact that the Law stated that every three years the storehouse was the home of the believer, the tithes were to be given to the Levites and needy from "**within the gates**" of the person who was tithing, and they were not taken to Jerusalem. Deut.14v28,29.

The following Greek scholars state that 1Cor.16v2. teaches that the storehouse is a Christian's home.

Kenneth Weust translates 1Cor.16v2., "On every first day of the week let each one of you have the habit of **putting aside at home** whatever he may be prospered in, accumulating and keeping it in reserve, in order that when I may come, then there may not be any collections."

A.T. Robertson writes on 1Cor.16v2., in his "Word Pictures in the New Testament.." "Lay by him in store, ("par' heautoi titheto thesaurizon.") By himself, **in his home.** Treasuring it (cf. Matt.6v19f. for "thesaurizo"). **Have the habit of doing it, "titheto" (present imperative).** As he may prosper ("hoti ean euodotai"). Old verb from "eu," well, and "hodos," way or journey, to have a good journey, to prosper in general, common in Septuagint. In N.T. only here and Rom.1v10. and 3John.v2." **End of quote.** **Bloomfield** translates the KJV "lay by him in store." "**Par heauto,**" **'by him.'** French, **'chez lui,' 'at home.'**"

Alford's Greek Testament translates it, "let each of you **lay up at home in store** whatever he may by prosperity have acquired (lit. 'whatever he may be prospered in:' i.e. the pecuniary result of any prosperous adventure, or dispensation of Providence)."

Christian, the storehouse is by you, at your home! If you are prosperous, save a hoard of treasure for the poor, "especially those who are of the household of faith." Gal.6v9,10. Paul said, that if we can, we should save up sufficient resources, to help out those who are in need, who come across our path. In 1Cor.16v1-3., Paul tells the Corinthians that they were only to give if they were prospering, and could afford it, and that these finances were to be used for the poor at Jerusalem, and not for the ministry. Notice how Paul made absolutely sure that others supervised the finances, he kept himself free from criticism. Many preachers say that the local church is,

"the storehouse," however, this is often an expensive church structure, whose building and upkeep swallow up all the finances that are poured into it, and which fail to provide relief for the for the poor, which was the prime directive on the giving of finances in the early Church. Such churches are certainly not "storehouses" for people in need, and so they come under the condemnation and curse in Mal.3v7-10., that God threatened the Jews with. God's blessing came upon the Jerusalem Church because of their one accord, and caring love for the poor, as Is.58v5-12. promised and prophesied.

As we have previously stated, there are Scriptural grounds for the financial support of ministries; however, we need to examine closely the integrity, honesty and spirituality of any ministry that we support. The excessive and extortionate financial appeals of some Television ministries and evangelists are quite appalling, and they offend and disgust both Christians and unbelievers. Peter warns us against them. 2Pet.2v1-3. Their financial appeals and wealth contrast sharply with the voluntary poverty of our Lord, and His command, "Freely you have received, freely give." Mt.10v8. It is also certainly wrong to support ministers who are morally corrupt, or deny the Scriptures, or oppose the work of the Holy Spirit; for Paul tells us to turn away from such. 2Tim.3v5. Such churches cannot be called "God's storehouse." However, there are ministries inside religious organisations that are worthy of support, and others outside of religious organisations, like our Lord and His apostles that deserve financial backing. The Israelites supported the religion that opposed and murdered Jesus; let us be careful who we support.

CONCLUSION.

THE SIMPLE, UNDEMANDING FINANCIAL STRUCTURE OF EARLY CHURCH ORGANISATION.

a. The poverty of Jesus and His early Church leaders.

Some preachers have built their own personal kingdoms and gone after wealth and prosperity. **They try to justify their greedy demands for money by saying that Jesus was wealthy. This is an appalling and positively evil lie; for it denies the totally sacrificial nature of the incarnation, life and ministry of Jesus.** When Paul says Jesus "became poor" in 2Cor.8v9., he uses "epitochousen," the aorist active indicative of the verb "ptochuo," (Strong 4433), **to be poor, to be reduced to abject poverty.** The adjective "ptochos," (Strong 4434), means cowering like a beggar, **and it describes someone who is poor and totally destitute of the necessities of life, and who only manages to survive through the alms and kindness of others.** This is in contrast to "penes," which describes someone who is poor, but they are still able to provide for themselves. In 2Cor.8v9., the word for "poverty," is the noun "ptochia," (Strong 4432), it speaks of abject poverty, and complete financial want. The aorist tense makes it clear that the whole event of Christ's incarnation is here referred to; Jesus became totally penniless, to give us heaven's riches. Praise his wonderful Name! Our Lord's love has always been totally sacrificial. Those who say our Lord was rich, not only deny the sacrificial nature of our Lord's ministry, they also reject both the facts stated in 2Cor.8v9., and the authority and inspiration of our Lord and Paul; it is another Gospel, and is under a curse. Gal.1v6-12.

We see from 1Cor.9v14., that the Lord Himself commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. However, as we have previously seen, the pastors and teachers of the churches usually worked and kept themselves. We read in 1Cor.9v12-18., that Paul himself gloried in the fact, that whenever possible, he preached the Gospel at his own expense, and continually renounced his rights to financial support. Paul writes in 1Cor.9v12, "Nevertheless we did not make use of this right of ours; but bear all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ." Again in 1Cor.9 v15., Paul says, "I have not made use of these things in even one instance, and at present I continue the same policy." K. Wuest. Paul continues to say He would rather die than let anyone deprive him of this source of glorying. In 1Cor.9v18., Paul said his pay and reward was the satisfaction of preaching the Gospel of Christ without charge, and states that he did not abuse, or use to the full, his right to be financially supported by those to whom he ministered.

Paul reminds the elders of Ephesus that he worked with his hands to keep himself and the other evangelists that were with him for the three years that he was at Ephesus. Acts.20v17,31-34. Many of Christ's disciples also suffered total poverty for His sake. Lk.6v20,22. The Christians at Smyrna suffered total destitution for their faith, Jesus said that they were materially poor, but spiritually rich. Jesus said the Laodicean Christians were materially rich but spiritually bankrupt. Rev.2v8,9. 3v14-22. Consider Mt.5v3., those who recognise their total spiritual poverty receive the riches of heaven.

b. Do our modern Church structures imitate the early Church structures?

This is the crux of the matter. The answer is that they certainly do not! The spirit of competition between denominations has resulted in the duplication of expensive buildings in modern day Christianity. We need to examine our church organisations in the light of the voluntary poverty of Christ, and the financially undemanding and simple structure of His early Church. It is quite wrong to use Scriptures that speak of ministerial support to justify the multiplied Church structures of today, which often vigorously compete with each other for members. Christ and His early Church placed no financial demands upon the people that they ministered to. They never asked for finances for church buildings, none were built before Emperor Constantine supposedly became a Christian in about A.D. 313.

Solomon used the finances and abilities of the people of God to fulfil every idea that came into his mind, until

the people groaned beneath the heavy burden that he placed upon them. When Rehoboam tried to increase the burden on the people they refused, and walked out on him, and the kingdom was divided. 1Kings.12v3-19. N.B. v3,4,13,14. It is a sin to overburden the people of God as Solomon did. Financially demanding huge church organisations and expensive church buildings are diametrically opposed to the practice of Christ and His early Church. **Stephen said Israel's religious leaders had always resisted the Holy Spirit, and throughout history men's religious kingdoms have resisted the kingdom of God more than they have aided it. Acts.7v47-53. Jesus said that Israel's religious leaders praised the prophets of the past, but opposed and murdered them in the present.** The Jews revered Moses, but Moses would have been hated just as much as Jesus if he had lived in their day. Mt.23v29-35. Lk.16v31.

c. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law. Gal.3v13.

This study has been written to defend Christians, particularly the poor, from the lie that they are under a curse if they do not tithe. It is those who try to deceive Christians by insisting that the Law on tithing still applies, who are under a curse, not those who do not tithe, for Paul states in Gal.3v10., "Those who take their stand on observance of the Law are all under a curse." Gal3v1-5. Paul assures us in Gal.3v13., that "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law," so Christians cannot be under a curse for not tithing. Those who demand tithes on the basis of the Law are really Judaizers in disguise. Paul clearly states in Gal.3v6-9,13-18,25-29., that believing Gentiles receive the blessing of Abraham, and are under the covenant of promise like Abraham, and are Abraham's seed, and not under the Law. Paul again writes in Gal.5v4., "If you try to be justified by way of Law, your relationship with Christ is automatically completely severed: you have fallen away out of the domain of God's grace." Is it not a falling from grace to state that Christians who do not tithe are under a curse?

In Col.2v14-16., Paul tells us that Christ has blotted out, annulled and nailed to His cross, the ordinances of the Law which were opposed to us. Paul states that we are not to allow anyone to sit in judgement on us over matters of the Law, in respect to eating or drinking, or over feast days, new moons or Sabbaths, which were a shadow of what was to come. In Rom.14v4-6., Paul again states that it is even a matter of conscience whether we keep the Sabbath or not, he says, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." These Scriptures prove that the Law no longer binds Christians, and this includes tithing.

d. The early Church priorities and motivations compared with today.

When we compare the New Testament practice of giving with today, it becomes obvious that the reason for this difference of practice is a result of a difference in motivation and priorities. The delightful spirit of "one accord," and "having all things in common" is, sadly, usually missing. **Concern for man-made kingdoms has taken the place of concern for people.** The change in the practice of giving is not just due to the fact that the circumstances and patterns of life have changed, it is due more to the many competing church organisations. These often look and act like the kingdoms of the world, and often have a closed-shop attitude to Christians outside of their groups or denominations. Paul says that Christians who manifest a sectarian bigotry are dominated by the evil carnal nature and are spiritual babes. 1Cor.1v11-13. 3v1-4. 2Pet.1v9. There are, thank God, many exceptions in all denominations to this blinkered and myopic sectarian outlook; large-hearted leaders recognise other Christians groups beyond their own, and work within the framework of the whole body of Christ. However, many others cannot see beyond their own denomination, and compete with an ungodly and worldly spirit for people to be members of their churches. David's sin of numbering is executed weekly by many Christian leaders. 2Sam.24v1-25. 1Chron.21v1-30.

e. Most pastors and leaders in the early Church worked for a living.

The Church historian, the Rev. Edwin Hatch states on page 147 and 148 of his book, "The Organisation of the Early Christian Churches:" **"The funds of the primitive communities had consisted entirely of voluntary offerings. Of these offerings those officers whose circumstances required it were entitled to a share. They received such a share only on the ground of their poverty. They were, so far, in the position of the widows and orphans and helpless poor. Like soldiers in the Roman army, or like slaves in a Roman household, they were entitled to a monthly allowance. The amount of that allowance was variable.** When the Montanists proposed to pay their clergy a fixed salary the proposal was condemned as a heretical innovation, alien to Catholic practice. (Eusebius H.E.5.18.2.: 5.28.10:) Those who could supplemented their allowances by farming or by trade. There was no sense of incongruity in their doing so. The Apostolical Constitutions repeat with emphasis the apostolical injunction, 'If any man would not work, neither should he eat.' Const. Apos. 2.62. 2Thes.3v10,12. 1Thes.4v11. There is no early trace of the later idea that buying and selling, handicraft and farming were in themselves inconsistent with the office of a Christian minister. The bishops and presbyters of those early days kept banks, practised medicine, wrought as silver smiths, tended sheep, or sold their goods in the open market. **They were like the second generation of non-juring bishops a century and a half ago (about 1730), or like the early preachers of the Wesleyan Methodists.** They were men of the world taking part in the ordinary business of life. The point about which the Christian communities were anxious was, not that their officers should cease to trade, but that in this as in other respects, they should be ensamples to the flock. The chief existing enactments of early councils on this point are that bishops are not to huckster their goods from market to market, nor are they to use their position to buy cheaper and sell dearer than other people."

In his notes at the bottom of page 148, Hatch continues to tell how the leaders of the primitive Church usually worked. He states, "among the latter are the case of Spiridion who tended sheep in Cyprus,--of a bishop who was a weaver at Maiuma,---of one who was a shipbuilder in Campania---one who practised in the law courts,---of a presbyter who was a silversmith at Ancyra.--- **Basil, Epist.198 (263), vol.4 p.290 speaks of the majority of his clergy as earning their living by sedentary handicrafts, and Epiphanius,---speaks of others doing it in order to earn money for the poor."** End of quote. So we see that the gifts and offerings of the early Church were voluntary, and that most of the early Church leaders worked for their living; and that those who did not work to keep themselves, were supported on the same level as the poor.

N.B. Thanks be to God, He does not forsake us, even when we go badly astray on Church organisation, He tries to lead us back on to the old paths. The Holy Spirit is invading our present day denominational structures, and many churches have become centres of revival and blessing, and their ministers a great blessing to the whole body of Christ. **I recognise that many denominational ministers of the Gospel have made great financial sacrifices to serve God, and God has blessed them for it, and we truly thank God for them, and they deserve financial and spiritual support.** The early Church ministries were content to have their needs met, they did not go in for expensive wants. They imitated the sacrificial ministry of our Lord. Let us do likewise, and make sure that we carry out God's work in God's way. 2Cor.8v9.

APPENDIX 7. Constantine's Edict Of Toleration (Milan), in A.D. 313.

When Constantine's father, Constantius, died, Constantine took possession of the countries, which had been subject to his father, that is, Gaul, Spain, and Britain. He extended his empire further with a series of battles in other lands. When he had conquered Maxentius in three battles, the last at the Milvian Bridge, under the walls of Rome, the senate proclaimed Constantine as Augustus and Pontifex Maximus on Oct. 28, 312 A.D. It was during this campaign that he is said to have seen a flaming cross in the heavens, beneath the sun, with the inscription, "In hoc signo vinces," i.e. "By this sign thou shalt conquer." Eusebius states that Constantine informed him that Christ appeared to him during the following night and ordered him to take for his standard the fiery cross, which he had seen. (Vita Constantini. 1:29, 30) So Constantine caused a standard to be made in this form, which was called "the labarum." Constantine stated that he had been directed to stamp on the shields of his soldiers 'the heavenly sign of God,' that is, the cross, with the name of Christ, and thus to go forth against his enemy" (Schaff, History of the Christian Church, vol. 2, § 2.)

In January 313 A.D., Constantine published his edict of toleration in favour of the Christians, by which all the property that had been taken from them during the persecutions was restored to them. "They were also allowed to take public offices. Some have falsely regarded this as marking the triumph of the cross and the downfall of paganism. **After he defeated Licinius, who showed a deadly hatred against Christians, Constantine became sole head of the Eastern-and Western empire in 325, the year which he convened the ecumenical council at Nice, in Bithynia,** and he attended it in person, for the purpose of settling the Arian controversy. Before long he favoured the Arians, being influenced by Eusebius of Nicomedia, and as a result he banished many orthodox bishops. Though Constantine professed Christianity, he was not baptized until he fell sick in 337, the year in which he died in Nicomedia. The Roman senate placed him among the gods, and some Eastern Christians reckoned him among the saints: his festival is still celebrated by the Greek, Coptic, and Russian churches on the 21st of May.

Constantine's conversion was lacking in many Christian fundamentals, however, it made possible for the Gospel to be freely preached throughout the Roman empire since Christianity became the established religion of the empire. Wealth and power was given to Church leaders, and they were corrupted by it, and the purity of the Gospel was lost, and the Church became indistinguishable from the world. A terrible, Laodicean type, spiritual state started to permeate much of the Church, from 313 A.D., as a result of Emperor Constantine's, "Edict Of Toleration," (also known as The Edict Of Milan).

Philip Schaff noted that a previous edict of toleration had been issued from Nicomedia by the Emperor Galerius in 311, but Constantine's Edict of Toleration went beyond the first edict of 311: (*History of the Christian Church*, chapter II, section 25 "The Edicts of Toleration A.D. 311-313"). He writes, "It was a decisive step from hostile neutrality to friendly neutrality and protection, and prepared the way for the legal recognition of Christianity, as the religion of the empire." **End of quote.**

The second Edict of Toleration was issued from Milan in A.D. 313; in the names of the Roman Emperors Constantine I, who ruled the Western parts of the Empire, and Licinius, who ruled the East. It initiated the period known by Christian historians as the "Peace of the Church," and Christians have interpreted it as officially giving imperial favour to Christianity, as Constantine became the first emperor to actually promote and grant favours to the Church and its members. The document itself does not survive. The Edict of Milan transformed the status of Christianity.

The previous edict of toleration that had been recently issued from Nicomedia by the Emperor Galerius in 311, gave by its provisions, the Christians, who had "followed such a caprice and had fallen into such a folly that

they would not obey the institutes of antiquity", were granted an indulgence. "Wherefore, for this our indulgence, they ought to pray to their God for our safety, for that of the republic, and for their own, that the commonwealth may continue uninjured on every side, and that they may be able to live securely in their homes."

By the Edict of Milan, properties which had been confiscated from the Christians and sold or granted out of the government treasury were to be returned: "...the same shall be restored to the Christians without payment or any claim of recompense and without any kind of fraud or deception..." It directed the provincial magistrates to execute this order at once with all energy, so that public order may be restored and the continuance of the Divine favour may "preserve and prosper our successes together with the good of the state."

Hence, from that time on the Church became wealthy, having received properties, monies and favours from the State. Constantine began a large building program of churches in the Holy Land, which also allowed considerable increase in the power and wealth of the clergy. New churches were allowed to be built, often under Constantine's (or his mother Helena's) patronage, under which the church prospered. He gave the Lateran Palace to the Pope, and ordered the building of new churches, including some in Rome and Constantinople.

The clergy were patronised by Constantine, and received legal perks. The Devil knew that if he could get the Church to embrace, and then go after wealth and prosperity, the anointings and spiritual power that it had known in the first three centuries AD, would completely desert it, for this kind of desire is "of the world" and NOT from God. Indeed, the Lord Jesus declares in **Luke.16v13,15**, what He thinks of this attitude: "No servant is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (riches, or anything in which you trust, and on which you rely)...What is exalted and highly thought of among men is detestable and abhorrent (an abomination) in the sight of God." (**Amplified Version**).

Paul writes in Col.3v5. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication ("porneian" 4202), uncleanness ("akatharsian" 167), passion ("pathos" 3206), evil desire ("epithumian" 1939, "kaken" 2556), and covetousness ("kai ten pleonexian" 4124), which is idolatry ("hetis estin eidololatria" 1495). Covetousness, "pleonexian," is the singular accusative of "pleonexia" 4124, a greedy desire to have more, avarice, by implication, fraudulency, extortion. There is a longer list of the works of the flesh in Gal.5v19-21., however, covetousness is not mentioned there, but it is in Eph.4v19. and 5v5.

In Col.3v5. "mortify is "nekrosate," the aorist active imperative of the verb "nekroo" 3499, to put to death, to treat as dead. Paul again applies the metaphor of death (Col.2v20. 3v3.) pictured in baptism (Col.2v12.) to the actual life of the Christian. Paul attacks the evil doctrine of the Gnostics, that the soul is not affected by the deeds of the body. Paul's states that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. 1Cor.6v19. He mentions some of these "members upon the earth" like fornication "porneian;" uncleanness "akatharsian;" passion "pathos;" evil desire, "epithumian kaken;" covetousness "pleonexian;" "which is idolatry" "hetis estin eidololatria." See the longer list of the works of the flesh in Gal.5v19-21., though covetousness is not there named, but it is in Eph.4v19. 5v5. See also Luke.16v14-31. 12v13-40.

So, the Devil found in Constantine, a willing servant, who would carry out his evil plans to get the Church to embrace wealth and prosperity, thus, causing a widespread loss of the Lords anointing and power. **Satan did this through the "supposed conversion" of Constantine to Christianity.**

N.B. We should particularly note that Constantine was the Emperor who ruled the Western parts of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was at this time the Sixth Head of the Seven Headed Beast, and so was under the direct control and domination of the Devil. In 325 A.D., after Constantine defeated Licinius, Constantine became sole head of the Eastern-and Western Empire. This was the year in which he convened the ecumenical council at Nice, in Bithynia, from which we get our Nicene Creed. **If the Christian leaders had taken note of our Lord's warnings in Revelation, they would have realised that the Council of Nicea was being chaired by the sixth head of the Beast, the prime instrument of Satan.** Satan's scheme to give the Church leaders power and wealth had worked well, the twelve years of wealth and power bestowed upon them by Constantine, since his Edict of Toleration in 313 A.D., had blinded the Church leaders eyes to the truth of the Scriptures, and destroyed their spiritual perception. They even called Constantine a saint!!! See Rev.13v1,2. and 17v7-12.

We read in Rev.17v10. "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority...And there are seven kings: five are fallen, **and one is (the 6th)**, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."

The traditional story of Constantine's conversion is presented as Constantine seeing an omen in the sky whilst marching along with his troops — in front of the sun, the shape of an ambigram cross with two Greek letters, chi (X) and rho (P) (the first two letters of the Greek ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ, Christos, or Christ) along with a Greek inscription reading "Ev τοῦτω Νικα", En Touto Nika (meaning "with(in) this win"), which is often translated into the more familiar Latin: In hoc signo vinces (meaning "in this sign thou shalt conquer") before his victory in the Battle of Milvian Bridge on October 28, 312.

Constantine's conduct after his "supposed" conversion to Christianity, certainly was contrary to Christian Truth and conduct: He remained the Chief Priest (pontifex maximus) of the idolatrous religion, Sol Invictus ("the undefeated sun") or, more fully, Deus Sol Invictus ("the undefeated sun god"), the main rival religion to Christianity at the time, until his death. As late as the year 321 he enjoined regular consultation of the soothsayers in public misfortunes, according to ancient heathen usage; even later, he placed his new residence, Byzantium, under the protection of the God of the Martyrs and the heathen goddess of Fortune.

Constantine instituted several legislative measures regarding the Jews.

Constantine also supported the separation of the date of Easter from the Jewish Passover (Quartodecimanism). The feast of the resurrection was thenceforth required to be celebrated everywhere on a Sunday, and never on the day of the Jewish Passover, but always after the fourteenth of Nisan, on the Sunday after the first vernal full moon. He stated in his letter after the First Council of Nicaea: "... it appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin, and are, therefore, deservedly afflicted with blindness of soul. ... Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd; for we have received from our Saviour a different way." (Ref: Life of Constantine Vol. III Ch. XVIII by Eusebius).

In 325, he convened the ecumenical council at Nicea, in Bithynia, which he attended in person. The purpose of the council was to resolve disagreements in the Church of Alexandria (between the followers of Arius (the *Arians*) and the followers of St. Alexander of Alexandria) over the nature of Jesus in relationship to the Father; in particular, whether Jesus was of the same substance as God the Father or merely of similar substance, with the result that the "**Nicene Creed**" was formed, which stated:

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father [the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God], Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made [both in heaven and on earth]; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; he suffered (was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell (Hades) - **(The Apostle's & The Athanasian Creeds)**, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost. [The following was added at the First Council of Constantinople (381): (And in the Holy Ghost) The Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spake by the prophets. In one holy catholic and apostolic Church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.]"

[But those who say: 'There was a time when he was not;' and 'He was not before he was made;' and 'He was made out of nothing,' or 'He is of another substance' or 'essence,' or 'The Son of God is created,' or 'changeable,' or 'alterable' — they are condemned by the holy catholic and apostolic Church.]" **Quoted from** Philip Schaff, *Creeds Of Christendom*)

However, a few years after the Council of Nicea Constantine favoured the Arians and embraced Arianism, to which he was persuaded by Eusebius of Nicomedia, in consequence of which he banished many orthodox bishops, who opposed Arianism.

