

The Great Tribulation Overcomer

(by Alister Hamilton, William Turner and others)

Contents

Introduction – Page 1

Relevant Scripture – Page 2

How Should The Christian Prepare Themselves For The Great Darkness That Lies Ahead? – Page 3

Appendix I: Foundation Truths – Page 3

Appendix II: The Gift Of Tongues – Page 23

Appendix III: Looking For And Hastening The Coming Of The Day Of God – Page 31

Appendix IV: Put On The Whole Armour Of God – Page 36

Appendix V: Oil For Our Lamps! – Page 37

Appendix VI: The Spiritual Qualities That Make Up The Character Of The Overcomer – Page 40

Appendix VII: The Lord's Prayer – Page 41

Appendix VIII: Concerning The Promised Return Of The Lord Jesus (By W F P Burton) – Page 42

Appendix IX: How Can I Be Filled With The Holy Spirit? – Page 46

Appendix X: How Can I Resist Evil? – Page 60

Appendix XI: Mark 16v9-20 Proved – Page 72

Appendix XII: Daniel's 70 Weeks Prophecy (Dan 9v24-27) – Page 74

Appendix XIII: The Mystery Of God And The Mystery Of Iniquity – Page 78

Appendix XIV: God's Answers For The Last Days – Page 79

Bibliography: Page 80

All Scriptural quotations in this study are taken from the King James Version, unless otherwise stated. The King James Version follows the vast majority of Greek texts in the order of about 1,000 to 10, and it is also confirmed by the ancient manuscripts in other languages, like the Gothic and Peshitta. It is in my opinion still the most accurate translation from the original Scriptures, and is my preferred version, and other translations quoted in this study, are tested against the King James Version. The Hebrew and Greek texts are taken from The Interlinear Bible.

Introduction

The last three and a half years (the 2nd half of Daniel's 70th Week. **(Please see Appendix XII)**) of this age is referred to in the Scriptures as "The Great Tribulation." In Rev 7v14 "great tribulation," should read, "the tribulation, the great one," "tes thlipseos tes megales." It is an emphatic phrase which calls attention to the adjective "great," rather than the noun "tribulation," the same construction occurs in the references to "the city, the great one," "tes poleos tes megales," in Rev 11v8, 14v8, 16v19, 17v18, 18v10,16,18,19,21. This "great tribulation," is not the "much tribulation" spoken of in Acts 14v22, which all Christians can expect, it is the terrible time of world-wide distress (immediately before the Lord's Second Coming) which Jesus warned us about in Matt 24v15-21 (with Dan 12v1, Jer 30v7, Mark 13v14,19,24). The Lord Jesus tells us that this period of time will be, "such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be," a time of unparalleled evil (as a result of the mystery of iniquity working fully. 2Thess 2v1-12. **Please see Appendix XIII)** that will ravage the earth which would result in the extermination of man and the complete destruction of the earth unless the Lord Jesus shortens those days by His Second Coming