The Apostle John writes in 1John.4v1-6. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." **KJV.**

By embracing Arianism (which came out of Gnosticism) Constantine showed that he was "not of God," but of "that spirit of antichrist," **but this is not surprising as he was the sixth Head of the Beast.** Rev 13v1,2. 17v10. He ordered the execution of his conquered rival and brother-in-law, Licinius, in breach of a solemn promise of mercy (324). Not satisfied with this, he caused soon afterwards, from political suspicion, the death of the young Licinius, his nephew, a boy of hardly eleven years.

But worse than that, in 326, Constantine had his eldest son Crispus tried and executed, as he

believed accusations that Crispus had been having an affair with Fausta, Constantine's second wife. A few months later he also had Fausta killed as the apparent source of these false accusations. He certainly was he sixth head of the beast.

Constantine certainly did not "bear fruits worthy of repentance," Mt.3v8., but by bearing "thorns," showed what kind of person he really was. We read in Mt.7v15-20. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. v16 **You will know them by their fruits.** Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? v17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. v18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. v19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. v20 **Therefore by their fruits you will know them.**" NKJV.

The Devil also knew that by getting these changes into the Church through Constantine, the informal fellowship meeting (based around the homes of believers), which was filled with the Lord's Presence, Power and Love and under His Lordship, would be changed into a formal lifeless and powerless imitation. (1Cor.11. 14v40) The Christian fellowship which was patterned upon the Last Supper (Mt.26v20-30. Mk.14v16-26. Luke.22v14-38. Jn.13v1-17,26.), would be based upon the unscriptural traditions of men. Satan knew that the Church would eventually come under the control of spiritually blind and spiritually dead leaders, and even be controlled by men who were energised and dominated by him. Mt.23v1-35. Eph.2v1-9. 2Tim.3v5. 1Peter.1v18.

N.B. 2Tim.3v5. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." "Form", is "morphosin," from "morphosis" 3446, "the shadowy pencilled outline of the "morphe" 3444, without any inner essence, reality or substance," "the mere outward semblance, as distinguished from the essential reality," "an outline of truth without the substance." It is also used in Rom.2v20., in the same (bad) sense, and it refers to a lifeless man-made tradition devoid of the Presence and Life of God.

Peter declares in 1Peter.1v18. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." "Received by tradition from your fathers," Greek, "patroparadotou," from "patroparadotos," 3970, literally "given from father," inherited, the mode of religion, which had been handed down from (spiritual) father to son (pupil).

The doctrine on Church government is as inspired and permanent a part of the foundation of Scripture truth as any other truth. Eph.2v20. 3v5. Jn.15v16. 16v13. When Christ founded the Church, He instituted its doctrine on organisation as well as its other doctrine. God conceived and planned the Church before Creation; it is not a man-made institution. Eph.1v4,5,11. Col.1v26,27. Rom.8v28-30. 1 Cor.2v7. By getting these unscriptural traditions into the Church, the Devil achieved what he wanted, which was to get the Church removed from it's Heavenly Canaan and the Heavenly places in Christ, and from the protective power of God the Father, and to bring the churches under the Devil's own control.

There must be a return to the informal fellowship meeting of the early Church in the last days of this Age of Grace, if the Church is to come through "The Great Tribulation" victoriously. **We read in Heb.10v25.** "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."
(For reference for this section on Constantine, see Philip Schaff: History of the Christian Church).

APPENDIX 8. The Judaizers and the Docetic and Cerinthian Gnosticism.

Paul's disobedience in going back to Jerusalem contributed greatly to the spread of Docetic and Cerinthian Gnosticism in the Church, and it greatly aided the Judaizers to spread their destructive heresy. Hebrews was probably written in the early part of A.D. 64, just after Paul's release from his first imprisonment the year before in A.D. 63. At this time the Judaizers, and the Docetic and Cerinthian Gnostic heresies were making really serious inroads into the Christian Church. This was, to a great extent, due to Paul's disobedience in 58 A.D., in going to Jerusalem against the express commands of the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Paul was arrested and imprisoned for 5 years. **Acts.21v4, 22v18.** Paul had been appointed by the Lord Jesus as Apostle to the Gentiles, and was told by Jesus, that his ministry was to them, not the Jews.

The name Gnostic, is derived from the Greek "gnosis," "knowledge." They gave themselves this name because they claimed a superior knowledge. Gnosticism in its many forms was mainly derived from pagan philosophy. It denied the humanity of Christ, and even denied that He possessed a human body. **Both the apostle John and Paul realised the great danger that the acceptance of Gnostic doctrine would have on the Church, and wrote with the strongest words possible against it. Heb.13v9. Col.2v8,16-23. Tim.4v1-5. John said that those who deny the humanity of Jesus are "not of God," and have the spirit of Antichrist. 1Jn.4v2,3. 2v18.** The Judaizers were the major problem that Paul had to face in the earlier part of his ministry. Gnosticism became the major threat to the spiritual life and doctrine to the Church in the latter part of the ministries of Paul and the apostle John, and it has corrupted the spiritual life and doctrine of the Church throughout Church history. **Docetic Gnosticism has invaded the Church again, and is a very real threat in the Church today. It has always been one of Satan's major weapons against the true knowledge of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Paul's attacks on the Judaizers and Gnostics.

The Judaizers had been a considerable threat to the Church for many years. And we see that the Judaizers had opened the door to the Gnostics. The Judaizers wanted to make the Gentile Christians keep the Law, and wanted to enforce circumcision on them. We read in Acts.15v1-6. "But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." v2 And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. v3 So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, reporting the conversion of the Gentiles, and they gave great joy to all the brethren. v4 When they came to Jerusalem, the church and the apostles and the elders welcomed them, and they declared all that God had done with them. v5 But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up, and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses." v6 The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter." RSV.

James, the brother of our Lord, summed up the feeling of the council, and advised the Gentile converts that they should abstain from certain things, so that they would not upset the Jews. **We read in Acts.15v19-21.**, "Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, v20 but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. v21 "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath." NASB.

However, though Peter, Paul and Barnabus, and James, had won the argument, and the apostles, elders, and the Jerusalem believers backed them up, the Judaizers appeared not to have accepted the verdict, and went round the churches subverting the Christians from the Gospel of grace, to keeping the Law, and they tried to enforce circumcision on the Gentile converts. This was a very serious danger to the Church, and Paul wrote and warned the Christians about it.

Wordsworth says that the Jerusalem Council took place in A.D. 50 to A.D. 51.; and says that the Galatian epistle was probably written from Corinth in about A.D. 53 to A.D. 54.; so we see that the Judaizers had troubled the Galatian Church for several years before Paul wrote to them. Paul writes in Gal.5v6. "For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith activated and energized and expressed and working through love." AMP.

In Gal.5v11,12. Paul writes, "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. v12 **I would they were even cut off which trouble you.**" KJV.

Paul finishes his letter to the Galatians with a strong attack on the Judaizers, we read in Gal.6v12-15. "As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. v13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. v14 **But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.** v15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." KJV.

Wordsworth says that Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus in the Spring of A.D. 57, and his second letter to the Corinthians was written only about six months later. Paul makes a strong attack on the Judaizers in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, we read in 2Cor.11v13-15. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. v14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. v15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. NKJV.

In 2Cor.11v13. Paul says the Judaizers are "false apostles," "pseudapostoloi" 5570, from "pseudes," false, and "apostolos." They are "deceitful workers," "deceitful," is "dolioi," 1386, from "dolos," 1388, a trick, lure, snare, they are full of tricks, and cunning, it only occurs here in the New Testament. They, like many modern day politicians, strove to present a good image, it is image without substance. "Transforming themselves," is "metaschematizomenoi," the present participle of "metaschematizo," 3345, from "meta," after, and "schema," form or habit, **the fair outside they presented was so different from the gross corruption inside them. This stands out in stark contrast to the beauty and glory, which radiated from the inside of Jesus in the Mount of Transfiguration.** These false apostles masqueraded as apostles of Christ by putting on a fake outward image of ministers of Christ. They were crafty, fraudulent, and hypocritical impostors, who wanted to gain control over the churches, they were people who saw that great advantages might come to them if they took control of the new religion. They doubtless deceived themselves that they were serving God in promoting their false Christian doctrines, like so many do today.

In Rom.12v2. Paul uses "suschematizesthe." the present passive imperative of "suschematizo," 4964,

with the negative "me," stop being fashioned, or do not have the habit of being fashioned. The Greek verb "suschematizo," 4964, means "to conform oneself (i.e. ones mind and character), to another's pattern." **It only occurs here and 1Pet.1v14., in the New Testament.** "According to this world," is "to aioni touto," Paul instructs the Roman Christians, "do not let this age squeeze you into its mould."

In 2Cor.11v13-15. the Judaizing false apostles who opposed Paul, are described by "metaschematizomai," they put on a good outward image, but they were filled with soul destroying false doctrine; they had empty souls, and had nothing good to offer. **In 1Cor.7v31.**, "schema" is used for the corrupt, false and empty fashion of the world, which is transitory and passing away. Paul uses "paragei," the present active indicative of "parago," 3855, to go along or away; Paul's use of the continuous present strongly infers that the fashion of this world is passing away and will not last much longer. **In Mt.20v30.** "parago" is used of Jesus passing by in Jericho.

We read in Rom.12v2., "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. NKJV.

"Be not conformed to this world," is "me suschematizesthe," be not fashioned according to the fleeting fashion of this world. **See 1Cor.7v31.**, "the fashion "schema," of the world passeth away." **See 2Cor.11v13-15.** where the changes described are changes in outward semblance. False apostles appeared in the outward fashion of apostles of Christ; and Satan takes on the outward appearance of an angel of light. These changes in outward appearance, are a false image, which covers evil, they do not affect the inner being. On the other hand, a change in the inner being is described as a change of "morphē," never of "schema," **So in Rom.12v2.** "Be ye transformed" "metamorphousthe," the change taking place by the renewing of the mind. **Compare Rom.8v29. 2Cor.3v18. Phil.3v21.**

"Be ye transformed," is "**metamorphousthe,**" the present passive imperative of the verb "metamorphoo," 3339, which means "to transfigure, to transform," as in **Mt.17v2. Mk.9v2. and 2Cor.3v18.** Paul tells us that there must be a deep-seated transformation in our thought life and life-style if we are to combat the evil of this godless age. "By the renewing of your mind," is "te anakainosei tou noos," the new birth should produce a new mind, and a new "kainos" life. **2Cor.5v17,18.**

In Phil.2v6. "en morphē" is used of the pre-incarnate superlative Divine status of Christ, and **in Phil.2v7.** "morphēn doulou," is used of the incarnate "emptied out" servant state of Jesus, He took the characteristic attributes of a slave. His humanity was as real as his deity and "schemati hos anthropos," emphasizes that Jesus was found "in fashion as a man." **In Mt.16v12.** "morphē" is used of the form of Jesus after his resurrection.

In using "metamorphousthe," in Rom.12v2. Paul emphasises that we need to be "transformed in our inner lives," if we are to prove and test what is God's will. "That ye may prove," is "eis to dokimazein," the infinitive of purpose of "dokimizo" 1381, which means, to examine, to scrutinize, to test and prove, with "eis," so, "to test and prove" what is God's will. God's will may be sometimes difficult and costly to accomplish, but it is always, "good and acceptable and perfect," "to agathon kai euareston kai teleion." **In 2Cor.3v18.** "metamorphousthai," is used regarding the transformation of saints from glory to glory into the image of Christ, by beholding the majesty, beauty and glory of the Lord Jesus. This is the ultimate in blessed contemplation and revelation, for when the veil is lifted, and we perceive the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, we are "filled with all the fullness of God." **Rom.8v29. Eph.3v14-21. N.B. v19.**

We read in Phil 2:7. "but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." "In the likeness of men," is "en homoiomati anthropon," it was a genuine and indisputable likeness, it was not a mere phantom humanity as the Docetic Gnostics taught. **In Phil.2v7.** "genomenos," is the aorist participle of "ginomai," 1096, becoming, and speaks of Christ's definite entrance in time into humanity at His incarnation. This is to be compared with **Phil.2v6.** where "being," is not the simple "einai," "to be," but the stronger, "huparchon," 5225, which speaks of a being which is from the beginning, and which describes Christ's eternal existence in the form, the "morphē," of God.

THE TRANSFIGURED SAVIOUR. Luke writes in Lk.9v29. "And as he prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment became white and dazzling." "**His countenance was altered,**" is "egeneto to eidos tou prosopou autou heteron," which literally means, "the appearance of his face became different." **We read in Mt.17v2.** that, "His face did shine as the sun." "And his raiment became white and dazzling," is "kai ho himatismos autou leukos exastrapton." Literally, "And his raiment white radiant." Luke uses the participle "exastrapton," from the verb "exastrapto" 1823, which means "to flash out or forth," Christ's garments, "kept on flashing as with the brilliance of lightning." The simple verb is used for lightning bolts and flashes, but it is only used here in the New Testament. All three evangelists use the word "leukos," white. **Mark.9v3.**, translates "stibonia," from the verb "stilbo," 4744, which means to gleam, flash intensely; Christ's garments were "glistening, exceeding white." And **Mt.17v2.**, translates "leukos," as, "white as the light." The English Revised Version (1885), reads, "dazzling." **See Mark.9v2,3.** The radiance and effulgence of glory that came from within Jesus, was a manifestation and essential part of His Divine nature and being. The transfiguration of Jesus reveals what our glorious Lord Jesus is like now, and what He will be like in the

Millennium.

We read in Mt.17v2. "And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light." NASB. "He was transfigured before them," is "metemorphothe emprosthen auton." "Metemorphothe" is the aorist passive indicative of "metamorphoo" 3339, to transform. The idea is change, "meta," of form "morphe." It describes the essence of a thing as distinct from the "schema," the changeable external fashion of a man, for instance, his gestures, clothes, words, etc. Luke avoided the use of "metamorphoo" in his description of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, probably because Luke was writing to some readers, to whom "metamorphoo" represented the transformations of heathen deities into other forms, and Luke did not want to give the Gnostics any grounds for their theology. However, in Lk.9v29., Luke gives a powerful description of Christ's transfiguration.

In Mt.17v2. "**He was transfigured,**" is "metemorphothe," "meta," denoting "change," and "morphe," "form." "**Morphe speaks of the distinctive nature and character of a person, and is contrasted with "schema," the changeable, outward "fashion," of a man.** For example, his gestures, clothes, words, or acts. The "morphe," partakes of the "essence" of a thing; the "schema," speaks of an outward fashion that can disguise the true nature of a person's character, and can cover up evil.

Why is a compound of "morphe" employed in the description of our transfigured Saviour, since the change described is a change in his outward appearance? It is because a compound of "schema," which would express a change in the outward form of Christ's person and garments, could not convey the true reality of the event. The visible change was an outshining of the beauty of our Lord's glorious character and His divine nature. It was a revelation of the reality of His inner nature, and the divine quality and excellence of his being. The glory which Jesus had with the Father before the world was, **Jn.17v5.**, breaks forth in that glorified face and form, which is confirmed by the striking words from God the Father; "This is my beloved Son."

The same truth is illustrated in the use of "morphe" in **Mark.16v12.**, where it is said that Jesus appeared in a different form, "en hetera morphe," after his resurrection. The calamities that marked Christ's body and face, and pierced His hands and feet, were still evident; but His Divine beauty and loveliness and His Divine nature could not be hidden, and shone through for those who were able to perceive it.

Paul writes of the Judaizers in 2Cor.11v13. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." "**Transforming themselves,**" is "**metaschematizomenoi.**" The 1885 English Revised Version, translates it, "fashioning," and so conveys the true meaning of "schema," which describes, "outward fashion." **In 1Cor.4v6.**, Paul uses "metaschematizo," from "meta," after, and "schema," form or habit, and it speaks of changing the outward form of a thing; and is quite different from "morphe" as in **Phil.2v7.** and **Rom.12v2.** **Only Paul uses "metaschematizo," in the New Testament, it also appears in 2Cor.11v13-15., where the word occurs three times, twice of the false apostles posing and passing as apostles of Christ and ministers of righteousness, and once of Satan transforming himself into an angel of light. In 2Cor.11v13., Paul calls the Judaizers, "deceitful workers," "dolioi," full of tricks, and cunning, who try to seduce others with their false and plausible arguments."**

We read in 2Cor.11v14. "And no marvel; for even Satan fashions himself into an angel of light." "**An angel of light,**" is "**angelon photos,**" Satan, the prince of darkness, puts on the garments of an angel of light, his followers follow his example in order to deceive the saints. **Compare 2Cor.2v11. and Gal.1v8.** This reveals the depth of Paul's feelings about the conduct of the Judaizing leaders in Corinth. **In Gal.2v4., Paul calls the Judaizers in Jerusalem, "false brethren."**

We read in 2Cor.11v15. "It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." "As ministers of righteousness," is "hos diakonoi dikaiosunes." **In Jn.10v1-21., Jesus calls these false shepherds thieves and robbers. They acted as servants of God and were really servants of the Devil.**

We read in Phil.3v20,21. "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: v21 who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be **conformed to the body of his glory,** according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself. **ASV.** "Shall fashion anew," is "metaschematisei," the future active indicative of "metaschematizo," which is used for the change in the body of our humiliation to the body of glory. "Conformed to," is "summorphon,". from "sun," and "morphe;" the only New Testament examples are here in **Phil.3v21.** and **Rom.8v29.,.** The body of our state of humiliation will be changed in the twinkling of an eye into a body like unto the glorious body of our dear Lord Jesus. **1Cor.15v50-54.** "**According to the working,**" is "kata ten energeian," literally, "according to the energy." Paul states that Jesus has the power to transform our bodies, and that he has power to "even subject all things unto himself."

Paul again strongly warns against the Judaizers in Phil.3v2. "Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision. **NASB. Wordsworth says that Philipians was written in A.D. 63.**

In about A.D. 54, Paul makes a fourth trip to Jerusalem. We read in Acts.18v19-22. "And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. v20 When they asked him to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, v21 but took leave of them, saying, "**I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem;** but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus. v22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. NKJV.

In A.D. 58 Paul makes a fifth trip to Jerusalem. We read in Acts.20v15-38. "v15 We sailed from there, and the next day came opposite Chios. The following day we arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium. **The next day we came to Miletus. v16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. v17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.** v18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, v19 serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; v20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, v21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. v22 **And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, v23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.** v24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. v25 "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. v26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. v27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. v28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. v29 **For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. v30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. v31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.** v32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. v33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. v34 Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. v35 I have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" v36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. v37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, v38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship." **NKJV. End of quote.**

From Acts.20v29-31. we see that Paul knew that Satan was going to launch a major attack on the church at Ephesus, and warned them with tears for three years about it. Here we see Paul neglecting and deserting his converts just before their hour of greatest need in order to be at Jerusalem for the Day of Pentecost. **We also read in Acts.21v4., that for seven days, the Christians at Tyre, "told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem."** "Told," is "elegon," the imperfect active indicative of "lego," 3004, which means properly, to "lay forth," relate in words, usually by a systematic or set discourse. They systematically laid down "through the Spirit," "dia tou pneumatou," that Paul should not go to Jerusalem, **and so confirmed the warnings given by the Holy Spirit in Acts.20v23., that bonds and afflictions awaited Paul in Jerusalem.**

N.B. We read in Acts.22v17-21. that when Paul returned to Jerusalem just after his conversion, Jesus personally warned Paul that the Jews in Jerusalem would not receive his witness and commanded Paul to leave Jerusalem. Paul certainly remembered this, for he told the Jews about this revelation, but he disobeyed this direct command of the Lord Jesus, and the commands and warnings of the Holy Spirit, and instead of ministering to the Gentiles, insisted on going to Jerusalem.

The whole Godhead warned Paul that if he went up to Jerusalem, he would be arrested, imprisoned. They knew that this would enable false teachers to flood into the Gentile Church. The Judaizers would accuse Paul of being an hypocrite and said he kept the Law. This gave the Judaizers the ammunition they needed to sow Judaizing leaven into the Church. Mt.13v24-33. Paul's visit to Jerusalem enabled "grievous wolves" from without to enter in and devastate the Ephesian church, and ambitious people within the Ephesian church to arise, and speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after themselves. "Perverse things," is "diestrammena," the perfect passive participle of "diastrepho," 1294, to turn aside, to twist, to distort, to misinterpret as Elymas the sorcerer did in Acts.13v8,10.

The effect of Paul's disobedience was disastrous and seriously effected Paul's ministry to the churches he had founded, **we read in 2Tim.1v15., "This you know, that ALL those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes."** NKJV.

Barnes identifies Asia as: "That is, in **that part of Asia Minor of which Ephesus was the capital.** The name Asia was often given particularly to that part of Asia Minor; see the notes at Acts.2v9. 16v6. This passage proves that Timothy was somewhere in that region when this Epistle was written to him, for otherwise he could not be supposed to KNOW what is here said. When Paul says that "all" were turned away from him, he must use the word in a general sense, for he immediately specifies ONE who had been faithful and kind to him." **End of quote.**

Barnes identifies Asia in Acts.2v9., "The capital of this region was Ephesus. See also 1Peter.1v1. This region was frequently called Ionia, and was afterward the seat of the seven churches in Asia, Rev.1v4." **End of quote.**

Barnes again identifies Asia in Acts.16v6., "[In Asia] This was doubtless the region of proconsular Asia. It was also called Ionia. **Of this region Ephesus was the capital; and here were situated also the cities of Smyrna, Thyatira, Philadelphia, etc., within which the seven churches mentioned in Rev 1-3 were established.**" **End of quote.**

We see that Acts.20v16,17., confirms that Ephesus was in the borders of Asia, we read, "For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, **so that he would not have to spend time in Asia;** for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. v17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus (about 30 miles away) and called for the elders of the church." **NKJV.**

"To spend time" Is "chronotribesai," the aorist active of the compound verb "chronotribeo," it only occurs here in the New Testament. It is derived from "chronos," time, and the verb "tribo," to rub, to wear out by rubbing, **it gives the idea of wasting time. Vincent says, "The sense is nearly equivalent to our expression, "fritter away time."** **Did Paul really think that it would be waste of time to visit his Gentile converts? It seems that Paul's priorities were wrong, his desire to be at Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost, was more important to him than caring for his Gentile converts.**

Why did Paul disobey God and go to Jerusalem?

Three things contributed to this disobedience by Paul.

1. The pressure of the needs of the poor at Jerusalem.

From Rom.15v25,26., we see that Paul had a gift from other churches to help the poor saints in Jerusalem.

We read, "v25 But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. v26 For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make **a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.**" Many years before a gift like this had been very acceptable and prepared the Christians for the time of the famine which Agabus the prophet foretold (in A.D. 40,41) in Acts.11v27-30., this famine lasted several years, about A.D. 44 to 48, and many people died of starvation in this famine.

Adam Clark writes, "This famine is particularly mentioned by Josephus, **Ant. lib. 20 cap. 2, sect. 5, who describes it as "a very great famine, in which many died for want of food."**- "That Helena, queen of Adiabene, who had embraced the Jewish religion, sent some of her servants to Alexandria, to buy a great quantity of corn; and others of them to Cyprus, to buy: a cargo of dried figs, which she distributed to those who were in want." And in cap. 5, sect. 2, he says that this happened "when Tiberius Alexander succeeded Cuspius Fadus; and that under these procurators the famine happened in which Queen Helena, at a vast expense, procured relief to the Jews." **End of quote.** The prophecy of Agabus and the gifts from other churches, saved many of the church at Jerusalem from dying of starvation.

Barnes confirms these facts. "Queen Helena sent some of her servants to Alexandria with money to buy a great quantity of grain, and others of them to Cyprus to bring a cargo of dried figs." This famine is described as having continued under the two procurators of Judea, Tiberius Alexander and Cassius Fadus. Fadus was sent into Judea, on the death of Agrippa, about the fourth year of the reign of Claudius, and the famine, therefore, continued probably during the fifth, sixth, and seventh years of the reign of Claudius." **End of quote.**

We can well imagine the thanks and gratitude that the poor Christians in Jerusalem showered on Paul for this life-saving financial aid. It is more blessed to give than receive, and **the expectation that Paul had of the reception of this second large financial gift that he brought, was something that he obviously looked forward to with great eagerness. Paul wanted be there to see their response, and see that the finances were properly distributed.**

2. The constraint and pressure that Paul's great love for his own people exerted on Paul.

Every day Paul was filled with great pain, distress and longing for his people to be saved.

We read in Rom.9v1-3., "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, v2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. v3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh." **NKJV.**

"Great sorrow," is "**lupe megale**," the noun "lupe" 3077, means grief, sorrow, sadness, it is used of persons mourning, It is the kind of grief that a Jew would have over the destruction of Jerusalem. "Unceasing grief in my heart," is "**adialeiptos odune te kardia**," a pain as severe as a heart attack or angina, "**odune**," describes consuming grief, and emotional torment, it only occurs here and 1Tim.6v10. in the New Testament. "**Unceasing**," "**adialeiptos**" 88, is a rare adjective which only occurs here and 2Tim.1v3, in the New Testament, it means, unceasing, continual, and permanent. This phrase could be paraphrased as, unceasing and permanent consuming grief and pain in the heart, like angina pectoris, or a heart attack.

Paul, at the time of writing this Epistle to the Hebrews had been a Christian for about 30 years, and it seems that he still was "kicking against the goad," regarding the issue of going up to Jerusalem. Acts 9v5, 26v14. Barnes writes on Acts.9v5. "The word translated "pricks" here is "kentron," it means properly "any sharp point which will pierce or perforate," as the sting of a bee, etc. But it commonly means an ox-goad, a sharp piece of iron stuck into the end of a stick, with which the ox is urged on. These goads among the Hebrews were made very large. Thus, Shamgar killed 600 men with one of them. Judges.3v31. Compare 1Sam.13v21. The expression "to kick against the goad" is derived from the action of a stubborn and unyielding ox kicking against the goad. And as the ox would injure no one by it but himself; as he would gain nothing, it comes to denote "an obstinate and refractory disposition and course of conduct, resisting the authority of him who has a right to command, and opposing the leadings of Providence, to the injury of him who makes the resistance." It denotes "rebellion against lawful authority, and thus getting into greater difficulty by attempting to oppose the commands to duty." **End of quote.**

Paul should have "imitated" the example of the Lord Jesus in Lk.19v41-44., (which he usually did, 1Cor.11v1.). Jesus was absolutely broken hearted and distraught over the impending destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., (which He saw in prophetic vision, as He came over the hill and saw the city lying before Him). However, Jesus did **NOT** turn aside from the will of the Father, and try to do some mighty sign and wonder in a vain attempt to try and bring Israel to repentance, but rather continued on in obedience to the Father's will, to His terrible physical sufferings and death upon the cross, and His descent into Hades, to make atonement for the sins of the World and purchase our redemption. Acts.2v22-28. 1Peter 3v18-22.

Paul could not live with the pain of his people's rejection of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he felt that his testimony might win them over, even though Jesus had told him that it would not. **It was not possible that Paul's testimony could bring the Jews to repentance, after the witness of the dead who were raised to life in Mt.27v50-53., failed to bring them to repentance. We read in Mt.27v50-53.** "And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. v51 Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, v52 and the graves were opened; and **many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; v53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.**" NKJV. This was a far greater miracle than the raising of Lazarus from the dead, and explains why 3,000 Jews were saved on the day of Pentecost. **It was not just the speaking in tongues in their own languages that convinced the Jews of the resurrection of Jesus and the truth of the Gospel; it was also the overflowing joy and dynamic testimony of many godly Jews who had received a visitation from these resurrected saints, and had heard their testimony about Jesus and his atoning death and His resurrection.**

Paul wished, like Moses in Ex.32v31-33., that he could be accursed from Christ if it could result in the salvation of his kinsmen according to the flesh, "kata sarka." "Accursed from Christ," is "anathema apo tou Christou," given over to destruction and separated from Christ. This reveals the deep love and devotion that Paul had for his own people, but this great love for his own people drove Paul on, and led him astray from God's will. We have to watch our loving desires, as well as our bad desires, and make sure that they are conformed to God's will. Only Jesus, the perfect and sinless Lamb of God, could be accursed for our sins, and through His precious shed blood, bring us forgiveness and salvation. 1Pet.1v18-21. John.1v29,36.

3. The pressure put on Paul by the Church leaders to show that Paul kept the Law.

We read in Acts.21v18-24., that the Apostle James and the Elders at Jerusalem suggested that Paul should offer sacrifices in the Temple, to show that he was a good Jew who kept the Law. This plan was a product of a deluded and misled human expediency, which brought about the fulfilment of the many prophecies that had been given, that Paul would be arrested and imprisoned if he went up to Jerusalem. Acts.20v23. 21v4. 21v10,11.

We read in Eph.3v1., "I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles." N.B. The prisoner of Jesus, not the prisoner for Jesus. The Lord Jesus used Paul's imprisonment to bring him back to his calling and work among the Gentiles. However, Paul's imprisonment meant that he was in chains for five years, and so his ministry to the Gentiles was considerably restricted and limited, but Paul could write, and his writings have enriched the Church.

It is also an astounding fact, that even after a sustained period of disobedience to the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit's command about NOT returning to Jerusalem, and the resulting five year imprisonment, Paul writes in Heb.13v19,23., "But I especially urge you to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner....Know that our

brother Timothy has been set free, with whom **I shall see you if he comes shortly.**" (NKJV). **Had Paul failed to learn his lesson regarding obedience to the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit on this issue?** Was he still "bound in his spirit," Acts.20v22., and still desired to go back to Jerusalem again? It is not recorded in the Scriptures whether Paul did actually return to Jerusalem, for shortly after he wrote his epistle to the Hebrews in about A.D. 63,64; the Roman Jewish war started in A.D. 66, which would have made it really difficult or impossible for Paul to return to Jerusalem.

It is not difficult to work out when and where Hebrews was written, for Heb.13v3,19,21. strongly suggests that Paul wrote this remarkable divinely inspired book in the closing period of his two years' imprisonment at Rome. Paul, it seems, was in prison when he wrote Hebrews, and he refers to his previous imprisonment in Palestine in Heb.10v34., "you had compassion on me in my bonds." The closing salutation in Heb.13v24., "Those from Italy greet you," shows that Paul was writing from Italy, and probably from Rome. In Heb.13v23., Paul expresses his hope to shortly visit the people he was writing to with "our brother Timothy," who had just been "set at liberty." Hebrews was certainly written before the temple's destruction in 70 A.D., for Paul implies the temple service was then going on. Heb.13v10. 8v4,5. 9v6,7. It was also written some time before the Peter's martyrdom, for Peter appears to mention this epistle in 2Pet.3v15,16. Usher says that Paul's first imprisonment ended in A.D. 65, others like Wordsworth say it ended in A.D. 63, still others in A.D. 64. Whichever date it was, the Jewish Roman war, and the holocaust prophesied by Jesus was about to start in A.D. 66, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70, when over one million Jews were killed. **Josephus states that it was the Jews belief in false prophecies that led them astray, and brought about their destruction. The Jews had rejected their Christ and put their faith in false messiahs and false prophets, and paid a fearful price for it.**

The Devil used Paul's great consuming love for Israel to take him out of God's will, and into great disobedience. We read in Rom 9v1-5., "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, v2 **that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.** v3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, v4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; v5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen. **NKJV**

Paul's continual disobedience, on this issue, is a tremendous warning to us all, and reveals the vital importance of obedience to God's will, and whether it is revealed in the Scriptures, or through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we **must** listen and obey the voice of Him Who speaks from Heaven. Heb.12v25, Rev 2v7,11,17,29, 3v6,13,22.

Paul should never have yielded to the disastrous suggestion of James and the Elders at Jerusalem, that Paul should offer sacrifices in the Temple, to prove to the Jews that he was a good Jew who kept the Law. Paul well knew the Law had been abolished, and its sacrifices fulfilled by Christ's great sacrifice of Himself. Paul should have given them the truth regarding Christ's mighty sacrifice, and all its implications regarding the New Covenant and the Church. This truth, Paul had proclaimed in his epistle to the Hebrews, which he appears to have written in 63 to 64 A.D.; and in his epistle to the Galatians. (Many say Galatians was written in A.D. 54 to A.D. 56, during the time of Paul's lengthily stay in Ephesus, Acts.19v8,10.: others say it was written in the winter of 57 AD to 58 AD, during Paul's stay in Corinth, where he also wrote Romans. Acts.20v2,3.)

The epistle to the Galatians shows that Paul had preached for many years that the Age of Law had passed away, and had been replaced by the Age of Grace. Paul writes in Gal.5v4., "You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen ("exepesate," the aorist active indicative of the verb "ekpipto," 1601, to fall out of, to fall down from), from grace. **NKJV. The Amplified Bible translates Gal.5v4.,** "If you seek to be justified and declared righteous and to be given a right standing with God through the Law, you are brought to nothing and so separated (severed) from Christ. You have fallen away from grace (from God's gracious favour and unmerited blessing)." **End of quote.**

We read in Gal.1v11-14., that Paul withstood Peter to his face, and accused Peter of hypocrisy for going back to keeping the Law, and yet, because of the pressure of the Christian leaders at Jerusalem, Paul does the very same thing that he had rebuked Peter for. Peter must have looked at Paul in astonishment. Paul had joined the "foolish Galatians," and had become "entangled with the yoke of bondage." Gal.3v1. 5v1. **N.B. Gal.2v21.** "I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain." NKJV. **N.B. again. Gal.5v4.** "You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace." NASB. Paul's words could not have been clearer or stronger." However, tradition and expediency die hard, particularly when accompanied by the pressure of one's peers. Paul succumbed to these pressures and tried to show the Jews that he was a good Jew who kept the Law, and as a result devastated the Church. A truly tragic error.

Paul's imprisonment meant that he could not protect the Gentile Churches that he had set up, and was responsible for, which allowed the Devil, through his servants, to put the evil seed of the Judaizers and the Gnostics into the Church. The results are still felt greatly today through Augustine's

doctrine of "Original Sin," and his "Born in Sin" theories. From Gnosticism also sprang the Heresies of Arianism and Sabellianism, which also still impact greatly upon the Church today. The evil heresy of Gnosticism not only spread through the Gentile Church, but also spread into the Jewish Church in Judea and Galilee, so Paul refutes and argues against this evil heresy by emphasising Christ's true and absolute deity in Hebrew one; and by emphasising Christ's real humanity in Hebrews two. The proclamation of the truth is the best argument against heresy.

Paul writes in Heb 13v9: "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein." (KJV). "Be not carried about," is "mee paraferesthe." "**Paraferesthe**," is the present passive imperative of "paraphero" 3911, to carry along, i.e. carry off, to bear away, to lead aside, the present tense indicating that this was a present and active danger. The Greek text has "stop being carried away," not only was the danger present, but some were being carried away. It signifies "do not apostatize; permit not yourselves to be carried off from Christ and his doctrine."

"With divers and strange doctrines," is "didachais poikilais kai xenais." "Divers," is "poikilos" 4164, it means, many coloured, manifold, various. "Strange," is "xenos" 3581, it means, foreign, literally, alien, or figuratively, novel, new, unheard of, unusual. The air was already full of new and strange teachings that fascinated many by their very novelty, these differed from the true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as taught by their God-appointed spiritual leaders. Heb.13v7.

Paul writes to the Colossians in Col.2v8,16,20-23. and to Timothy in 1Tim.4v1-5., and refutes the false teaching of the Gnostic heretics, with the same kind of negative injunction that he uses in Heb.13v9., regarding foods and false doctrines.

Paul warns against Gnosticism in Col.2v8,16,20-23. v8 "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ....v16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink.... v20 Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations — v21 "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," v22 which all concern things which perish with the using — according to the commandments and doctrines of men? v23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh." Gnosticism had become a major threat to the Church, and Paul and the apostle John warn strongly against it. John says the Gnostic attack on the true humanity of Christ is a most dangerous Heresy, and is "the spirit of Antichrist. **See 1John.4v1-3.** "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. v2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, v3 and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God. **This is the spirit of antichrist.** of which you heard that it was coming, and now it is in the world already." **RSV.**

1Tim 4v1-5. "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, v2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, v3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. v4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; v5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

Paul knew that the Devil was using, and would use in the future (especially in "the last days," see also Heb.10v25, 1Tim.4v1., these issues of foods and false doctrines, to stop God's people from entering into, and staying in, their Heavenly Canaan, the Heavenly places in Christ. Jesus gave this promise of heavenly blessings to His people while He was upon earth, Jn.3v13. 17v24. Immediately after Col 2v8,16,20-23., Paul writes in Col 3v1,2, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Paul, in Hebrews, also writes this same truth to the Jews in Palestine regarding the possible failure to enter into, or stay in, their Heavenly rest:

We read in Heb.3v1,19. 4v1,9-11. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus...v19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. 4v1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.... v9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. v10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.v11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

In Heb13v9., Paul's counsel to the Jews in Palestine was,"...it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." "Established" is "bebaioushai," the present passive infinitive of "bebaiooo" 950, and means, to stabilize, to make firm, establish, make secure. **Or as the Amplified Version of Heb.13v9.,** puts it: "for it is good for the heart to be established and ennobled and strengthened by means of grace (God's favour and spiritual blessing)."

Our salvation is all of grace and not of ourselves. We read in Eph.2v8., "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." See Heb.12v15.

THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM. Wordsworth says it took place in A.D.50 or A.D. 51.

Many church leaders believe that councils of ministers should make decisions for their churches, and they quote "The Council of Jerusalem" to prove their point. However, if we examine Acts.15 closely, we will find that it gives no authority for councils, or synods composed of ministers, or representatives, autocratically deciding the policies and running of the churches.

Dean Farrar writes on page 243 of his, "The Life and Letters of St. Paul:" "It is only by an unwarrantable extension of terms that the meeting of the Church of Jerusalem can be called a 'Council,'---- It was not a convention of ordained delegates, but a meeting of the entire Church of Jerusalem to receive a deputation from the Church of Antioch." **End of quote.**

1. Notice who gathered at Jerusalem and why.

God had opened "a door of faith" to the Gentiles, but Satan tried to destroy the basic and essential truth of justification by faith, through Pharisees who had joined Christ's Church. **Satan had tried to destroy the Church by persecution, but his attack by intrigue from within was far more deadly and dangerous, and but for the overruling providence of God, it would undoubtedly have succeeded.** Certain "false brethren" from Judea tried to close "the door of faith," and bring the lovely converts at Antioch into the bondage of their own belief, they demanded obedience to the Law of Moses, instead of proclaiming the glorious liberty and freedom of the New Covenant. These Judaizers refused to accept the obvious implication of God's dealing with Cornelius and his friends. **Satan through them tried to destroy the Church with the God-given tradition of the Old Covenant.** The Judaizers blindly refused to see that Christ had fulfilled the Law with its types and prophecies, so the type was no longer necessary; they had Christ the living fulfilment of the type, not the shadow. **Heb.8v1-13. 9v15,23,24. 10v8,9.**

The Judaizers implied that the Gentile Christians were not only inferior to unregenerate Jews, **they systematically taught, "Unless ("ean me") you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved, "ou dunasthe sothenai."** NKJV. **Acts.15v1,5. In Acts.15v1., the word "taught," is "edidaskon," the imperfect active of "didasko," to teach, to teach or speak in a public assembly, the imperfect shows that they began to teach and kept it up.** The Judaizers made a systematic attempt to bring the converts at Antioch into legalism, they practised a determined espionage and proud indoctrination of these lovely young converts. The Gentile Christians at Antioch had proved their love and friendship with the church at Jerusalem with a very generous gift. **Acts.11v30.** This evil could not be allowed to go on.

These Gentiles' hearts burned with love for Christ and their Jewish brethren in Christ, Paul was determined that this was not going to be extinguished by legal bondage. Paul and Barnabus challenged these Judaizers, "they had no small dissension and disputation with them," **Acts.15v2., the word for "dissension" is "staseos," which means "insurrection" or "violent disruption;" the word for "disputation," is "zeteseos," which means dispute or discussion.** It was a prolonged, hostile and heated dispute, and these Judaizers refused to accept the revelation of the Church age as preached by Paul. **Satan made a determined attempt to destroy the New Covenant truth through these Judaizers. Gal.5v1-4.** Even the combined mighty ministries and Scriptural knowledge of Paul and Barnabus failed to convince these self-appointed guides of Christ's Church of the error of their ways. The church at Antioch appointed Paul and Barnabus and some others to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders to settle this matter.

On their journey to Jerusalem Paul and Barnabus reported to the churches of Phoenicia and Samaria how the Gentiles had turned to God, and their news was received with great joy and praise. At Jerusalem Paul and Barnabus again "declared all things that God had done with them." Acts.15v3,4. After the welcome of the Jerusalem Church and the elders and apostles, battle is joined. The Judaizing Christian Pharisees, insisted that these Gentile converts "must," "dei," be circumcised and charged to keep the Law of Moses. They evidently were still as narrow in their outlook as when they challenged Peter over his preaching to the Gentiles in the home of Cornelius. **Acts.15v5. with 11v2-18.**

We read in Acts.15v24., that the Judaizers from the Jerusalem Church had greatly troubled and subverted the church at Antioch. "Troubled," is "etaraxan," the aorist of "tarasso," to agitate, to disturb, to throw into confusion, to make the heart palpitate. Jn.14v1,27. "Subverting," is "anaskeuazontes," the present participle of "anaskeuazo," to plunder, ravage, pervert, and destroy. It has the thought of the reversal of good that had been done, or the tearing down of what had been built, and is used to describe the plundering of a town. The idea of deciding the matter with the church at Jerusalem, came from the church at Antioch, not from the church at Jerusalem, and so all the Jerusalem church, and representatives of the Antioch church, gathered to discuss the problem. The Judaizers had greatly damaged the church at Antioch, and were severely censured for it. **It seems the Judaizers either withdrew, or submitted to the decision for a while, whatever they did at this point, they later certainly started up their divisive and Satan-inspired activities again.**

This conference at Jerusalem was not a conference of ministers from many churches, but appointed representatives of the church at Antioch, meeting the whole church of Jerusalem. This is the only meeting of this kind in recorded in the New Testament, even though, by modern standards, many more would have been thought necessary, and held on a regular basis. It was a meeting to decide the answer to a fundamental doctrinal point. The decision had consequences for the Church universal, for it decided whether the Church and Gentile believers were to keep the Jewish Law, or be separate from Judaism.

When Christian leaders insist that they have the right to lead and decide matters on their own, they are departing from New Testament principles, and in particular **Acts.15v22,25.**, where we see that "the whole church" was involved and of "one accord" in this critical decision. The Holy Spirit confirmed their decision, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us." **Acts.15v28.**

N. B. It is obvious that the first gathering at Jerusalem in **Acts.15v4.** was adjourned, for **Acts.15v6.**, speaks of another gathering. It is between these two gatherings that the private conferences of **Gal.2v1-10.** undoubtedly took place. **Dean Farrar writes:** "I have here assumed without hesitation that the visit to Jerusalem of **Gal.2v1-10.**, though here mentioned as though it were a second visit, was identical with that of **Acts.15.**, and therefore was in reality his third visit." **End of quote.**

Farrar then details the five visits of Paul to Jerusalem, which I have detailed as follows in my own words.

1. Paul's visit after his conversion on the Damascus Road. Acts.9v26.
2. When Paul brought the contribution for the poor at Jerusalem. Acts.11v30.
3. Paul's visit to resolve the problem of the Judaizers at the Council of Jerusalem. Acts.15v2.
4. Paul's visit after his second missionary journey. Acts.18v22.
5. Paul's visit to fulfil a vow at Jerusalem, and before his imprisonment at Caesarea. Acts.21v17.

Farrar continues: "Now this visit of Gal.2. could not possibly have been the first; nor as it is proved by Gal.2v7., as well as by the whole chronology of his life, could it have been the second; nor, as we see from the presence of Barnabus (compare Gal.2v1. with Acts.15v39.) could it have been the fourth; for no one can assume that it was without accusing Paul of disingenuous suppression when he spoke to the Galatians of this sole intercourse which he had with the apostles; and that it was not the fifth is quite decisively proved by Gal.2v11.

By the exhaustive method, therefore, we see that the visit dwelt on in Gal.2. must have been the third. It would, indeed, be inconceivable that it was some visit not recorded by the author of the Acts if there were any reason whatever for such a supposition; but when we consider how impossible it was that such a visit should have occurred without the knowledge of St. Luke, and how eminently the facts of it accorded with the views which he wished to further, and how difficult it is to find any other occasion on which such a visit would have been natural, we have no reason for adopting such an hypothesis. Nor, indeed, can anything be much clearer than the identity of circumstances in the visits thus described. In the two narratives the same people go up at the same time, from the same place, for the same object, in consequence of the same interference by the same agitators, and with the same results. Against the absolute certainty of the conclusion that the visits were one and the same there is nothing whatever to set but trivial differences of detail, everyone of which is accounted for in the text." **End of quote.**

Luke would hardly have passed over the events of Gal.2v1-10., if they had taken place in Acts 11v29,30.; it is also difficult to fit 14 years between **Acts.9v27. and Acts.11v29,30.; also Gal.2v1-10. cannot be Acts.11v29,30.,** for Paul saw the elders, not the apostles, and in **Gal.2v1-10.,** Paul proved that he was not behind the greatest apostles in experience and knowledge. **So, we are driven to the conclusion that in Acts.15v5-29., we have the public narrative of events, and in Gal.2v1-10., we see the private discussions of Paul with the other apostles. Paul and Barnabus saved the Church from staying within the Old Covenant.**

We see, then, leading men among the brethren meeting for discussion, but not for decision without the approval of the rest of the church at Jerusalem. In **Acts.15v4,6,12,22.,** the whole church at Jerusalem gathered to consider the problem of the relation of Gentile Christians to the law and circumcision; not only apostles and elders, but also "all the multitude," and "the whole multitude of disciples," and "the whole church," were involved in the discussion and the decision.

2. Notice the freedom of participation in discussion and the unanimous decision.

The apostles did not assume authority over the meeting of the two churches, they let discussion freely take place, they did not direct by apostolic authority, or by prophetic revelation. Nor did the elders, who were the pastors of the two flocks, insist that they were the only ones to hear and decide the matter. The apostles and elders did not decide the issue on their own, all the Jerusalem church was there, and all God's local family was at the discussion. Considerable time was given for people to air their points of view, grievances and objections. The Judaizers were given opportunity to fully state their views and there was "much

questioning and disputing," "**polles zeteseos**," but there was no attempt to silence them, or to rush things to a decision by a majority vote, or to limit discussion and debate. **There was a prolonged controversy and discussion over what to believe, it was a question of faith, and all could take part, not just a select few. This questioning, debate and discussion, was a blessing, it made everyone think through the implications of the New Covenant.**

After there had been much debate, Peter stands up and repeats how God directed him to preach the Gospel to Cornelius and his friends (about twelve years before), all of whom were Gentiles. God saved these Gentiles and filled them with the Holy Spirit just as He did the Christian Jews. Peter then asks the telling question, "Why tempt ye God?" that is, how could they accuse God of making a mistake, or refuse to follow His guidance as the Israelites had done at Massah and Meribah. **Exod.17v7. Deut.6v16. 1Cor.10v9.** Peter then says that the Christian Gentiles should not be compelled to carry a yoke, which they as Jews had never been able to bear. **Mt.11v30. 23v4.** Peter finishes by saying that salvation is by faith in Christ not in ceremony or ritual, and it is fitting that the last words of Peter in Acts are for forgiveness and liberty in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul and Barnabus follow up Peter's account and conclusions from God's dealings with Cornelius, with their own account of God's dealings and mighty workings with the Gentiles. Peter's words had silenced everybody, **Acts.15v12.**, and prepared the way for the appeal to Christian experience, these facts were far more eloquent than any intellectual argument. James then gives the Scriptural proof to back up God's directive to Peter to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, by quoting **Amos.9v11,12.**, from the Septuagint, and finishes by recommending four simple prohibitions for the Gentiles, which would stop them stumbling the Jews. These were abstaining from eating food offered to idols; from things strangled, **Gen.9v4. Lev.3v17. 7v26. Deut.12v16. 1Sam.14v33. Acts.10v15. Rom.14v14.**; from blood, dishes made from blood were common among Greeks and Romans; and from fornication, which was treated very lightly, indeed, as natural and permissible, by the heathen. **Acts.15v21.** Notice the insistence of appeal to God's workings and God's Word, not just to God's Word, or just to God's workings, but to both. Peter, Paul and Barnabus, tell of God's workings, Peter gives a very strong Scriptural warning as well, and James concludes with Scriptural proof and the practical application of that truth.

3. Notice the unanimous decision.

There was prolonged discussion, then decision; nothing was done until unanimity was reached, "having come to one accord," v25, "then it pleased the apostles and elders, WITH THE WHOLE CHURCH," v22, "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us." v28. The decision was confirmed to be of God by the unanimous decision of the whole church, and the Holy Spirit.

We cannot expect to get God's will in a church with a prayerless and worldly "rule by majority vote," this is a carnal expedient. We know that elders were elected by the popular vote of Christians, but this was a statement of confidence in proven ministries, and this was done prayerfully, and is quite different from worldly majority voting. Both Christian and worldly experience has often proved the majority to be wrong and the minority right. The report of the twelve spies proves that the carnal and unbelieving often outnumber the spiritual and full of faith believers. **Num.13v1 to 14v45.** Rule by majority vote often brings dissension, disagreement, confusion and distrust, and hinders fellowship, which is certainly against the divine desire that God's children should be one. Rule by majority vote has led to families and friends being either estranged, or indoctrinated to vote certain ways, and has resulted in fights for power behind the scenes, which can only be described as worldly and wicked. It is a tragedy when churches are divided into voting power groups, these power struggles destroy fellowship, and frustrate the desires of the Holy Spirit, and instead of the unanimity that brings certain victory, there is a division that brings sure defeat.

We must seek "the mind of the Lord," and recognise Jesus as the Head and Guide of His body the Church. Rom.12v4,5. 1Cor.12v12-27. Eph.4v11-16. A body goes into convulsions when it is sick and is not directed by the head, this is a true picture of Christ's Church, when we do what we want, and not what He wants. **We must be willing to pray until we all come to the same mind, this proves our subjection to Jesus. Jn.17v20-22. Rom.15v5-7. 1Cor.1v10-13. 2Cor.13v11-14. Eph.4v1-6,14-32. Ph.1v27. 2v1-5. 4v2. 1Thes.5v12-15.** Jesus desires us to be one, as He was with the Father, this oneness springs from mutual "agape" love, and this alone gives an effectual testimony to the world. A publicly manifested unity of the spirit, springing from "agape" love, is essential. The God who brought the Christians of the early Church, with their different ways, thoughts and backgrounds, to one accord, will do the same for us if we will humble ourselves and seek His face.

To obtain the mind of the Lord, prolonged united prayer has to be exercised by a church; there is no short cut. Prophecy may well confirm guidance from God, but it can never do away with the necessity of a person or church earnestly seeking God for His will. All local church members must have God's peace in their hearts before important decisions are made. If there is no unanimous decision, the matter should be left week by week, month by month, again and again, until all are of one accord. The China Inland Mission of Hudson Taylor practised this method, the secretary said, "When there has been a delay, it has always proved to have been a wise step, and the necessary guidance has come later on, ---no inconveniences have been found to

arise from the plan." **In an age of rush, quick decisions and worldly government and management techniques, churches have to be careful not to partake of the spirit of the world, or we can miss the good and perfect will of God.** The Trinity works by unanimity of plan, and churches should too, we should seek and follow the perfect plans that God has for His churches. Even with Christians as prayerful as those in the early Church, Satan's attack by cherished tradition nearly succeeded. Our modern prayerless churches lack diligent waiting upon God in prayer and worship, so defeat is inevitable.

Some have objected to the practice of unanimity on the grounds of **2Cor.2v6**. "hoi pleiones," "the many," or "the majority," means all the church except the sinning brother. A church should restrain action until there is unanimity of opinion, this demands the fruit of the Spirit, longsuffering and self-control, but it is the Divine highway to Divine guidance.

4. Notice the appealing and reasonable spirit of the decrees to the churches.

The apostles and elders at Jerusalem gave their decisions to the Gentile churches in a gentle manner, they did not pontificate, or act as lords. Mt.20v25-28. 1Pet.5v3. The decrees are given in an appealing advisory spirit, for Acts.15v28,29., reads, "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; v29. That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." **"Ye shall do well," is certainly not hard legalism, it is the language of love and reasonableness.**

We read in Acts.16v4., that the decisions of the apostles and elders and members of the church at Jerusalem are called, "the decrees," "ta dogmata," meaning decisions, or decrees, from "dokeo," to give an opinion. "Dogma" is used in **Col.2v14. and Eph.2v15.**, of the legal requirements of the ordinances of the Law, and in **Lk.2v1. and Acts.17v7.**, of the decrees of the Caesars. **The decrees of Acts.16v4., are said to be, "ordained of the apostles and elders;" "ordained," is "kekrimena," the perfect passive participle of "krino," to judge, to decide, the perfect emphasises the permanence and abiding nature of the decrees.** In **Eph.2v20. and 3v5.**, Paul confirms that the foundation of doctrine was laid down by apostles. The important thing about the Jerusalem decree was that the heads of the church at Jerusalem, and the apostles, admitted that circumcision was not essential to salvation, and a Gentile was not to be compelled to be circumcised or keep the Law. This brought temporary peace to the Gentiles, but it did not finally settle the problem, as we see from our next point.

5. Notice the danger of being restricted by a former God-blessed tradition.

There was a great conflict in the early Church over the relation of the Law to Christianity. Even genuine Christians were very slow to realise that Christ had fulfilled the types and prophecies of the Old Covenant, and He had instituted a completely New Covenant. The early Jewish Christians still followed and cherished their old forms and traditions, and unfortunately we are often no different from them, and we too are often slow to follow the Lord Jesus to the blessings of the New Covenant. In our day we often still see former God-blessed cherished traditions being an hindrance to Christians experiencing the fullness of New Testament Christian experience. The numbers of zealous Jews who became Christians was so great, that it appears that Peter, James and Barnabus were overcome by them, it seems from **Gal.2v12.**, that they had compromised New Testament truth through fear of offending them. This proves how we all need to watch our hearts, if men of God of this calibre can be inconsistent and compromise truth when pressured to do so by Jews, who were not prepared to put on one side their former Jewish traditions. We can all fail God if we do not keep close to Jesus. It is only as we seek the mind and will of God in earnest prayer, that we shall be clear-sighted enough to discern God's will, and strong and courageous enough to perform it.

We read in Gal2v11-21., that Paul reprovved Peter and Barnabus, for living like Christians one day and like Jews another day. It was very wrong for them to treat Gentile Christians as brothers one day, and then to shun them as Gentiles another day, because of the fear of the Jews and the Judaizers in the Church, so Paul publicly rebukes Peter and Barnabus for this. Paul's words were obviously received by Peter, for we find no trace of bitterness in Peter towards Paul, he recognised his great ministry, and his divinely inspired New Testament truth. **2Pet.3v15.** Peter and Paul honoured and respected each other, and Paul's correction did not spoil their affection for each other, they parted in friendship, a lesson we need to note. Barnabus did not separate from Paul on the grounds of this correction; it was on the issue of Paul's rejection of Mark, a relative of Barnabus. Paul later as good as admitted that he had been wrong over Mark, when he asked for his help, and Peter spoke well of Mark also. **Col.4v10. Phil.v24. 2Tim.4v11. 1Pet.5v13.** This teaches us that even the judgement and actions of apostles and notable Christian men, can be suspect at times, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." **1Cor.1v26-31.**

When Paul came to Jerusalem after his second apostolic mission, the issue of the relation of Christianity to the Law came to a head again. The church praised God for what He had done through Paul, but they were obviously suspicious of Paul's doctrine. They asked Paul to take part in a Nazarite vow, to show that he did not teach "apostasy from Moses," as the Judaizers had said that he did. Paul did not teach "apostasy from Moses," this was a devilish parody of his teaching, he taught the fulfilment of Mosaic type and prophecy in Christ.

Paul had made a vow in Acts.18v18. and undertook a Nazarite vow in Acts.21v23-27.. This involved the sacrifice of burnt offerings, sin offerings and peace offerings, as well as a basket of unleavened cakes and a libation of wine. **Num.6v1-21.** While it is true that God had ordained the ceremonies of the Law, and the Jews had practised them in God's will for fifteen centuries, and the apostles had used the Temple for a period, **Lk.24v53. Acts3v1.,** there can be no doubt that the Old Covenant had passed away when Christ came and died. **Jn.1v17. Mt.11v11-14. Heb.8v7-13. 10v1-9.** It is almost unbelievable to see Paul, the chief exponent of justification by faith, not only standing in the Temple and submitting himself to the Law, but also to the petty ceremonial additions of the Rabbis. Paul must have realised that he was giving the Judaizers, who had seized on his circumcision of Timothy as a proof of his inconsistency, **Acts.16v3.,** some real ammunition to use against him. Paul went to Jerusalem against the express orders of the Trinity. Why did Paul do it? Some have tried to justify Paul's visit to Jerusalem and his involvement with Temple worship on the following grounds.

1. They say that Paul did not give way on the issue of justification by faith, the brethren at Jerusalem admitted that this was not the issue. Acts.21v25. They say Paul was acting on the principle he laid down in **1Cor.9v19-23.,** it was an act of love, to the Jews, and he became a Jew to win them to Christ. However, this expediency involved a considerable compromise with truth. Paul had called the Judaizers, who said that keeping the Law was essential to salvation, "false brethren," "dogs," "false apostles," "deceitful workers," and "servants of Satan." **2Cor.11v13-15. Gal.2v4. Phil.3v2.** In both Galatians and Corinthians, Paul had said that no one could be justified by the Law, and said that all who taught they could, were accursed. **Gal.1v6-10. 2v16. 3v10-14.** Paul had called the ceremonies of the Law "weak and beggarly elements," as a means of justification, and said that circumcision was an unnecessary mutilation. **Gal.4v9-11. 5v12.**

2. They say that when Paul withheld truth from those who could not bear it, that Paul was following the example of Jesus who withheld truth from His disciples when they could not bear it. In Jn.16v12. Jesus did veil the truth of the implications of the New Covenant from His apostles, even after His cross and resurrection, because of their inability to bear that truth that the Old Covenant had passed away. They were so bound by the traditions of the Old Covenant, that Jesus had to leave the opening of their eyes on these matters to the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is evident from the apostles question, "Lord will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" That even after the forty days ministry of the risen Christ, the apostles did not understand the truth about the Church and the new Age of Grace. Paul certainly had no right to justify his observation of Temple rites, by thinking that if Jesus had been limited in what He could say to His apostles about the Law, then he had the right to act in a similar way. Paul had been given the truth that the Law had passed away, and had been replaced by the Age of Grace, and he had been given the responsibility of proclaiming it, and this is what he should have done.

Nothing can justify Paul's visit to Jerusalem, for the Trinity had told Paul not to go there. The problem of the relation of the Church to Judaism was going to be solved a mere ten years ahead, when the destruction of Jerusalem ended the Jewish state and religion. Those who defend Paul's action, say that he looked upon his vow as an act of public consecration to God and as an appeal to the Jews, not as a means of justification. However, it was an act of expediency, and was a carnal attempt to remove barriers and win people over, but instead of doing this it produced a riot and more persecution, just as the Lord had warned Paul that it would.

N. B. Paul disobeyed God when he went to Jerusalem.

The above reasons are not satisfactory for justifying Paul's visit to Jerusalem, for in Acts.21v4., God told Paul NOT to go to Jerusalem, and his disobedience brought about tragic results. **Acts.20v22,23. 21v4,11-14.** Why did Paul disobey the Lord and go to Jerusalem? As we have seen, Paul's love for his people drove him to Jerusalem; he was willing to be accursed from Christ, if it could only have saved them. **Rom.9v1-5.** It is very sad that the apostles and elders of the church at Jerusalem were the means of bringing the prophetic warnings to pass. They should have defended Paul's teaching of the New Covenant, but their appeal was based on an unscriptural expediency, and it nearly cost Paul his life. It all shows how difficult it is to break free of our traditions, and how the fear of man can hinder and harm the church of God. If we are not careful we can be as presumptuous and disobedient as the Israelites, who disobeyed God's command to Moses that nothing was to be added or taken away from the pattern that He had given, **Heb.8v5.,** they ignored this command and added thousands of their own traditions and rules and so made the Word of God of none effect. In the end they persuaded themselves that their tradition was God's truth and rejected Christ in favour of their own tradition, and murdered their Messiah.

APPENDIX 9. WAILING AND GNASHING OF TEETH. **Mt.8v12. 13v42,50. 22v63. 24v51. 25v30. Lk.13v28.**

N.B. We need to realise that there is no contradiction between the hymn-writers words, "For the love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind; And the heart of the eternal, is most wonderfully kind," and the words in **Rev.14v10,11.,** where the angel states that those who continue to follow Antichrist will be confined in Hell. The angel states that the followers of Antichrist, "shall be tried ("basanizo") with fire and brimstone in

the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; v11. And the smoke of their trial ("basanismos") ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night." In **Rev.14v10.**, "he shall be tormented in fire," is "basanisthesetai en puri;" which **Young, in his "Concise Critical Comments,** says literally means shall be "tried in fire," which shows that the thought of being tested or tried is definitely meant here.

We read that Israel's religious leaders gnashed their teeth at the martyr Stephen in Acts.7v54-60.

"When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at Stephen. v55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. v56 "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." v57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed together against him. v58 Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. v59 While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." v60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died."

In Acts.7v54. "they were cut to the heart." is "dieprionto tais kardiais," the imperfect passive of "diaprio," which literally means, "to saw in two. Stephen's words sent a saw through the hearts of the Sanhedrin. See Acts.5v33., where the same imperfect passive of "diaprio," tells us that the words of Peter and the other apostles enraged the Sanhedrin and cut them to the heart, literally, "they were sawn through the heart." They were plotting, "eboulonto," the imperfect middle of "boulomai," to kill the apostles, but the wise words of Gamaliel hindered them from carrying out this purpose. Acts15v29-42.

In Acts.7v54. "they gnashed on him with their teeth," is the imperfect active of "bruchō," "to bite with loud noise, to grind or gnash the teeth." Literally, "they began to gnash their teeth at him," just like a pack of hungry, snarling jackals. The gnashing and grinding of teeth here demonstrates the meaning of our Lord's words, they speak of the unrepentant bitter anger of the wicked. See Rev.16.9,11,21., where men blaspheme God to His face because of his judgements and will not repent. See. Rev.2v21. Jezebel would not repent. Rev.9v20. Many Jews refused to repent even after the powerful preaching of John the Baptist and Jesus, and the mighty miracles of Jesus. Mt.11v20. 21v32.

The noun "klauthmos" 2805, is translated in the AV as "weeping" in Mt.2v18. (the weeping of mothers whose children had been murdered by Herod), Mt.8v12. 22v13. 24v51. 25v30. and Lk.13v28., and as, "wailing," in Mt.13v42,50., and as "wept sore," in Acts.20v37. when the elders of Ephesus heard that they would not see Paul again on earth. The words "cast into outer darkness," and "cast into a furnace of fire," come from the lips of Jesus and cannot be ignored, they could not be more solemn and serious.

In Rev.14v9-13. the dreadful end of the wicked is compared with the blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord. The angel says they "rest from their labours," "kōpon," and that "their works, "erga," do follow them" into the heavenly kingdom. The angel says that these Christians who die for their Lord are blessed. This is the second of 7 beatitudes in the book of Revelation. **Rev.1v3. 14v13. 16v15. 19v9. 20v6. 22v7,14.** Jesus warns us that many Christians will die for the faith through dreadful persecution, and that Christians in the countries under Antichrists control, will need patient endurance to win through, when Antichrist is at the height of his power and fury. **Rev.6v9-11. 13v10. Mt.10v22. 24v13,44-51. 25v35-40.** "Patience," is the noun "hupomōne," which speaks of triumphant fortitude and courageous steadfastness rather than the long patience of "makrothumia." It is worth noting that the Greek word translated "labour," can have the meaning of trouble, vexation, pain and suffering as well as the meaning of labour and toil. **Mk.14v6. Lk.11v7. 18v5.** Glory and blessing awaits those who are prepared to labour and suffer for Christ.

Rev.14v9-12. is truly a most remarkable Scripture. "Basanisthesetai," is the third person singular future passive indicative of "basanizo," it is used here in **Rev.14v10., of the test and examination by Christ and the holy angels of the souls of the wicked in Hell. The justice of Heaven is based on love, mercy, and righteousness. It would be impossible for people in Heaven to be happy if there was anyone in Hell who was genuinely repentant and desired and loved righteousness, so everyone has to see the unrepentant love of evil in the wicked in Hell, and so know, beyond any shadow of doubt, that justice has been done. Rev.14v10. 20v10. Mt.8v29. Mk.5v7. Lk.8v28.**

The verb "basanizo," means, to test or try, from "basanos," a touchstone. It is used of any severe trial that produces distress, such as the physical trial and distress caused by disease, **Mt.8v6. (4v24.);** or trial caused by severe persecution, as is represented by the birth pangs of the woman of **Rev.12v2.;** or the severe spiritual trial and mental anguish and distress that Lot experienced through living in Sodom. **2Pet.2v8.** It can speak of a boat being tried or tossed by the waves. **Mt.14v24. Mk.6v48.** It is also used of the trials and suffering inflicted on the wicked on earth through the judgements of God. **Rev.9v5. 11v10.**

N.B. In Rev.14v11., the A.V. "the smoke of their torment," "torment," is the noun "basanismos" it only occurs in Rev.9v5. 14v11. 18v7,10,15.; most translators follow the A.V. and render it as "torment," **however, the famous Greek scholar, Robert Young, in his "Concise Critical Comments,"**

always renders it as "trial," which is its literal meaning.

The noun "basanos," literally, a touchstone, test, trial; occurs three times in the New Testament, in Mt.4v24. it speaks of persons suffering trial through sickness, etc., but in Lk.16v23,28., it speaks of the severe trial of the wicked selfish man who was suffering confinement in Hades. In one of His parables our Lord spoke of a debtor in prison of whom everything possible was to be exacted, He said they were put in charge of the keeper of the prison, the jailor, the "basanistees," it only occurs in Mt.18v34.. Jesus is the jailor, "basanistees," of Hades and has its keys. **Rev.1v18.** God has His prison where He confines the wicked, the lake of fire, which destroys both angelic and human bodies, and so protects the rest of society from their evil ways.

God warns everybody that all who follow Antichrist and Satan, will end in the lake of fire. However, God is certainly not saying that people will be gradually roasted alive forever. The lake of fire will destroy the body in a twinkling of an eye, and physical suffering will be out of the question. Rev.20v14,15. 21v8. Nor do Christ and His holy angels descend to the cruel levels of the Roman Inquisitors, who enjoyed putting their victims through the most dreadful tortures in the name of God. The sufferings of the wicked in Hell are not physical, for the lake of fire has devoured the bodies of angels and men, it is the distress of mind that is the result of being confined in the lake of fire with no hope of coming out and putting their evil desires into practice. **The pain in the soul of the wicked is one of their own choosing, it is the suffering, which they inflict upon themselves through loving evil and hating righteousness; the torment of a mind that is devoid of the truth and is twisted and deranged by the evil that it loves.** Even the prospect of isolation and confinement in the lake of fire will fail to bring the wicked to repentance, they are stubbornly determined to eternally love evil. Rev.21v8.

As the Lamb and the holy angels test and scrutinise the souls of the wicked, they find no trace of repentance, or any grounds for their release, they are proved irreconcilable. Even the revelation of the dying love of the Lamb of God fails to bring them to repentance. They wail in exasperation and frustration, but they gnash their teeth in fury and bitter anger.

We read in Psalm.2v1-5. that at the second coming of Jesus, the heathen will rage and take counsel against God the Father and Jesus; v1 "Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? v2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, v3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." v4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. v5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure. **NKJV.**

This same event is referred to in Rev.19v19-21. "And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. v20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. v21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. **NKJV**

This rebellion and hatred of God, that is manifested at the second coming of Jesus continues after death. At the second coming of Christ the followers of Antichrist among the nations get angry, (the verb "orgizo," 3710, to provoke or enrage), and God gets angry too, (the noun "orge," 3709, violent passion, and by implication punishment), and judges and exterminates the wicked. This hatred of a God of love is totally unjustified and quite astonishing, and is beyond understanding. Love of evil has totally warped, twisted and perverted their personalities and judgement. The effects of evil are totally appalling and are a warning to all.

APPENDIX 10. Faith, which is energised through Love. Gal.5v6.

Introduction. As a child I loved Jesus, and God gave me some remarkable experiences, but I had some "faith distress," because of a lack of knowledge of God's Word. We read in Hos.4v6., "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." And 1Pet.2v2., tells us, "Like new-born babies, crave for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up thereby unto salvation." See Heb.5v10-14. This study is an attempt to give knowledge of the way of salvation, and reveal through a study of the Scriptures, how we can have a faith, which is energised by love.

Paul warns us in Heb.3v12,13,18,19. "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; v13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. v18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? v19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." **NKJV**

Unbelief kept Israel out of Canaan, true faith caused them to inherit it. Their lives and bad reactions to the voice and Word of God are lessons for us, and are examples for us to avoid. **See 1Cor.10v5,6.** "But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. v6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted." **NKJV.**

Paul warns the Corinthians that sickness and death had come upon many of them because they had profaned the Lord's Table, by living bad lives when they partook of the communion service. We read in 1Cor.11v29,30., "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. v30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many ("hikanoi," 2425) sleep." NKJV. "Sleep," better, "are sleeping," is simply a synonym for "are dead," but here it does not convey the restful sense which Christian theology usually conveys by it. See Jn.11v11. Acts.7v60. 1Thes.4v13. 2Pet.3v4. Thayer's Greek Lexicon, says "sleep," "hikanoi," 2425, in 1Cor.11v30., means, "many, a considerable number,"

Unbelief that is the product of bad living will keep us from obtaining our spiritual Canaan inheritance, whereas, a faith that is energised by "agape" love, will ensure that we enjoy all the spiritual blessings and riches that are ours in Christ Jesus, and will make sure that we avoid the judgements that came upon the Corinthians for their bad living.

We read in Gal.5v6., "For [if we are] in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith activated and energized and expressed and working through love." AMP. Faith, which is energised by love, is the foundation of our walk with God.

1. WE MUST DISTINGUISH SAVING FAITH FROM OTHER FALSE KINDS OF FAITH.

a. Saving faith is obviously not a demon's faith.

We read in James.2v19., that demons believe that there is a God and tremble in apprehension of judgement, but they resist God's power, purposes and ministries. They tell men to doubt what they know is true.

b. Saving faith is not the faith of a Heathen, or an unbeliever.

The Scriptures tell us that the Heathen know there is a God and a judgement day, but this is not Christian faith. 2Thes.3v2. Rom.1v18-32. Unbelievers place their trust in worldly things, and they reject, and refuse to seek saving faith in Jesus.

c. Saving faith is genuine faith in Jesus, and it brings us into God's kingdom. Acts.16v30-34. Rom.10v5-21. N.B.v9.

God uses many ways to bring people to Jesus and saving faith. Jesus revealed Himself to Paul by open vision; God opened Lydia's heart when Paul preached, and the jailer's mind by an earthquake. God compelled many to believe by mighty signs, wonders and miracles. Acts.8v5-13. 9v1-18. 16v14,30-34,40. Rom.15v18-21. Saving faith is personal faith in Jesus; it is miraculous in its effect upon us, for it brings us forgiveness and peace with God. Rom.5v1,2. In Lk.10v17-20., Jesus told the seventy evangelists to rejoice more over their saving faith in Him, which had written their names in Heaven, than over their miracle working faith that had produced signs and wonders in His name. All the other gifts and blessings that come to us, are the result of this primary gift of salvation in Jesus. Eph.2v8,9. Rom.6v23. 8v32. 1Cor.8v9. 9v15.

d. Saving faith is a simple and uncomplicated personal faith in Jesus and His atonement.

The angel Gabriel proclaimed it in Mt.1v21. "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." **End of quote.**

Paul preached it in Rom.5v1,2. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, v2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." **End of quote.** "Access" is "prosagoge," a word used for entrance into the presence of a king. Paul gloried in, and preached, a crucified Saviour. 1Cor.1v23. 2v2. Gal.6v14.

Peter preached redemption through the precious blood of Jesus. 1Pet.1v17-19. "And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; v18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, v19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

e. Salvation is a gift, and is of faith and not of works. Eph.2v8,9. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest anyone should boast." **End of quote.** **And again Paul proclaims God's great gift of salvation in Rom.6v23.** "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." **End of quote.**

Paul's testimony in 1Tim.1v12-17. "I constantly thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me trustworthy, putting me into service; v13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and an insolent violent aggressor. But I was shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; v14 and the grace of our Lord super-abounded, with the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. v15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving unqualified full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost. v16 Moreover, for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate all His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. v17 Now to the King of the ages, the incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen." **End of Quote.**

JESUS IS A GIFT TOO WONDERFUL FOR WORDS.

We read in 2Cor.9v15. "Now thanks be to God for His Gift, [precious] beyond telling [His indescribable, inexpressible, free Gift]!" AMP. Paul bursts out, "Thanks be to God," "charis to Theo," for the third time. See 2Cor.9v11-12,15. Words fail Paul as he tries to describe the gift of Jesus to us. "Indescribable" is the adjective "anekdiegeto" (only here in the New Testament), translators translate it as, indescribable, unspeakable, inexpressible. Jesus is the priceless gift of God's love to us; a gift too wonderful for words. Jesus is God's unspeakable gift, the greatest gift that God ever gave, or could ever give to us. It is a "wonder beyond description." A similar word is used in Rom.11v33., and Eph.3v8., it is, "anexichniastoi," which means unsearchable. **In 2Cor.4v17.** and elsewhere, Paul uses the form of the Hebrew superlatives, which twice repeats the emphatic word. We read in 2Cor.4v17., "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." NKJV. "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," is "kath' hyperbolen eis hyperbolen, baros doxes." Literally, "exceedingly unto excess." See another example in Phil.1v23., literally, "much more better;" and Rom.8v37., "abundantly the conquerors;" and Eph.3v20, "exceeding abundantly."

2. THE FRUIT OF FAITH IS VITALLY LINKED WITH A FAITH, WHICH WORKS, BY LOVE.

The fruit of faith is the natural growth of the seed of saving faith; it is the extension of our faith in Christ's death, to faith in God in all the other areas of our lives. 1Pet.1v23. Rom.1v17. The fruit of faith mentioned in Gal.5v22., is speaking of both passive and active Christian faith. The fruit of faith is an attitude of mind that trusts God daily in every area of life, and this spiritual frame of mind is essential for a powerful exercise of spiritual gifts. Certain manifestations of spiritual gifts can only take place through a consecrated Christian who is at the peak of spiritual power through living a life of holiness and dedicated love for people. The higher manifestations of spiritual gifts are generated and sustained through communion with God in prolonged prayer, abiding in Christ, and diligent study of the Scriptures. Jn.15v7. 14v12-14. Mk.9v20-29. Paul declares in 1Cor.13., that we cannot divorce character from spiritual power without tragic consequences for ourselves and others; those who do so, end up either with a shallow ministry, or even in total spiritual shipwreck, as in the case of Judas and Demas. If our faith and love are transfigured through beholding the glory, love and goodness of God, we will never need to fear such a fate. 2Cor.3v18.

N.B. The prayer of faith is a manifestation of the fruit of faith.

The prayer of faith often precedes the operation of the gift of faith, and the other gifts of power. Saving faith, the fruit of faith, the prayer of faith, and the gifts of power, are all vital partners in Christian experience. Elijah's earnest prayers of faith brought into operation the power gifts of the Holy Spirit. We read that Elijah prayed "seven times," before the rain came in answer to his prayers. 1King.18v41-46. Elders should pray through for the sick like Elijah prayed for rain. James.5v14-18.

In 1Cor.12v31., Paul again uses the superlative, (and not just the comparative), "kath hyperbolen hodon," "a supremely excellent way." 1Cor.12v31., "But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And moreover a most excellent way show I unto you." ASV. "I show you a way beyond all comparison." Like "kath hyperbolen eis hyperbolen" in 2Cor.4v17. "Hyperbole" is from "hyperballo," to throw beyond, to surpass, to excel. See. 2Cor.3v10. Eph.1v19. 1John.4v7. In 1Cor.12v31., The Majority Text has the superlative adjective "kreitton," 2909, better, best, nobler; more useful, more serviceable: see 1Cor.11v17.; and Heb.1v4., more excellent. The Nestle text has the superlative adjective "meizon," 3185, in greater degree, greater, the more. Faith, which is energised by "agape" love for God and people, is far superior to a faith that desires and covets spiritual, gifts because they are spectacular. The motivation by "agape" love is God's supremely excellent way to manifest spiritual gifts.

3. THE GIFT OF FAITH IS ALSO VITALLY LINKED WITH A FAITH THAT WORKS BY LOVE..

The miraculous gift of faith is limited to the area of supernatural miraculous power, it is a temporary faith given to produce a specific miracle; whereas, saving faith is a continuous faith, and if we are faithful, an eternal faith, which like God's kingdom, endures forever. The gift of faith is speaking only of a special area of active faith; it is an occasional and temporary impartation of the Holy Spirit's faith and power to us, to fulfil a specific purpose of God. The gift of faith deals with the spiritual realm and areas where faith is necessary to see, it gives authority and power in the spiritual realm. The gift of faith needs the foundation of saving faith. 1Cor.13v2. The gift of faith also needs the basis of the fruit of faith, which is a quality of character. Great spiritual power inevitably bring great stresses and spiritual conflict into a Christian's life, and this demands some measure of Christian fruit and maturity. The more of the fruit of faith you have, the easier it is to manifest the gift of faith and the other spiritual gifts.

2. HOW YOU CAN BE SURE THAT YOU HAVE A GENUINE FAITH.

We will now show the foundations of faith, and how we can test, know, and be sure of our faith. You can be sure of your faith: -

a. When your faith is built on the foundation of genuine repentance. Mt. 9v13. Acts.3v19.

Repentance precedes saving faith. Heb.6v1. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God." (KJV)

Holman Hunt's picture of Jesus as the light of the World. One of these has been hanging in St Paul's Cathedral since June 1908. A door overgrown with ivy and weeds. The catch that opens the door is on the inside, it is opened by repentance. The foundation of true faith is repentance, which involves a change of mind and life, "metanoia." We become Christians, when we repent of our sins, and ask God to forgive us, and invite Jesus into our lives.

John Baptist preached repentance. Mark.1:4,5. "John did baptise in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. v5. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptised of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."

Jesus preached repentance. Matt.4v17. "Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." **Mk.1v14,15.** "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." (KJV)

Peter preached repentance. Acts.2v38. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptised 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." (KJV)

Paul preached repentance. Acts.26v20. "But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." (KJV)

God longs for all to repent. 2Pet.3v9. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**" (KJV)

b. When you base your faith on the foundation of the Holy Scriptures.

True faith is founded on the Word and promises of God, not on our feelings. John Wesley learned the valuable lesson that our feelings can vary, but faith in the captain of our salvation, the Lord Jesus, can, and should, remain steadfast.

2Peter.1v3,4. "His divine power has generously bestowed upon us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the full experiential personal knowledge (the noun "epignoseos") of Him who called us by means of His own glory and virtue ("arete"). v4. **Whereby there are generously given to us exceeding great and precious promises:** that through these you might become sharers of the divine nature, having escaped by flight the moral decay and corruption that is in the world through lust, covetousness, and greed ("epithumia")."

True faith in God's Word results in a relationship with God, not just a theory about God.

Knowing Jesus and the Father is the start of a transforming relationship. We read in John.17v3., "And this is eternal life, namely, that they might be having an experiential knowledge of you, the only genuine God, and of Him whom you sent on a mission, Jesus Christ." This is a correct translation, for the A.V. "should know," is "ginoskosin," the present active subjunctive of "ginosko," "should keep on knowing," a present continuous relationship and experiential knowledge of God. Knowledge of God the Father comes through Jesus. Jn.14v6-9.

c. When your faith is inaugurated, inspired and witnessed to by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgement. John.16v7-11. "I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. v8. And when he is come, he will reprove and convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement: v9. Of sin, because they believe not on me; v10. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; v11. Of judgement, because the prince of this world is judged."

The Holy Spirit is the agent of regeneration and the rebirth of our spirits, which were dead through sin. Eph.2v1-3. James.1v13,14.

Nicodemus and Jesus. John.3v3-7. "Jesus answered and said to him, "I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." v4. Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" v5. Jesus answered, "I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. v6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again."

Titus.3v3-5. "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. v4. But when the kindness of God our Saviour and {His} love for mankind appeared, v5. **He saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but because of His pity and mercy, by the cleansing bath of**

regeneration and the renewing by the Holy Spirit, v6. whom He bestowed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, v7. that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to {the} hope of eternal life. (NAS)

N.B. The Holy Spirit gives us the inner witness to our salvation and the certainty of knowing.

In. Eph.1v14., the Holy Spirit is said to be the "guarantee" of our inheritance. "Guarantee," is "arrhabon," a pledge, deposit, or down-payment, part of the purchase-money or property given in advance as security for the rest, and which certifies that the full amount will subsequently be paid. **The baptism in the Spirit is a foretaste of Heaven, and a living experience of God.** We read in 1John.4v13., that the gift of the Holy Spirit makes a Christian conscious that God dwells in him, and is proof of our fellowship with God. "Given" is "dedoken," perfect active indicative here, though in 1John.3v24., the aorist "edoken" is used.

1John.5v9-15. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. v10. He who believes in the Son of God **has the witness in himself**; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. v11. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. v12. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. v13. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, **that you may know that you have eternal life**, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. v14. Now **this is the confidence that we have in Him**, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. v15. And **if we know that He hears us**, whatever we ask, **we know** that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."

Rom.8v16. "The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

The Holy Spirit is "The Comforter," or better "The Encourager" and Guide of believers in Jesus.

John.14v16,17. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; v17. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (KJV)

John.16v12. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. v13. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things so ever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. v14. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you."

Rom.8v28. "And **we know** that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to {His} purpose." (NAS)

The Holy Spirit gives us the desire to seek and thirst for God.

1. Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed His tender, last farewell, A Guide, a Comforter, bequeathed with us to dwell.
2. He came in tongues of living flame, To teach, convince subdue; All-powerful as the wind He came, As viewless too.
3. He came sweet influence to impart, A gracious, willing Guest; Where He can find one humble heart Wherein to rest.
4. And His that gentle voice we hear, Soft as the breath of even, That checks each thought, and calms each fear, And speaks of heaven.
5. And every virtue we possess, And every conquest won, And every thought of holiness Are His alone.
6. Spirit of purity and grace, Our weakness pitying see; O make our hearts Thy dwelling-place, And worthier Thee.

d. When your faith is proved by a pure and holy life. Jn.17v17. 1Pet.1v15,16.

Crucified flesh. Gal.5v14-26. N.B. v24. Luke.3v8. "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." (KJV)

Rom.8v13. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

In 1Cor.6v9-11., Paul remarks on the change of life of the Corinthians, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, v10. nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. v11. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." (NKJ)

2Cor.5v17,18. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. v18. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation."

Col.3v5-11. "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. v6. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, v7. in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. v8. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and filthy language out of your mouth. v9. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, v10. and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, v11. where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all."

3. THROUGH JESUS WE CAN HAVE VICTORY IN OUR FIGHTS OF FAITH. Heb.4v14-16.

Jesus has been more severely tried and tempted than any of us. His victories assure us of our victory in trial. 1Tim.6v12. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were called, and did confess a good confession before many witnesses."

Rom.5v3-5. "And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; v4, and perseverance, character; and character, hope. v5. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

Heb.6v12. "Be not slothful, but followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

a. Trials of our faith are allowed and ordained by God, and are more precious than gold. 1Pet.1v4-7.

God allows all Christians to experience trials of faith in order to improve our characters, deepen our faith, and give us qualifications for ministry. These trials of life, and conflicts with the powers of darkness can be particularly expected, when we are seeking a deeper walk with God and a more effective ministry for God. We cannot avoid having battles of faith, and the pressures on our faith and the gloomy doubts that rise, are often not our own fault. They can be caused by the pressures of life that we cannot avoid, such as financial and health problems, difficulties in our home and work circumstances, bereavement, and the opposition and unbelief of the world. 1Tim.6v12. Pressure and problems can be exacerbated through false teaching and unscriptural tradition, and the lack of a Spirit-anointed fellowship, for this leaves us without the essential spiritual support that we need, when we are attacked by the insinuations and lies of the powers of darkness. However, God understands and sympathises with us in all these pressures and difficulties, and our Saviour's intercession and ministry are totally dedicated to us. He is the Author of our faith, and He will perfect and finish it; so let us cling to Him and seek Him with all our hearts. Heb.12v2. Rom.8v26-39. We can surely believe that the God, who gave His Son for us, will with Him also freely give us all things. Rom.8v32. Mt.11v27. 19v26. 21v22. 1Cor.3v21,22. Rev.21v5,7. But beware of roots of bitterness. Heb.12v12-15.

b. The strengthening grace of our Lord Jesus is with us in our "faith distress."

Paul states that our faith should grow, "from faith to faith." **Rom.1v17.** However, our faith can at times be severely tested, as Abraham found out, when, "with no grounds for hope, Abraham sustained by hope, put faith in God." Abraham at 99 and Sarah at 90, both laughed in unbelief at the long delayed promise of God, when old age made the promise of a child seem ridiculous. They later embraced and received the promise of God through the gracious faith-building acts of God. A personal visit of Jesus restored the faith of Abraham and Sarah, we read in Rom.4v20., they were "strengthened in faith," "enedunamothe tei pistei," the aorist passive of "endunamoo," to empower, to strengthen, the passive means "to be strengthened, to be empowered." God strengthened and empowered Abraham's faith to receive His promise. Gen.15v4-6. 18v11-14.

God allows our faith to be tested, because faith grows through overcoming the trials that test it. We should also take great comfort from the fact that God not only takes great pleasure in our faith, He also delights to encourage and sustain it. Jesus was never hard on people with genuine doubts and problems; He treated Nathanael, Nicodemus, doubting Thomas, and multitudes more, with great grace and love; Jesus always met a sincere seeker's need. Jn.1v46-51. 3v1-21. 20v24-29. Mk.9v17-29. The risen Christ restored the shattered faith of His apostles, and though He chided them for their ignorance of the prophetic Scriptures, and their consequent unbelief, **He was very gracious to them, and encouraged them with a benediction of peace.** Jesus also restored their faith by "showing Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs;" He "appeared to them repeatedly over a period of 40 days; talking with them about the affairs of the kingdom of God." Acts.1v3. Lk.24v25-29,44,45. Jn.20v1-31. 1Cor.15v3-8. **We too can experience the strengthening grace of Jesus in our times of trial and "faith distress," and gain extremely valuable qualifications for an anointed ministry to those in similar trials.**

c. The difference between "genuine doubts," and "an evil heart of unbelief."

God never despises a genuine seeker who is harassed by doubts and fears. There is a great difference between a "genuine doubter" with "faith distress," and a person who has a spirit of scepticism and "an evil heart of unbelief," who does not want to believe, because of the demands that faith will make upon them. Heb.3v12-19. This is why Jesus severely censured the people who were still full of unbelief, and wilfully unrepentant, after seeing multitudes of signs and wonders from God. Mt.11v20-24. 12v31-45. The honest doubter may want to believe, but they may have real problems and difficulties that keep them from a clear faith. Genuine doubts can give us real distress, anguish and perplexity, for the very reason that faith and authentic experience are so

earnestly desired. This longing "faith distress" will certainly lead to a positive and conclusive faith, and an abundant and satisfying experience of God. Every seeking heart in God's gallery of faith has known what it has meant to pray through from genuine doubts to a certainty of faith, and from barrenness to a blessed and fruitful experience. Even godly Enoch had a period of crisis before he started walking with God. Gen.5v21-24. Heb.11v5,6. Jude.v14,15.

4. GOD'S EVER PRESENT PROTECTING LOVE AND SUSTAINING GRACE IN OUR TRIALS OF FAITH.

a. Peter assures us of God's complete and continuous protection. 1Pet.1v4-7.

We read in 1Pet.1v5., that God gives special protection to His children; believers in Jesus, "are constantly and always kept, protected and guarded by the power of God through faith." The word for, "are always kept" is "phrouroumenous," the present passive participle of "phroureo," a military term, Acts.9v24. 2Cor.v32., meaning, "to guard or garrison," from "phrouros," "a sentinel." **Vincent says, "The present participle indicates something in progress, a continuous process of protection."** Peter assures us that the heirs of God's heavenly kingdom are guarded as securely as our heavenly inheritance.

When Peter tells us in 1Pet.1v4., that our heavenly inheritance is "reserved" for us, he uses "teteremenen," the perfect passive participle of "tereo;" which signifies, "taking care of and keeping by guarding." Jesus uses the same word, "tereo," in Jn.17v11., when He prays and asks the Father to guard His disciples. He asks the Father, "keep in Thy Name those whom Thou hast given me;" "keep" is "tereson," the aorist active imperative of "tereo." Again, in Jn.17v12., our Lord said, "I kept them in Thy Name;" "I kept," is "eteroun," the imperfect active of "tereo;" "I constantly kept and guarded them." Also in v12, "Those whom thou gavest me I guarded;" "guarded" is "ephulaza," the aorist active of "phulasso;" Christ was their "phulax," their sentinel and guard, and He is still our sentinel and guard; He ever lives to protect us, and intervene for good in our lives. Heb.7v25.

In 1Pet.1v5., Peter assures us that Christians are protected and enveloped, "en dunamei theou," "**IN the power of God.**" See Phil.4v7., where "phrouresei," "shall garrison," the future active indicative of "phroureo," is used for the peace of God guarding our hearts. The peace of God can guard our hearts in every situation, because the power of God envelops, guards, and preserves us.

The protecting and transforming friendship of Jesus is a continuous and blessed reality.

Jesus said that no thieves or robbers, could attack our heavenly inheritance; and He assures us that the heirs of the heavenly kingdom are as securely guarded by God their Father as their heavenly inheritance. Mt.6v19-21. Col.1v5. **God cares more for the heirs of the kingdom of Heaven, than He does for the fabric of that kingdom. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His love for us will never pass away.** As God's beloved children we are assured of our heavenly Father's care and protection.

b. The apostle John assures us that Satan cannot grasp a born-again child of God.

In 1John.5v18., John writes, "We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and **the Wicked One does not touch him.**" "Does not touch him," "ouch haptetai autou," is the present middle indicative of "hapto," **which means to lay hold of or to grasp rather than a momentary touch, which is "thiggano."** John assures us that **the Wicked One cannot lay hold of, or grasp a child of God.** John only uses "hapto," here in 1Jn.5v18., and in Jn.20v17., where Jesus asks Mary to "cease holding and clinging to me;" "me mou haptou" is the present middle imperative of "hapto." Mary was filled with joy at finding our Lord risen and alive, and did not want Him to go away; Jesus told Mary that she could not keep clinging to Him, because He had to ascend to the Father. There was no prohibition against Mary touching or holding the Lord, for in Mt.28v9. the women took hold of our Lord's feet ("ekratesan") and worshipped Him. Jesus was so moved by the grief of the women, that His love for them compelled Him to come and comfort them before He ascended to the Father. **We can say with absolute certainty, that the Wicked One cannot grasp or possess a Christian.**

In 1John.5v18., John states that truly regenerated Christians do not live a life of sin, or keep on being dominated by continual sin. See 1Jn.3v6,9. **John is not speaking of an act of sin, which would be indicated by the aorist tense; but the continuous life of sin which is indicated by the present tense, for, "sinneth not," is "ouch hamartanei," the linear (continuous) present active indicative of "hamartano," "to sin."** We have victory over sin through the new birth, and the law of the spirit of life in Christ, this frees us from the law of sin and death. Rom.8v1-3.

{In the phrase, "he that was begotten of God," "ho geneses ek tou theou," "he that was begotten," is "geneses," the aorist passive participle of "going too," which only occurs in the second part of 1Jn.5v18. Some think it is equivalent to the, "he that is begotten of God," "ho gegennemenos ek tou theou," the perfect passive participle of "gennao," which is used in the first part of this verse and 1Jn.3v9., and refers to a Christian who is begotten of God. The perfect tense speaks not only of the act of birth, but also of its continuous present efficacy, from the point of birth up to the present.}

The Majority Text reading, "keeps himself," "terei heauton," means that it is referring to Christians. Others feel that the reading of the Critical Texts, of "terei auton," "keeps him;" makes, "He that was begotten of God," refer to Christ. The New English Bible reads, "It is the Son of God who keeps him safe." There is no problem

here, both thoughts are true; we are to keep ourselves in the love of God and our Lord's devoted and continuous intercession for us is a glorious and wonderful fact. Jude.v21. Jam.1v27. Heb.4v12-16. 7v25. Ps.121v3,4.

N.B. God's children are the apple of His eye.

In Zech.2v8. the prophet says, "He that touches you, touches the apple of His eye;" and Deut.32v9,10. tells us, "The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is His inheritance;---He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye." What was true of God's Old Covenant saints, it is certainly true of God's New Covenant saints. Evil spirits believe in God and tremble, none of them would think of trying to hit God in the eye, and when they attack God's dear children they are in real danger. Many demons are in the abyss because they have tried to harm God's dear children.

c. We have a covenant relationship, legal protection, and authority in Jesus.

God has confirmed by an oath His covenant relationship with us, to give us an anchor for our souls. Heb.6v12-20.

We have authority and dominion over Satan and evil through faith in the name of Jesus.

Every knee must bow to the name of Jesus and recognise its authority. Phil.2v9-11. Rom.14v11,12., both from Is.45v23. Jesus said in Luke.10v19., "Behold, I give unto you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over ALL the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you." The seventy were not mature Christians, for in v21 our Lord calls them, "neepios," "none-speaking babes, "or" little children." The revelation of this power and authority had been hidden from the wise and prudent and given to babes, because it was good in the eyes of our heavenly Father. They were given complete authority over ALL the power of the enemy, and the powers of darkness were terrified at their coming. The 70 disciples returned with joyful surprise that demons were subject to them in the name of Jesus. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and are safe." **Prov.18v10.**

N.B. In Lk.10v19.. Our Lord definitely states, "Nothing shall by any means hurt you."

Our Lord Jesus used a very strong triple negative when He said, "Nothing you, in no way shall hurt," "ouden humas ou me adikese." It is made up of, "nothing," "ouden;" "in no way," "ou me;" and "shall not hurt," "adikese," the aorist active subjunctive of "adikeo." "Adikeo," is made up of the negative prefix "a," and "dikos," which means, "to act unjustly, to do wrong, to injure, to harm." It is difficult to adequately convey the strength of our Lord's strong triple negative in English, unless we express it as, "Nothing, in no way, shall not hurt you,"

{The Majority Text has "adikese," the aorist active subjunctive of "adikeo," other texts read, "adikesei," the future active indicative of "adikeo." Both readings are theologically correct; the aorist tense assures us, that at the point of conflict with evil angels, God will protect us from them; the future tense informs us that God will protect us from harm in any future conflict with the powers of darkness.}

In Mt.10v1., we see that God gave authority, "exousia;" and power, "dunamis;" to the apostles, even though Jesus describes them as "little children" in Mt.11v25,26. These Christian babes had authority over all the power of the Devil in the Name of Jesus. The source of this authority is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, as John tells us in 1Jn.4v4., "He that is in us, is greater than he that is in the world." We are proof against Satan's attacks through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

5. THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES AND LEVELS OF FAITH.

a. The difference between personal faith in God and a faith to minister to others.

The Centurion and the Syrophenician woman. Mt.8v10-12. & 15v21-28. **Both of these people had a great personal faith in Christ; indeed, Jesus Himself said that their faith was "great." Both had a desperation of faith because of a deep concern for one they loved.** Both had great faith and great love, but they were not able to meet the needs of their loved ones, it took Christ's faith and the gifts of the Spirit that were manifested through Him to meet their need.

However, it is one thing to believe that God will meet your needs, or another's needs, but quite another thing to have the spiritual ability or faith to take or receive from God, the power to meet those needs. It takes even more faith, and a Divine call, to believe that God will give you the regular exercise of His power and love to meet other people's needs.

b. There is the great possibility and opportunity of a real growth in faith, we can go "from faith to faith." **Rom.1v17.** "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed **from faith to faith:** as it is written, the just shall live by faith."

2Cor.5v17,18. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. v18. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." **See 2Pet.2v18.** "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

In Heb.11., we have a catalogue of the three kinds of godly faith; saving faith, the fruit of faith, and the gift of faith, Heb.11. speaks of faith in general, and shows us the three kinds of faith that please God, all are capable of growth.

c. Faith grows by communion with Jesus and the Father, and by obedience to the Holy Spirit.

2Cor.3v18. "But we ALL, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "Transformed," is "metamorphoumetha," the present passive of "metamorphoo," to transform, to transfigure, in Mt.17v2. and Mk.9v2., it is translated "transfigured." In Rom.12v2., "Be ye transformed," is "metamorphousthe," the present passive imperative of "metamorphoo." **Faith comes by communion with God, not just by confession of truth. Paul instructs us to be passive under the transforming hand of God.**

**Lie still and let Him mould thee; Oh Lord I would obey;
Be Thou the Skilful Potter; And I the yielding clay.
Bend me, O bend me, to Thy will; While in Thy Hand I'm lying still.**

We read in Heb.12v2. "Looking away to ("eis") Jesus, the author and Perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." "Looking away to," is "aphorontes eis," the present active participle of the verb "aphorao," to look away, it only occurs here and Phil.2v23. in the New Testament. "Eis," suggests we look not just "to," but also "into" all the inner beauty, perfections and glory of Jesus. After being encouraged by the faith of "the cloud of witnesses," we must fix our eyes on Jesus, for he was the one who inspired their faith. Heb.11v26. **Jesus is, "the Author" of faith, "ton archegon,"** from "arche" and "ago," "the one leading off," here **Jesus is described as the Pioneer who blazes the way of faith; and as a Leader or Prince in Acts.5v31.; and as the Source and Author of life in Acts.3v15.,** any or all of these meanings can be applied to "archegon." Jesus is the Author and Pioneer of faith and salvation, our Elder Brother and Friend. Rom.8v29. **All His life Jesus endured the most severe and unrelenting trials of faith in His conflicts with Satan and evil people, and His countless thousands of victories of faith out of pure love for us are quite beyond praise.**

"Perfecter," is "teleiotes," **Jesus perfects our faith and brings it to the goal.** This word is found nowhere else; Paul seems to have coined it from "teleo." In Heb12v3., "Consider," is "analogisasthe," the aorist imperative of "analogizomai," which means to reckon up, to count up, to compare, to weigh, it can include the idea of contemplation; it only occurs here in the New Testament.. **We are to consider the victorious faith and triumphant endurance of Jesus over all the vicious slander, aggressive speaking against ("antilogian") and other opposition that came against Him. "Endured," is "hupomemenekota," the perfect active participle of "hupomeno,"** the same verb that is used in Heb.12v2., to speak of our Lord's brave and victorious endurance of the cross.

We read in Heb.12v3.. "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. KJV. **The epistle to the Hebrews was written to drive home to us, that considering, contemplating, and feeding on Jesus is the answer to all our problems, and the cure for doubt, fear, unbelief, weariness ("kamete"), and feebleness and fainting ("ekluomenoi"), in the Christian life.**

"That ye wax not weary," is "hina me kamete," the negative "hina me," with the aorist active subjunctive of "kamno" 2577, to be weary as here, or sick as in James.5v15.

"Fainting in your souls," is "tais psuchais humon ekluomenoi," the present passive participle of "ekluo" 1590, to loosen out, to set free, and in the passive to be enfeebled, to be tired out, here in soul, as in Heb.12v5. Paul's whole purpose in writing this epistle was to strengthen and empower fainting and enfeebled Christians through contemplation of Jesus.

A similar thought is expressed in Heb.3v1.. "For consider him that hath endured such gainsaying of sinners against himself, that ye wax not weary, fainting in your souls." ASV. We are told to "consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession." "Consider," is "katanoesate," the aorist active imperative of the verb "katanoeo," from "kata," and " nous," and so means to put the mind down on a thing, to fix the mind on as in Mt.7v3. and Lk.12v24. We are to fix our minds on Jesus and thoughtfully and attentively consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.

LOVE IN ACTION IS THE "MORE EXCELLENT WAY" TO ESTABLISH FAITH.

"Faith which is energised, expressed and works ("energeo") through love," Gal.5v6.

We are saved by faith in Jesus, but love in action is the "more excellent way" to establish faith. 1Cor.12v31. **We read in 1Tim.1v19.20.** "Keeping fast hold on faith and a good conscience; which some having rejected and thrust from them have made shipwreck concerning the faith: v20 of whom is Hymenaeus

and Alexander; whom I delivered unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme."

N.B. Col.3v12-17. "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; v13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. v14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. v15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. v16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. v17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." **NKJ**

See 1John.4v7-21. John uses the tender word "beloved, ("agapetoi," "Divinely loved ones." Weust), three times in this chapter. 1Jn.4v1,7,11. "'Beloved, let us habitually love one another, for love comes out of God, and everyone who habitually loves, out of God has been born, and knows God in an experimental way. v8 Whoever does not habitually love in this manner, has not come to know God, because God is love. v9 In this the love of God was clearly manifested to us, in that God sent His Only Begotten Unique Son into the world on a mission, so that we might live through him. v10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

v11 Beloved, (Divinely loved ones, Weust), since God so loved us, we are under a moral obligation to be constantly loving one another. v12 No man has had the capacity to behold God, but if we habitually love one another, God lives in us and His love exists and is brought to its fullness in us. v13 We know experientially that we abide, live and remain in Him, and He in us, because he has given ("dedoken," perfect active indicative) us of his Spirit as an abiding gift. v14 And we have steadfastly beheld and contemplated, and are bearing witness that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. v15 Anyone who confesses ("homologeō," the aorist active subjunctive) that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. v16 And we have known by experience and believe and rely on the love God cherishes for us. **God is love. Whoever dwells and lives in love, dwells and lives in God, and God dwells and lives in him.**

v17 In this (abiding communion with God) love is brought to completion among us, so that we will have boldness and confidence on the day of judgement, because as He is, so are we in this world. v18 There is no fear in love. But full-grown perfect love throws fear out and drives it away. For fear brings with it the thought of punishment, so the one who still fears has not reached the full maturity and perfection of love. v19 We love Him, because he first loved us. v20 If anyone says, "I love God," and yet hates his brother all the time, he is a liar. For the one who does not keep on loving his brother, whom he has seen, cannot, ("ou dunatai agapain" "is not able to go on loving") love God, whom he has not seen. v21 And this commandment we have from Him; that he who loves God, must love his brother also." **End of quote.**

If we desire a true and living faith, we must have a faith, which is energised through "agape" love, for as we walk on this "more excellent way," we will experience a deep knowledge and abundant experience of God and His gifts. **"God is love. Whoever dwells and lives in love, dwells and lives in God, and God dwells and lives in him." Gal.5v6. 1Cor.12v31. 1John.4v16.**

We read in the KJV of Gal. 5v6. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." We see from **Gal.3v28., and 5v6.**, that neither Jew nor Greek has anything that can bring acceptance with God. All equally need a Saviour, and a faith, which is energised by "agape" love.

In Gal.5v6. the KJV "which worketh," is "energoumene," the present middle participle singular of "energeo," 1754, literally, "to work in," "to be active, to work effectually in, to be energised." The faith Paul is describing is not passive; it is "a faith which is energised through love." See 1Thes.2v13. Compare, Rom.7v5. 2Cor.1v6. 4v12. 2Thes.2v7. Eph.3v10. "Through love," is "di agapes," **The source and sustaining force behind a triumphant living faith is "agape" love. See 1Cor.12v31. 13v1. Gal.3v28. 5v14. 1Thess.1v3. 1Tim.1v5.**

True faith in Jesus brings freedom from the Law, and it brings the moral dynamic and spiritual energy that enables us to live a life glorifying to God. **N.B. 2Cor.5v17,18.** "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. v18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. **KJV.**

See 1Thess.2v13. "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectually works in you who believe." NKJV. "Effectually worketh," is "energeitai," the present middle indicative of "energeo," 1754, literally, "to work in," "to be active, to work effectually, to work efficiently and productively." **It here refers to "the word of God," and not to "God." God's Word is living and powerful, "zon kai energes," and sharper than any two-edged sword. Heb.4v12. Jesus said in John.6v63., "The words which I have spoken are spirit and are life."**

N.B. WHY SPIRITUAL GIFTS GREATLY DECREASED IN CHURCH HISTORY.

John Wesley states in his sermon, "The More Excellent Way," that backsliding was the reason for the scarcity of spiritual gifts from the fourth century onwards, he writes:- "It does not appear that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were common in the Church for more than two or three centuries. We seldom hear of them after that fatal period when the Emperor Constantine called himself a Christian; and, from a vain imagination of promoting the Christian cause thereby, heaped riches and power and honour upon the Christians in general, but in particular upon the Christian Clergy. From this time they almost totally ceased; very few instances of the kind were found. The cause of this was not, as has been vulgarly supposed, "Because there was no more occasion for them," because all the world was become Christians. This is a miserable mistake; not a twentieth part of it was then nominally Christian. The real cause was, "the love of many," almost of Christians, so called, was" waxed cold." The Christians had no more of the Spirit of Christ than the other Heathens; The Son of Man when He came to examine His Church, could hardly "find faith upon the earth." This was the real cause why the extra-ordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were to no longer be found in the Christian Church; because the Christians were turned heathens again, and had only a dead form left." **End of quote.**

Alexander Mackie in his book "The Gift of Tongues," gives a similar explanation for the scarcity of the manifestation of the gift of tongues during the dark ages of Church History, he says on page 27 of his book: "From patristic times until the power of the reformation had made itself distinctly felt, the gift of tongues is an almost forgotten phenomenon. The attention, which the Reformation drew to the Scriptures, is the reason for the reappearance of the gift. Men do not usually have the gift of tongues unless they know there is a gift of tongues. The revival of the Bible made also necessary in some minds a revival of states of mind and actions such as were those of men who lived in Bible times and who were esteemed Holy. During the long silence of these weary centuries there was evidence, however, of those psychological and physiological tendencies and actions which we find go hand in hand with the appearance of the gift in the history of the Corinthian Church, or in the history of the more modern sects which we shall discuss. Simply because the ages preceding the Reformation were deficient in a Scriptural vocabulary we fail to find these phenomena described and classified as related to the gift of tongues." **End of quote.**

Bengel gives the reason for the lack of spiritual gifts in the following short note. "The reason why many miracles are not now wrought is not so much because faith is established, as that unbelief reigns." **End of quote.**

However, even during these dark centuries God raised up centres of revival in Southern Europe, the most notable of these outpourings of the Holy Spirit took place among the Albigenses and Waldenses. These Christians returned to the simplicity of New Testament Christianity, and experienced manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Albigenses. These were so called because they originated from the area around Alby in Languedoc, forty miles northeast of Toulouse. They were founded around A.D. 1,110 and became quite a large sect by A.D. 1,150. They were anathematised by Papal councils as heretics, (A.D. 1,139 & 1,179,) and by other provincial synods at Toulouse and elsewhere. In A.D. 1198 Pope Innocent 3rd. determined to use force, and so an army was sent against these dear Christians. Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester was in charge of military operations and Arnold; abbot of Citeaux was commissioned as legate to suppress the "heretics" by any means at his disposal, these turned out to be assassination, torture and murder. The first place to be captured was Beziers, a town of 30,000 people. When the general asked Arnold what to do with the people, Arnold said, "Kill them all! God will know His own!" This murderous and ruthless mission suited the army under the control of Simon de Montfort, for as one Roman Catholic historian records; they were composed "of desperadoes, mercenary soldiers, and adventurers of every description, whose sole object was plunder." A court was started by Dominic and his brotherhood, which descended to the depths of cruelty and injustice. Out of this court sprang the inquisition, which was established and authorised in A.D. 1,229 at the council of Toulouse, this decision was confirmed by Pope Gregory 9th. in A.D. 1232. (This council also forbade the Layman to read the Scriptures in the Latin or vernacular.) So ruthlessly were these dear Christians exterminated that we hear no more of them in history after 1232 A.D. Satan is well named, he hates the movings of the Holy Spirit, and is a ruthless adversary to the children of God who experience them.

The Waldenses. These were led by Peter Waldo, a wealthy and devout merchant of Lyons. He came to see the truth about 1170 A.D. when he first read the Scriptures in his own language and saw the tremendous difference between the Churches of his day and the teaching of Christ and the early Church. Waldo sold all his goods and gave the proceeds to the poor. He gathered around him a company of men who sold up their possessions and accompanied him on an evangelistic mission. Later these "Poor Men of Lyons," as they were called, went everywhere preaching the Gospel, earning their keep as peddlers, or in other humble vocations. They adopted the Scriptural method of going two and two to preach the Gospel.

Pope Alexander 3rd. tried to stop Waldo and his associates from preaching, A.D. 1179; when this failed, the next Pope, Lucius 3rd. excommunicated them. Pope Innocent 3rd. at the fourth Lateran Council, A.D. 1215,

again emphatically condemned the movement, for though Peter Waldo had died in 1229, the Pope tried to stop this revival by establishing the Inquisition and forbidding the Layman to read the Scriptures. In 1234 a synod at Tarragona prohibited the clergy from reading the Scriptures in their own language. These Christians were persecuted by the Dominican Inquisitors of Languedoc and in A.D. 1312 one was burned at the stake by this Inquisition. These good Christians were finally driven to take refuge in the Piedmontese valleys of the Alps where they continued to worship the Lord in their simple, Scriptural way. Later, in more peaceable times, they became the chief evangelists of Italy.

The move of the Holy Spirit in the latter part of the dark ages of Church History was rejected by a backslidden and wicked clergy, there was a determined and vicious opposition from a corrupt and Satan-inspired clergy. The Scribes and Pharisees of the 12th., and 13th. Centuries killed the children of God, as their forefathers had killed the Lord Jesus. When the people knew the promises of the Scripture, then the people desired and experienced those promises. They enjoyed justification by faith in Christ and the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Satan did everything that he could to stamp out the knowledge of the Bible, and the revivals that came through this knowledge of the Scriptures. **John Wesley writes**, "Some have computed, that, from the year 1528 to 1548, fifteen million of Protestants have perished by the Inquisition. This may be overcharged, but certainly the number of them in these years, as well as since is almost incredible." **End of quote.**

Some of the major opposition to the present day move of the Holy Spirit has originated in the Protestant Churches, and it has pained and injured many good Christians. However, we rejoice today that many in the historic churches, including the Roman Catholic Church, are recognising the Person of the Holy Spirit, and are experiencing His spiritual gifts, and we recognise them as true children of God. However, it is still unfortunately true, that those who today are enjoying the manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit have experienced some measure of Ecclesiastical opposition. Sometimes we have to choose between man-made orthodox, but unscriptural teaching; and Scriptural teaching called "heresy" by religious leaders who resist the Holy Spirit and His gifts. Acts.7v50-60. 2Tim.2v8-13. 3v12-17. It is a great tragedy when godly men align themselves with Satan and resist the truths of the Scriptures. Acts.13v50. Jn.12v42,43.

THE MINISTRY OF JESUS WAS ONE CONTINUOUS MANIFESTATION OF "AGAPE" LOVE.

Jesus ministered to people with a faith energised by perfect "agape" love and compassion. Jesus was moved with compassion when He saw the great needs of the multitudes.

Note the NKJV of Mt.14v14. "And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and **He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.**" "Moved with compassion," is "esplagchnisthe," the aorist passive of "splagchnizomai" from "splagchnon" 4698; bowels, so, to have the bowels yearn, to feel sympathy, to pity, to have inward affection and tender mercy, to have compassion.

We read in Mk.1v40,41. (Where Jesus Cleanses a Leper. See Mt.8v1-4. Lk.5v12-16.) "Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." v41 **Then Jesus, moved with compassion,** ("splagchnistheis," is the aorist passive participle of "splagchnizomai," 4697, to be moved with compassion) stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." **NKJV.**

We read in Mk.6v34. **At the feeding of the five thousand.** "And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things." **NKJV.** "Esplagchnisthe," is the aorist passive of "splagchnizomai" from "splagchnon" 4698; bowels; so, to have the bowels yearn, to feel sympathy, to pity, to have inward affection and tender mercy.

See Mt.20v34. "So Jesus had compassion ("splagchnistheis," the aorist passive participle of "splagchnizomai," 4697, to be moved with compassion) and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him." **NKJV.**

See Mk.8v2. The feeding of the four thousand. "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. **NKJV.** "Compassion," is the present passive indicative of "splagchnizomai" 4697, to have the bowels yearn. It is derived from "splagchna," "the inward parts," and speaks especially of the nobler inward parts, the heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys. These came to signify the "seat of the affections," like our word "heart." This is why the word "bowels" is often used in the King James Version in the sense of "tender mercy, affection, and compassion." See Luke.1v78. 2Cor.7v15. Phil.1v8. Philemon.v7,12,20.

See Mt.15v32. The feeding of the four thousand. (See also Mk.8v1-10.) "Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." **NKJV.**

See Mk.9v22,23. "And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." v23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are

possible to him who believes." NKJV. "Compassion," is, "splugchnistheis," the aorist passive participle of "splugchnizomai," 4697, to be moved with compassion.

See Lk.7v12-15. "And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. v13 When the Lord saw her, **He had compassion on her** and said to her, "Do not weep." v14 Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." v15 So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. v16 **Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people."** NKJV. "Compassion," is, "esplugchnisthe," the aorist passive indicative, of "splugchnizomai," 4697, to be moved with compassion.

We need to take special note of Mt.9v35-38.

An Expanded Translation by Kenneth S. Wuest, translates Mt.9v35-38. "And Jesus was going about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues and making a public proclamation of the good news concerning the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness. v36 **And having seen the crowds He was moved with compassion concerning them** because they were exhausted by their troubles and their long, aimless wanderings, and had thrown themselves to the ground in an utterly prostrate condition as sheep not having a shepherd. v37 Then He says to His disciples, The harvest indeed is great, but the workers, few. v38 Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to thrust out workers into His harvest." **End of quote.**

The RSV translates Mt.9v35-38. "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity. v36 **When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.** v37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; v38 pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest." **End of quote.**

N.B. The Amplified Bible translates Mt.9v36. "When He saw the throngs, He was moved with pity and sympathy for them, because they were bewildered (harassed and distressed and dejected and helpless), like sheep without a shepherd. Zech.10v2." **End of quote.**

We read in the NKJV of Mt.9v36. "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd."

"**Moved with compassion,**" is "esplugchnisthe," the aorist passive indicative of "splugchnizomai"4697, to have the bowels yearn, which means, to feel sympathy, to have pity, to be filled with compassion and tenderness, from "splugchnon," a bowel. It indicates a deep feeling of compassion and pity that affected the bowels and heart, and produced real inward pain.

"**Were distressed and scattered,**" is "esan eskulmenoi kai errimmenoi," the perfect passive participle of "skullo," to flay, to skin. "**And scattered,**" is "errimmenoi," the perfect passive participle, of "rhipto" 4496, to throw, to fling down, to cast down, to prostrate as from a mortal wound. It is their prostration in themselves that is referred to here. They were cast down to the ground, in utter spiritual weariness and hopelessness. Both perfect participles refer to the people as sheep, which had been badly treated and mishandled, and were left lying helpless and prostrated by their religious leaders, the perfect tense shows their abiding appalling condition.

A. T. Robertson comments: "A sad and pitiful state the crowds were in. Rent or mangled as if by wild beasts. "Skullo" occurs in the papyri in sense of "plunder, concern, and vexation." "Used here of the common people, it describes their religious condition. They were harassed, importuned, bewildered by those who should have taught them; hindered from entering into the kingdom of heaven (Matt.23v13), laden with the burdens which the Pharisees laid upon them (Matt.23v3). "Errimmenoi" denotes men cast down and prostrate on the ground, whether from drunkenness, or from mortal wounds" (Allen): This perfect passive participle from "ripto," to throw down. The masses were in a state of mental dejection. No wonder Jesus was moved with compassion, "esplangchnisthe." **End of quote.**

It is no wonder that in Mt.23v1-39, the Lord Jesus castigated Israel's religious leaders with the very strongest language. He pronounced many woes upon them, He called them "fools and blind" and said in Mt.23v27. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." NKJV In Mt.23v33., Jesus further castigates the Scribes and Pharisees; "Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?" **ASV.**

The most serious charge Jesus made against Israel's religious leaders was, that they hindered people from having an experience of God. **Jesus said in Mt.23v13.** "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those

who are entering to go in." NKJV. Jesus made this same charge in Lk.11v52. "Woe to you, lawyers (experts in the Mosaic Law)! For you have taken away the key to knowledge; you did not go in yourselves, and you hindered and prevented those who were entering." AMP BIBLE. This strong denunciation brought an extreme angry reaction from the Scribes and Pharisees. We read in Lk.11v53,54. "As He left there, the scribes and the Pharisees [followed Him closely, and they] began to be enraged with and set themselves violently against Him and to draw Him out and provoke Him to speak of many things, v54 Secretly watching and plotting and lying in wait for Him, to seize upon something He might say [that they might accuse Him]. AMP

Instead of the Received Text "eklelumenoi." "fainted;" the Majority Text, and all the best MSS., versions, and fathers, read "eskulmenoi," the perfect passive participle of "skullo," 4660. The word originally meant "to flay, to skin, to rend," or "mangle; they were rent or mangled as if by wild beasts. It is used in the papyri to mean, to distress, to worry, to trouble, and to harass. **The perfect tense with the participle denotes their habitual condition.**

Rienecker quotes Allen, "the people were harassed, importuned, bewildered by those who should have taught them." End of quote. The people were spiritually broken, weary and exhausted and in total spiritual collapse. The spiritual condition of these poor people was utterly neglected, and they were rejected and treated with contempt by the proud and scornful Pharisees. The Pharisees said these ordinary poor people were not worthy to be included in a resurrection to eternal life. They said in Jn.7v49. "This multitude ("hō ochlos," 3793, this mob, this rabble) that does not know the Law, they are contemptible and doomed and accursed!" End of quote.

However, it was these ordinary poor people at the feast, especially those from Galilee, who were sympathetic to the ministry of Jesus, and believed in Him. Lk.4v18. Jn.7v12,31. See James.2v5-7. "Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? v6 But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? v7 Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? NRSV

We read in Mt.21v12-16. "v12 And Jesus went into the temple (whole temple enclosure) and drove out all who bought and sold in the sacred place, and He turned over the four-footed tables of the money changers and the chairs of those who sold doves. v13 He said to them, **The Scripture says, My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you have made it a den** ("spelaion," a cavern, cave, den) **of robbers.** [See Jer.7v11. and Isa.56v7.] (We read in Isa.56v7. "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." KJV) See Mt.21v13-15.] v14 And the blind and the lame came to Him in the porches and courts of the temple, and He cured them. v15 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did and the boys and the girls and the youths and the maidens crying out in the porches and courts of the temple, Hosanna (O be propitious, graciously inclined) to the Son of David! they were indignant. v16 And they said to Him, Do You hear what these are saying? And Jesus replied to them, Yes; have you never read, Out of the mouths of babes and unweaned infants You have made (provided) perfect praise? [Ps.8v2.]" AMP.

Jesus stated, "My house shall be called a house of prayer. But as for you, you are making it a den belonging to robbers." Jesus then went on to show what they should have been doing, "And there came to him in the temple blind people, and those who were maimed, and He healed them." When Israel's religious leaders saw the marvellous things, which Jesus did, and the boys, girls, youths and maidens crying out in the temple and saying, Hosanna to the son of David, they were indignant and tried to get Jesus to silence them. Jesus refused to do this, and He told these hypocrites that the children's praise was perfect.

We read in Mt.21v13. "And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." "Thieves," is "leston" 3027, which speaks of robbers, not thieves. "Leistes" 3027, is a robber, a brigand, from "leizomai," to plunder, a brigand, a gangster. Jesus was crucified between two robbers and on the very cross, which was intended for their leader, Barabbas, who was a robber. Mt.26v55. The robber, conducted his operations on a large and systematic scale, and with the aid of bands, and is to be distinguished from the "kleptes," or "thief" who purloins or pilfers whatever comes to hand. A den would be used by a band of robbers, not thieves. So the traveller to Jericho, in Christ's parable, was attacked by a band of robbers, not thieves. Lk.10v30.

In Mt.21v13. Jesus quotes, "My house shall be called the house of prayer," from Isa.56v7. And, He quotes, "But ye have made it a den of thieves," from Jer.7v11. Jesus here likens the activities of Israel's religious leaders to a company of brigands in the robber dens in Judea. Their sole aim was to financially rob those who came to worship God. Note well 2Pet.2v1-3. where Peter warns us that people like these, who are motivated by greed, are in the Church today, and that Divine judgement is going to fall on them. 2Peter.2v3., "In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping." NIV.

We read in Mark.11v17. "And he taught, and said unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers." **"For all the nations," is "pasin tois ethnesin."** **Mark alone quotes this phrase, which is derived from Isa.56v7., and Jer.7v11.** Jesus said that the nation was adulterous, and evil, "poneros," they desired to corrupt others into sin. The people, as well as the temple authorities were sold to sin, and were guilty of graft, extortion, and desecration of God's house of prayer. Jesus castigates this political and financial abuse of God's Temple. He was brave and courageous and did not hesitate to tell them that they had made God's house "a den of robbers and gangsters." The religious leaders of Israel were guilty of graft, extortion, and desecration of God's house of prayer. Jesus rebuked and drove out these financial charlatans from His Temple, **He hated this gross financial abuse, and still does.** Many preachers today are robbing God's children not only of money, but also of vital Christian truth; particularly the truth about the atonement and victorious sinless humanity of Jesus, and the truth so essential for this day, the doctrine about the second coming of Christ.

The noun "proseuche" 4335, means earnest prayer, petition, entreaty to God, the most frequent term for, "prayer to God." It is derived from "proseuchomai," 4336, to pray to God, i.e. to supplicate, to make prayer, to pray earnestly, to worship. In James.5v17., "he prayed fervently," is, literally, "he prayed with prayer," (a Hebrew form). See Eph.6v18. Phil.4v6. 1Tim.2v1. 5v5. We read in Acts.16v13,16., of "a place of prayer," which was a place outside the city wall.

In Lk.10v30. in the parable of the Good Samaritan, we read how Jesus told a story about a man going from Jerusalem to Jericho. This traveller "fell among robbers," "lestais periepesen," the aorist active indicative of "peripipto" 4045, to fall among and to be surrounded by, ("peri" 4012, "around"). The traveller was, "surrounded by robbers," and this often happened to travellers on the road to Jericho, this was bandit country, they were not petty thieves. The violence and robbery was such that it was called a "red and bloody way," and the Romans placed a fort on this rocky and desolate road, it was a notorious haunt of robbers, then, and for ages after.

Paul warns us against "an evil heart of unbelief" in Heb.3v12,13,18,19. "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you **an evil heart of unbelief** in departing from the living God; v13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. v18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? v19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." **NKJV**

Unbelief kept Israel out of Canaan; true faith caused them to inherit it. Their lives and bad reactions to the voice and Word of God are lessons for us, and are examples for us to avoid. **See 1Cor.10v5,6.** "But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. v6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted." **NKJV.**

Paul warns the Corinthians that sickness and death had come upon many of them because they had profaned the Lord's Table, by living bad lives when they partook of the communion service. We read in 1Cor.11v29,30., "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. v30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many ("hikanoi," 2425) sleep." **NKJV.** "Sleep," better, "are sleeping," is simply a synonym for "are dead," but here it has none of the peace that is conveyed by normal Christian doctrine. See Jn.11v11. Acts.7v60. 1Thes.4v13. 2Pet.3v4. Thayer's Greek Lexicon, says "many" "hikanoi," 2425, in 1Cor.11v30., means, "many, a considerable number." Unbelief that is the product of bad living will keep us from obtaining our spiritual Canaan inheritance, whereas, faith that is energised by "agape" love, will ensure that we enjoy all the spiritual blessings and riches that are ours in Christ Jesus, now; and will make sure that we avoid the judgements that came upon the Corinthians for their bad living.

The heroes of faith. Heb.11v1 to 12v3.

There are many kinds of victories of faith mentioned in Hebrews 11. There are the victories of faith over great foes, and the chapter closes with accounts of the victorious endurance of faith of God's people over great privation and vicious persecution, the supreme example of brave endurance being the Lord Jesus. Heb.12v2,3.

N.B. The amazing grace of Jesus to the despised and rejected Syrophenician Woman.

We read in Mt.15v21-28. v21 "Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. v22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out ("ekrazen" 2896, the imperfect active infinitive of "krazo," to scream, call aloud, shriek) to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." v23 But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." v24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." v25 Then she came and **worshipped Him**, saying, "Lord, help me!" ("**help me,**" is "**boethei,**" the present active imperative of "**botheo**" 997, she asked Jesus to run to her cry and help her) v26 But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to **the little dogs.**" v27 And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even **the little dogs** eat the crumbs which fall from **their masters' table.**" v28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O

woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour. **NKJV.**

In Mt.15v22., we read that the Syrophenician woman cried, "Have mercy on me," is "eleeson me," the aorist, active, imperative of "eleeo" 1653, to have compassion on, to have pity on, to show mercy to.

We read in Mk.7v24-30. v24 "From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden. v25 For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. v26 The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. v27 But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to **the little dogs.**" v28 And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even **the little dogs** under the table eat from **the children's crumbs.**" v29 Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter." v30 And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed." **NKJV.**

This is a remarkable incident that gives a very precious insight into the ways and heart of God. God so loved the sinful world that He gave His Son to die for it. God invites, redeems, and heals the outcasts, and here is a case to prove it. Jesus runs to the cry of outcasts. Jesus chose Simon the Canaanite to be one of His 12 apostles. Mt.10v4. Mk.3v18.

In Mt.15v22., the Syrophenician is called, "a woman of Canaan," and in Mk.7v26. she is called a Greek, and a Syrophenician by birth, she was born in that country, and therefore, was descended from the ancient Canaanites, who God placed under His judicial anger and judgement, because of their gross evil, and the murder of the innocents, by sacrificing babies to demons. Psalm.106v38. Ex.33v2. 34v11. Amos.2v9,10.

The Syrophenician's persistence and great faith.

We read in Mt.15v22-24. "And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." v23 But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." v24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." v25 Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" **NKJV.**

"I am not sent," is "ouk apestalen," the aorist passive indicative of "apostello," Jesus acted under orders from God His Father, and His Father had instructed Jesus that the Jews had the first claim on our Lord's ministry, so Jesus obeyed His Father's orders and said, "Let the children first be filled." See Mt.10v5. in His third tour of Galilee, Jesus told His apostles not to preach to the Gentiles and the Samaritans. Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles, but God instructed him to give the Jews the first opportunity of hearing the message of salvation.

Paul states in Rom.1v16. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, **for the Jew first** and also for the Greek." **NKJV.** Jesus doubtless knew that He was going to deliver the woman's child from the demon, and was obviously testing the faith and love of both His apostles and the woman.

In Mk.7v25-27., the diminutive "thugatrion" 2365, reveals that the daughter was a beloved and precious young child. "She kept on asking," is "erota," the imperfect tense of "erotao" 2065, to interrogate, to request as a favour, to ask, to beseech, entreat, pray. This verb is used here as an urgent request, not a mere question. The woman's intense love for her darling child drove her to Jesus, for deliverance from this demon; she allowed nothing to put her off from her mission. The apostles could not cope with the woman, and asked Jesus to send her away. Jesus was silent, and at first seemed to ignore her. The reason for this was clearly to test and prove the faith, patience, and perseverance, of the apostles, and the Syrophenician, and it had the desired effect: "She cried after them." We read in Mt.15v24., "Then Jesus said to the apostles, "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." **The woman responded by worshipping Jesus, and pleaded with Him, "Lord help me," "boethei," the present active imperative of "botheo" 997, she asked Jesus to run to her cry and help her.**

We read in Mk.7v27,28. "But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." v28 And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs." **NKJV.** Mark also uses the diminutive "kunariois" 2952, the beloved, pet little dogs. "The crumbs, is "psichion," 5589, "little morsels," (another diminutive), that fall from the table of the little dogs masters, "kurion," 2962, the little children. Jesus knew that in all lands, and in all ages, little children purposely drop some titbits for their beloved little dogs.

Note Mt.15v26. Jesus paints the picture of a family meal, with the beloved pet little dogs running around the table.

The woman had real faith and perceived Christ's desire to deliver her child by use of His picture, and His use of

the diminutive "kunariois" 2952, "little pet dogs." Jesus was saying that though she was a Gentile, and outside of Israel's covenants, she was beloved of God. She cleverly used Christ's diminutive "kunariois" 2952, "little pet dogs," for her child's benefit, and said, "Yea, Lord: for even the "little dogs" under the table eat "of the children's crumbs." The diminutives that the woman used shows that she had grasped the message of God's love in our Lord's words, "little dogs," "little scraps of bread," the diminutive of "psychos," "morsel," "little children," "paidia," the diminutive of "pais." The little children purposely dropped a few little tasty morsels for the little dogs. These household pets were dearly loved by the children, she was saying, "God is kind and giving, and I believe that God will answer my earnest prayers through you." Jesus saw this great faith in God's love, and her deep love and concern for her beloved child, and delivered the child from the demon.

Jesus from the great grace in His heart dispenses grace to the desperate cries of the Syrophenician woman. Jesus, by His response to her cries for help, draws a very positive reaction from her, which reveals her great love and faith. This was in order to teach us that "agape" love and true faith bring certain answers to prayer. Even though she was a Gentile, and outside the covenants and promises, God had obviously developed the fruit of the Spirit in this woman's heart, home and life, and this is where it counts. **Paul informs us that we serve the Lord Jesus best in our home and work situations. Col.3v12-25. Eph.5v17-33. N.B. Col.3v23,24. "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, v24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ."** NKJV

Here the great faith and love of a woman of Canaan for her child, knocks down the door that excluded her from God's promises. The woman did not resent Christ's words about giving the children's bread to the little dogs in Mk.7v27., she instantly saw it for what it was, an expression of affection and love, and an invitation for healing, and she used it to bring healing to her little daughter. **Mt.15v28.** "Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour." **NKJV See Mk.7v29,30.** "Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter." v30 And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed." **NKJV.**

In Mk.7v29. "Laid," is "beblemenon," the perfect, passive participle of "ballo" 906, to throw, in various applications, more or less violent or intense, it literally means, "thrown," which indicates that she, as in other cases of demon expulsion, had probably experienced a considerable convulsion when God's power expelled the demon from her. See Mk.1v26. 9v22,26.

We are told that Jesus twice marvelled, first in Mk.6v6., at the chronic unbelief of the people of Nazareth, and second, at the outstanding faith of the Roman Centurion, in Lk.7v9.. We read in Luke.7v9. "When Jesus heard these things, He marvelled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" **NKJV.** The faith of this Gentile outstripped all the children of the covenant, even the faith of the apostles. An important addition to this statement is given in **Mt.8v11,12.** "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west," (from all parts of the heathen world) "and shall sit down" (anaklithesontai," the third person plural, future passive, indicative of "anaklino" 347, to lean back, shall recline, as at a feast) "with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," (the fathers of the old covenant). **In Lk.13v28-30.** Luke repeats these words on a later occasion and adds, "and all the prophets;" "in the kingdom of heaven," and, "but the children of the kingdom, shall be cast out into outer darkness," and "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." These rejected "children of the kingdom," are those whose birth as Israelites made them natural heirs of the kingdom, but they lacked the essential genuine faith and morality, the weeping expresses their anguish, the gnashing of teeth their anger and despair.

The Christian Certainties that Encourage Faith.

N.B. Wuest's translation of Heb.11v6., reads, "Now, without faith it is impossible to please Him at all. For he who comes to God must of the necessity in the nature of the case believe that He exists, that **He also becomes a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him out.**"

The Amplified Bible translates Heb.11v6., "But without faith it is impossible to please and be satisfactory to Him. For whoever would come near to God must [necessarily] believe that God exists and that He is the rewarder of those **who earnestly and diligently seek Him [out].**"

The RSV translates Heb.11v6., "And without faith it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."

"Impossible," is the adjective "adunaton," 102, a strong word which is also used in **Heb.6v4.** to say that those who have been fully enlightened and enjoyed all the Christian blessings, and then turn their backs on God, cannot be made to repent.

In Heb.6v18., Paul declares, "that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible ("adunaton") for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us." "In which it is impossible for God to lie," is "en hois adunaton pseusasthai Theon," "pseusasthai," is the first aorist middle infinitive of "pseudomai" 5574, to utter an untruth or attempt to deceive

by falsehood. God cannot lie or attempt to deceive by falsehood; His promises are sure, and will never fail.

God cannot lie, and these two immutable things ("dia duo pragmaton ametatheton") are God's promise and God's oath, both of which are steadfast, sure and unchangeable, and they give us "strong consolation," "ischuran paraklesin." God promises and oath give us an indestructible indwelling strength, and Divine consolation and encouragement. See Luke.6v24., and 1Cor.14v3. "That we may have," is "hina echomen," the present active subjunctive of "echo" 2192; the present continuous means, "that we may keep on having."

"Who have fled for refuge," is "hoi kataphugontes," the aorist active participle of "katapheugo," 2703, to flee down and away, it only occurs here and Acts.14v6., in the New Testament. The same thought occurs in fleeing to the cities of refuge. (Deut.4v42. 19v5. Josh.20v9) The compound verb (unlike the simple "pheugein," "to flee") it expresses flight to a definite place or person for safety; it is often used in connection with an altar or a sanctuary. "To lay hold of," is "kratesai," the aorist active infinitive of "krateo," which speaks of a single act, in contrast with the present tense, "hold fast," in Heb.4v14.

In Heb.4v14. "Let us hold fast our confession," is "kratomen tes homologias." "Kratomen," is the present active subjunctive of "krateo" 2902, from "kratos," power, it means, "to cling tenaciously to," both here and Heb 6:18. (See 2Thess.2v15. Col.2v19.) The thought is, "Let us keep on holding fast." Paul emphasises this thought all through his Epistle to the Hebrews. In Heb.3v1., Paul exhorts Christians to hold on to their confession of Christ. Paul then makes five points of Christ's superior priestly office. Christ's Melchizedek Priesthood is better than Aaron's priesthood. Heb.5 to 7. We are under a better covenant. Heb.8. We have a better sanctuary. Heb.9v1-12.; We have a better sacrifice. Heb.9v13 to 10v18. Our hope is based on better promises. Heb.10v19 to 12v3., Paul exhorts us again in Heb.4v14-16., as he did in Heb.2v1-4., to hold fast to our Great High Priest, and to draw upon His Divine resources.

"Set before us," "prokeimenes," that is "placed before us as the goal. In Heb.12v2., this same participle is used with the "joy," "charas," that was set before Jesus.

We read in John.6v54-56. "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. v55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. v56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. NKJV.

It is totally incorrect to say that Jesus is here speaking of the Lord's Supper, and saying that participation in the bread and wine is the means of securing eternal life. This discourse is not a basis for sacramentalism, it is an incentive for a vital and indispensable communion with a living Saviour The language of Jesus can only be interpreted as having a spiritual meaning, for He reveals Himself as the true bread from Heaven. Jn.6v31-35,48-51.

"Abides," is "menei," the present active indicative of "meno" 3306, it means, to stay in, abide, dwell, and remain. It is one of John's favourite words, and it occurs more frequently in John's writings than in all the rest of the New Testament.

In both Jn.6v54 and 6v56. "He that eats" is "ho trogon," the present active participle of "trogo," 5176, to gnaw or chew, generally to eat. It speaks of continual or habitual eating, (just as in Jn.6v29., "pisteuete," the present active subjunctive of "pisteuo" 4100, speaks of continual and habitual believing). In both Jn.6v54 and v56, "drinks," is "pinon," the present active participle of "pino" 4095, to imbibe, to drink. Jesus is informing all Christian believers of the vital necessity of actively, continually and habitually, eating, drinking and imbibing all that Jesus is, and meditating upon all He has said and done.

We read in 2Cor.9v15. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." "Thanks be to God," is "charis to Theo." Paul twice thanks God for the gifts that Christians have given him to aid him in his work for God in 2Cor.9v11,12., and then thanks God for "His unspeakable gift," the gift of His Son, which includes all other gifts. 2Cor.8v9. Rom.8v32. "For His unspeakable gift," is "epi te anekdiegeto autou dorea." **Words completely fail Paul when he tries to describe God the Father's gift of Jesus to us; so, he appears to coin the word "anekdiegeto," as it is not found anywhere else in the New Testament.** "Unspeakable," "anekdiegeto," literally means, "not to be told throughout." Moulton and Milligan translate it, "wonder beyond description." It means, what cannot be related, unutterable. It occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. The idea is, that no words can properly express the unspeakable greatness of the gift that God bestows on us in Jesus. It is much higher than the mind can conceive and much greater than language can express.

The Saviour is the Father's unspeakable gift to mankind; see John.3v16. Gal.1v4. 2v20. Eph.1v22. 1Tim.2v6. Titus.2v14. Jesus is a gift so unspeakably great, that no language can express, and no mind can conceive. His greatness and glory are immeasurable. His love is too wonderful for words. The sufferings that he endured for us are indescribable. The great benefits, which result from his work, sufferings and death, no language can put

into words, or fully reveal. All our peace, hope, and our experiences of the joy salvation; all our future hopes of eternal glory are to be traced to our dear Lord Jesus, the unspeakable gift of God our Father.

We read in the NKJV of Rom.11v33. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

In Rom.11v33. Paul uses a similar word to "anekdiegeto," in 2Cor.9v15. In "His ways past finding out," "past finding out," is the adjective "**anexichniastoi**," which means "unsearchable;" and is the same word that is used in Eph.3v8., where we read of, "the unsearchable riches of Christ," "to anexichniaston ploutos tou Christou." **The adjective "anexichniastos" 421, is made up of a negative and "exichniazo," to track out, "ex" and "ichnos," track.** Paul, it seems, could have got it from Job, see Job.5v9. 9v10. 34v24. It is found nowhere else in the New Testament except Rom.11v33., and Eph.3v8.

The Amplified Bible translates Rom.11v33. "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unfathomable (inscrutable, unsearchable) are His judgments (His decisions)! And how untraceable (mysterious, undiscoverable) are His ways (His methods, His paths)!" **End of quote.**

In Rom.11v33. "O the depth," is "O bathos," Paul gasps in astonishment at the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom and knowledge. (See **2Cor.8v2.**, where "bathos" is used to describe the extreme and deep poverty of some Christians.) (See **Rom.8v39.**, where Paul states that no unfathomable depth (the noun "bathos" 899) can separate us from Christ's love.)

As Paul contemplates God's infinite wisdom and knowledge in Rom.11v33., he is conscious of his total inability, with even the best godly human reason, to fully understand what God' plan is. "**Unsearchable,**" is the adjective "**anexerauneta**," 419, which means, "cannot be searched out," and so means unfathomable, inscrutable. Some of God's wisdom is revealed and can be known, Rom.1v20f, but a great deal is beyond the grasp of both men and angels.

In John.4v10. Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The word "gift," here is the noun "dorea" 1431, **it occurs 11 times in the New Testament.** In Acts.2v38. 8v20. 10v45., and 11v17., it speaks of, "The gift of the Holy Spirit. In Rom.5v15,17., Eph.3v7., and 4v7., it speaks of God's wonderful gift of grace. In 2Cor.9v15., it speaks of Jesus, "God's unspeakable gift. In Heb.6v4., Paul speaks of Christians "who have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit." So we can see from the above Scriptures that Jesus was offering the Samaritan woman the gift of grace and forgiveness through Himself. Jesus was the giver of this life giving water and salvation.

Paul's superintendence of the churches through prayer and vision ministry from God.
Paul intervened in a positive and helpful way in Christian's lives with God's revelation and power gifts.

In Col.2v1. "What a great conflict I have for you," is "helikon agona echo huper humin,". Which means literally, "how great a contest I am having for you;" or, "how greatly I strive for you." This conflict and striving in prayer is seen in the prayer life of Epaphras in **Col.4v12.**, "Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." NKJV. See 1Pet.1v22-25. This was triumphant praying that intervened with God's power, grace and gifts in the lives of their flocks. Let us imitate them.

We read in Heb.2v9. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone." **NKJV**

"That by the grace of God he should taste death for every man," is, "hopos chariti Theou huper pantos geusetai thanatou." "Geusetai" is the aorist subjunctive of "gueomai" 1089, to taste. "Huper pantos," declares that it was "on behalf of everyone." The phrase "geuomai thanatou," "to taste death," occurs in the Gospels in Mt.16v28. Mk.9v1. Lk.9v27. and Jn.8v52. **It means Jesus experienced the full sufferings of confinement in Hades, which are likened in Acts.2v24., to the worst pains of a women in childbirth, "tas odinas tou thanatou." "Oodinas," is "birth pangs." His death on behalf of every one was, a truly horrendous experience. Jesus endured all this, and "by the grace of God," won our salvation.**

In Col.3v10. "**After the image,**" is "kata eikona" The restoration of the image of Jesus in us is gradual and progressive, **2Cor.3v18.**, but our final transformation and sanctification will finally be completed when we see Jesus. **Rom.8v29. 1Jn.3v1,2.** "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. v2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, **but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**" **NKJV.**

We read in Wuest's translation of Heb.11v6. "Now, without faith it is impossible to please Him at all. For he who comes to God must of the necessity in the nature of the case believe that He exists, that He also

becomes a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him out." **End of quote.**

"Must believe," is "pisteusai dei," it is a Divine and moral necessity to have faith. "That He is," is "hoti estin," We read in Rom.1v18-32., that the existence of God is clearly declared through creation, so that men are left without excuse. "Seek after," is "ekzetousin," the present active participle of "ekzeteo" 1567, to seek out, to search for, see Acts.15v17.; to thoroughly investigate, to scrutinize, 1Pet.1v10.; to search out for judgement, Lk.11v50. N.B. we see Esau's seeking was too late so he failed to receive the blessing. Heb.12v17. Here in Heb.11v6., it means to seek out God.

Heb.11v6. "And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing (unto him); for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and (that) he is a rewarder of them that seek after him."

"To please," is "euarestesai," the aorist active infinitive of "euaresteo" 2100; from 2101; to gratify entirely:

"**He is a rewarder,**" is "misthapodotes ginetai," better, He "becomes a rewarder," the present middle indicative of "ginomai," not of "eimi." This is the only New Testament example of "misthapodotes," a rare double compound (one papyrus example, from "misthos," reward, and "apodidomi," to pay back, like "misthapodosian," in Heb.10v35. 11v26.

"Of them that diligently seek him," is "tois ekzetousin auton," literally, "unto them that seek him out." Compare Acts.15v17. Heb.12v17. 1Pet.1v10. "Ekzetousin," is used of seeking God in, Rom.3v11. God's great loving kindnesses toward the seeker is not always immediately apparent. At such times, when there is delay, there is need for faith, and then diligent seeking of God, will surely find its reward. In Lk.11v5-13. and 18v1-8., Jesus reminded us that we need determined persistence to seek God out. The words "diligently seek" are literally, "seek Him out," the present active participle of "ekzeteo" 1567, to search out, to seek after diligently. Creation proclaims the very existence of God, so that men are left without any excuse for not seeking God. See Rom.1v16-32. "Comes to God" implies "worship," as in Heb.4v16., and 7v25.

In Heb.11v6. the Amp Bible, for "come near, and RSV, for "draw near," is "proserchomenon," the present participle of "proserchomai" 4334, to approach, literally, to draw near, to come near, and so, to worship. (There are three exhortations in Heb.10v22-25., "Let us draw near," "proserchometha," Heb.10v22.: "let us hold fast," "katechomen," Heb.10v23.: "let us consider one another," "katanoomen," Heb.10v24.) In Heb.11v6., "must believe," is "pisteusai dei," "dei," declares that God looks upon true faith as an essential moral necessity and obligation. True faith believes and knows, "that God is," "hoti estin." A true faith sees the invisible God and has steadfast trust in Him. **Like Moses in Heb.11v27.** who, "By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible." RSV.

Paul declares in Rom.1v18-20., that through Creation everybody can clearly see God's invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, v19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. v20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, **even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.** NKJV

"The invisible things of him," is "ta aorata autou," the verbal adjective "aorata" 517, the alpha negative "a," "no," and "horao," to see, this can mean either unseen or invisible here in **Rom.1v20.,** and **Col.1v15,16.** Jesus "is the image of the invisible God, "eikon tou Theou tou aoratou," the one who has seen Jesus has seen God the Father. John.14v9.

We read in 1Tim.1v17. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, **invisible,** the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." **And in Heb.11v27. Moses "endured, as seeing him who is invisible."** The attributes of God's nature are defined in Rom.1v20., as "his everlasting power and divinity," "he te aidios autou dunamis kai theiotes." "Are clearly seen," is "kathoratai," the present passive indicative of "kathorao" 2529, to behold fully, distinctly apprehend (from "kata" 2596, down; and "horao" 3708, properly, to stare at, to discern clearly, to experience; passively, to appear).

The revelation of God's power and divinity is manifested to all, "so that," if, after being enlightened, they fall into sin, they are without excuse. "That he is," is "hoti estin," the very existence of God is revealed in Creation, and cannot be denied by an honest mind, so that men are left without an excuse. Rom.1v17-32. N.B. v20.

In Rom.8v26., "Helpeth our infirmity." is "sunantilambanetai te astheneia hemon," the present middle indicative of "sunantilambanomai," **to lend a hand together with, at the same time with one. It only occurs here in Rom.8v26. and Lk.10v40.,** when Martha urgently asked for Mary's help in the kitchen. Here Paul beautifully describes how the Holy Spirit continuously aids us and takes hold with us against our limitations and weaknesses, before it is too late. "Lambanetai," "taketh," is the same verb in precisely the same phrase, which in Mt.8v17., is translated "took our infirmities.

N.B. In Rom.8v34. "intercession," is "entugchanei," the third person, singular, present, active, indicative of "entugchano." **So Rom.8v34., should be translated,** "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who died, yes, rather, who is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, **who is all the time constantly, actively, and continuously intervening, and blessing us, with power, grace, and love in our lives.**" Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father, and He has all power and authority to act on our behalf, and this He does. Jesus does not have to ask the Father for power to aid us, this power already belongs to Him. It is the joint out workings of the Trinity's plan of the ages, which was conceived in their minds before Creation, before the World's foundation. Eph.3v10,11. Titus.1v2. Rev.10v7. 13v8.

So we read in Rom.8v34-39. "Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who is constantly intervening with power, grace, and love in our lives. v35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? v36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." v37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. v38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, v39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

THE HAZARD AND PERIL OF UNBELIEF.

N.B. Heb.3v12-14., v12 "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. v13 **But encourage one another day after day,** as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. v14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end. **NASU.**

Heb.3v12-14., NKJV. "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; v13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. v14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end. **NKJV.**

Heb.3v12-14. K. Wuest., "Take heed constantly, brethren, lest there be in any one of you a heart perniciously evil with unbelief in standing aloof from the living God, v13 but be constantly exhorting one another daily, so long as the aforementioned Today is being announced, lest any of you be hardened through the stratagem of this sin; v14 for we have become participators of Messiah and as a present result are participators of Him, [and that is shown] if we hold the beginning of our assured expectation steadfast to the end." **End of quote.**

Heb.4v1-3. To enter the Promised Rest, The Word of God needs to be mixed with Faith.

v1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. v2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; **but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.** v3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,'" although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. **NKJV.**

The KJV of Heb.4v2., reads., " For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

"For unto us was the gospel preached," is "kai gar esmen euangelismenoi," literally, "and we have had good tidings proclaimed to us." "Euangelismenoi," is the perfect passive participle of "euaggelizo," 2097, to announce, declare and proclaim good news, (from "euaggelion," which means, good news, glad tidings). "The word preached," is "ho logos tes akoes," 'the word of hearing:' the word heard by them. The reference is to the announcement of the glad tidings that God has promised a rest for the Israelites in an earthly Canaan. The rest proclaimed to the Church, is the declaration of a heavenly rest." The entrance into both of these is through faith."

"Not being mixed with faith in them that heard it," is "me sugkekerasmenous te pistei tois akousasin." "Sugkekerasmenous," is the perfect passive participle of "sugkerannumi" 4786, to mix, to blend together, to combine, to assimilate. It is used in 1Cor.12v24., of the combining and blending together of the members of the body of Christ, in the hand and will of God.

Weymouth translates. Heb.4v2., "For Good News has been brought to us as truly as to them; but the message they heard failed to benefit them, **because they were not one in faith with those who gave heed to it.**" We read in Numb.14, that all of the Israelites were not one in faith with Caleb and Joshua, who fully believed the promises of God. They were not of the same spirit as Joshua and Caleb. The unbelieving Israelites were determined to kill Caleb and Joshua, and only Divine intervention saved their lives. Numb.14v8-11.

Adam Clark gives the following helpful comment on Heb.4v2., "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard

it." "God gave them a generous promise of entering into an earthly rest; we have an even greater promise of entering into a heavenly rest. God gave them every necessary advantage; he has done the same for us. Moses and the elders spoke the word of God clearly and powerfully to them: Jesus and his apostles have done the same to us. Those hearers might have persevered and obtained the promise of God; we can also persevere and through faith and patience obtain the promises of God: those who heard Moses disbelieved, disobeyed, and fell; and we can do the same if we do not walk with God." **End of Adam Clarke quote.**

Heb.4v2. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." The word did not unite with the souls of the hearers in faith. The word heard being the food, which must pass into soul of the believer, by them appropriating it in faith. Jn.6v33. Hearing alone is of as little value as undigested food in a full stomach. The obedient hearers, Caleb and Joshua, mixed the Word of God, which they heard, with faith. "Hear" means 'obey.' Heb.4v7. The disobedient, instead of responding in faith, separated themselves as Korah did. When we hear God's Word it must be mixed with faith, in order to make the word of God effectual to our salvation.

We read in Heb.4v3. "For we who have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." "Do enter," is "eiserchometha," the present indicative of "eiserchomai," we who believe are already in process of entering. Paul proceeds to show from the Old Testament that there was a promise to "believers" that they could enter into rest. However, Paul warns that there is a danger that through unbelief we too can fail to enter this precious promise of rest.

Mt.9v18-26. The daughter of Jairus Raised from the dead, and a Woman Healed.

(See Mk.5v21-43. Lk.8v40-56.) We read in Luke.8v41. "And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house.

We read in Luke.8v49,50. v49 While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." v50 **But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." NKJV. N.B. In Luke.8v50.** "Do not be afraid; only believe," is, "me phobou monon pisteuson;" "phobou," is the present passive imperative of "phobeo," 5399, to be alarmed, to be sore afraid, to fear exceedingly. "Pisteuson," is the aorist active imperative of "pisteuo" 4100, to believe, put trust in, to have faith. **Note the change of tense, stop the fearing you are doing all the time, the present passive imperative; and at this point of time make an act of faith, and believe, the aorist active imperative. In Luke.8v50.** "she will be made well," is "sothesetai," the future passive indicative of "sozo" 4982, to heal, to make whole, to save, to deliver or protect.

We read in Mark.5v35,36. "While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? v36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe." **KJV.** Both Mark.5v36., and Luke.8v50., have "Fear not, only believe" "me phobou, monon pisteue." "Fear not," "me phobou," is the present passive imperative of "phobeo" 5399, from "phobos" 5401, to be put in fear, to frighten, to be sore afraid, to fear exceedingly, passively, to be alarmed.

By using the present passive imperative "phobou," with the negative "me," Jesus was instructing Jairus that he must abandon the fears, which were dominating him all the time. Jesus said, "Stop fearing," and only believe. "Only believe," is "monon pisteue;" "pisteue," is the present active imperative of "pisteuo," 4100, to have faith, believe, put trust in, commit to. The present active imperative speaks of continuous action, "Be believing." The command was for a continuous, sustained faith. Jesus told Jairus to continue believing, even in the presence of death. "Monon," 3440, as an adverb, means merely, only.

The NKJV translates Mk. 5v36. "As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid; only believe." In Mk.5v36., The Received Text has "akouo" 191, to hear. **The ASV translates Mk.5v36.** "But Jesus, **not heeding** the word spoken, saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Fear not, only believe." **ASV.** The **ASV** follows the Nestle Text; and the reading "not heeding," which is "parakousas," the aorist active participle of "parakouo," 3878, which primarily signifies, to overhear, hear amiss or imperfectly, then, to hear without taking heed, to neglect to hear and so to disobey. This is the sense in Mt.18v17., "If he **refuses to listen** to them, tell it to the church; and if **he refuses to listen** even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. **RSV.** It is consistently translated in this way in the Septuagint.

"**Parakousas,**" may be translated either as "not heeding," or "over-hearing," and both are obviously true here, for it seems that the message was addressed to Jairus, and Jesus overheard it and totally ignored it. Scholars say that the present participle "laloumenon" 2980, translated as "that was spoken," is more appropriate to the idea of overhearing. Whichever reading we accept it is clear that Jesus overheard what was not spoken directly to Him, and that He totally disregarded it. God the Father had shown to Him that the child was going to be raised from the dead, so Jesus certainly did not heed what the messengers said. Both Mark.5v36., and Luke.8v50., have Jesus saying, "Fear not, only believe" "me phobou, monon pisteue," to

Jairus, to counteract the faith destroying words of the messengers, who said that his daughter was dead.

We read in the ASV OF Luke.8v50. "But Jesus hearing it, answered him, Fear not: only believe, and she shall be made whole." "Only believe," is the aorist active imperative "monon pisteuson," which means, 'have faith, believe, right now, at this very moment. Jesus said this as soon as he heard the sad message that had been told to Jairus of the death of his daughter. **The RSV translates Lk.8v50.** "But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well." "And she shall be well," is "kai sothesetai," Jesus promised that the dead daughter of Jairus was going to be made whole and enjoy good health again, and, of course, it came to pass.

We read in Mt.9v18. "While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live." v19 So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples. **v20 And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. v21 For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well."** v22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour." **NKJV. We should draw near to Jesus and touch Him, as she did, and imitate her real faith.**

We read in Mt.9v23. "When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, v24 He said to them, "Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him. v25 But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. v26 **And the report of this went out into all that land. NKJV**

The Amplified Bible translates Mt.9v24. "He said, Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping. And they laughed and jeered at Him." **AMP. The King James Version translates "kategelon auton," in Mt.9v24., as "They laughed him to scorn."** "Kategelon auton," is the imperfect active indicative of "katagelao" 2606, to laugh down, i.e. deride, from "kata," an intensive meaning down, and "gelao," I laugh. They mocked and derided Jesus, and the imperfect tense shows they kept on ridiculing and mocking Jesus. This shows the contempt they felt for the person and knowledge of Jesus.

We read in Mark.5v40. that Jesus threw all the noisy critics out, the word is very strong, it is "ekbalon," the aorist active participle of "ekballo," 1544, to throw, to eject, and when He had thrown them all out, He raised the girl from the dead.

We read in Luke.8v54-56. "But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." v55 Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. v56 And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened. **NKJV**

Jesus said in John.6v63. "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. **NKJV.** The **KJV** of John.6v63., reads, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "That quickeneth," is "to zoopoiooun," the present active participle of "zopoioeo," 2227, to revitalize, make alive, give life, quicken. For the contrast between spirit, "pneuma," and flesh, "sarx," see Jn.1v13. 3v6.

"The words," "ta remata," I have just spoken, "lelaleka," are the words of God. John.3v34. 8v47. 17v8. No wonder they "are spirit and are life," "pneuma estin kai zoe estin." The breath of God and the life of God are in these words of Jesus. Never man spoke like Jesus. John.7v46. The written words of Jesus are filled with the life and power of God today. The spiritually anointed words of Jesus, and the power love and faith radiating from Jesus, encouraged and inspired faith in Jairus. The anointing from Jesus rested on Jairus and gave him faith.

See John.5v21. "For just as ("hosper," just as, i.e. exactly like) the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. **NAS.** So far as we know, Jesus had not yet raised anyone from the dead, but he claims the power and authority to do it, just like God the Father. Soon after this there was the raising of the widow of Nain's son in Luke.7v11-17. In His message to John Baptist, Jesus reaffirms His ability to raise the dead. Luke.7v22. Mt.11v5. The raising of the daughter of Jairus confirms that Jesus has the power to raise from the dead "whom he wills." Mt.9v18,22-26. The raising of Lazarus from the dead was the greatest of Christ's miracles, and it made Christ's enemies determined to kill Him. John.11.

THE MANIFESTATION OF JUDGEMENT GIFTS CAN BE MOTIVATED BY LOVE.

N.B. We read in James.5v17. "Elijah was a man of like passions with us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth for three years and six months." Elijah prayed Divine judgement on the nation, he stopped it raining for three and a half years. This must have been very difficult thing for Elijah to do, for he loved his people, and he knew that hundreds of thousands of people would die because of his prayers. This had to take place to stop the murder of the children who were offered in sacrifice to Baal, and also to bring the nation to repentance. It took a very strong and loving heart to see this through. Judgement ministry through the gifts of the Holy Spirit is the last gifting that God gives.

"He prayed fervently," is "proseuche proseuxato," a Hebrew form, which literally means, "he prayed with prayer." The noun "proseuche" 4435, is the most frequent term for prayer to God, and here it is linked with "proseuxato," the aorist middle indicative of the verb "proseuchomai" 4336, to pray to God. **The addition of the noun intensifies the action of the verb.** "Proseuchomai," is derived from "pros" 4314, a preposition of direction; forward to, i.e. toward; and "euchomai" 2172; to wish; by implication, to pray to God. "Proseuchomai" is always used of "prayer" towards God, and is the most frequent word that is used for this, being used many times in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts. It occurs once in Rom.8v26.; and in 1Cor.11v4,5,13., 14v13,14,15.; in Eph.6v18.; in Phil.1v9.; in Col.1v3,9., 4v3.; in 1Thes.5v17,25., in 2Thes.1v11., 3v1.; in 1Tim.2v8.; in Heb.13v18.; in Jude.v20. and James.5v13,14,17,18..

In James.5v17., "of like passions," is the adjective "homoioopathes," which speaks of similar feelings, circumstances, and experiences, and the same nature as ourselves. It only occurs here and Acts.14v15., where Peter and Barnabus, with great difficulty, stopped the people of Lystra from worshipping them as gods. They told the people that they were human beings, with the same human nature, "homoioopathes," and with similar feelings, circumstances and experiences as the people of Lystra. Elijah had the frailties of our humanity, and by God's great grace conquered them, and did remarkable things for God, and so may we through God's great grace.

A similar construction of noun and verb is found in Luke.22v15., "with desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." "With desire I have desired," is the noun "epithumia," 1939, with "epethumesa," the aorist active indicative of "epithumeo," 1937, to desire, to long for. Again the addition of the noun intensifies the action of the verb, and describes the intense love Jesus had for His disciples and the great longing that Jesus had to be with His beloved disciples before His sufferings. Jesus loved them to the uttermost and wanted to impart something to them in teaching and in spiritual power to strengthen them for the dark days ahead.

We read in John.13v1. "[NOW] BEFORE the Passover Feast began, Jesus knew (was fully aware) that the time had come for Him to leave this world and return to the Father. And as He had loved those who were His own in the world, He loved them to the last and to the highest degree." **AMP.** Weust translates the NKJV, "He loved them to the end," as, "He loved them to the uttermost." "Unto the end," is "eis telos," as in Mt.10v22. and Lk.18v15., but here it could better be translated as, "to the uttermost, as it is translated in 1Thes.2v16., by many scholars.

"Before I suffer," is "pro tou me pathein." "Pathein" is the aorist active infinitive of "pascho," 3958, to suffer. However, Christ's internal stress and suffering on behalf of His beloved disciples had already started. Jesus knew that they would all fail Him, but He still loved them to the uttermost, and He knew that His love for them would bring them through, His faith was energised by His perfect love for them. His love will also bring us through our dark nights of the soul.

*** CHART OF THE CHRONOLOGY OF PAUL'S LIFE BY DIFFERENT AUTHORITIES. ***

EVENTS AND AUTHORITIES.	Usher	Wordsworth	Alford	Baronius	De Wette.	Bowyer	Turner
The Ascension of Christ. Acts.1v3-14.	33	30	30	32	--	30	30
Stephen is stoned. Acts.7v51-60.	33	33	37	32	--	32	33
Paul's conversion. Acts.9v1-22.	35	34	37	34	37 or 38	32	34
Paul's FIRST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM "after many days." Sent to Tarsus, because of a death threat. Acts.9v23-30. Gal.1v18,19.	38	37	40	37	40 or 41	35	37
Paul goes to Antioch. Acts.11v19-26.	43	43	41	41	43 or 44	--	43
Death of James and Herod. Acts.12v2,23.	44	--	44	42	44	44	44
The famine. Acts.11v27-30.	44	44	44	42	--	--	or 48?
Paul's SECOND JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM to bring finances for poor. Acts.11v29,30.	44	44	44	42	44 or 45	46	44
God sends Paul and Barnabus on their FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY. Acts.13 & 14.	45-46	45	45	44-47	--	47-48	45-46
After 3-5 years at Antioch, Paul makes his THIRD JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM over the issue of the Law. Acts.14v28 to 15v35	52	49-50	50	49	50 or 51	49	49 or 50
Paul's SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY with Silas. Acts.15v36-41.	53	51	51	49	51 or 52	49	51
The Emperor Claudius banishes all Jews from Rome. Acts.18v2.	54	--	--	49	Between 52 to 54	--	Between 49 to 52
Paul arrives at Corinth, and stays there about 2 years. Acts.18v1,9-11,18.	54	53	53	50	52 or 53	50	52 to 54
Paul's FOURTH JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM, and after "some time" at Antioch goes on his THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY. Acts.18v20-23.	56	54	54	52 Caes	53 or 54	52	54
Paul at Ephesus. Acts.19v1-20v2. 20v31.	56-59	54-57	55	53-55	54 or 55	52-55	54 to 57
Paul spends 3 months in Greece, 20v2,3., then makes a FIFTH JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM and is imprisoned. Acts.20v4 to 24v26.	60	58	58	56	58 or 59	56	58
Paul is sent to Rome, after spending two years in prison at Caesarea. Acts.27v1.	62	In Autumn of 60	61	56	60 or 61	Late58	Autumn of 60
Paul is imprisoned for 2 years in his hired house at Rome. Acts.28v30,31.	63-65	61-63	61-63	61-63	62 to 64	59-61	Spring61 to Spring63

NOTE:

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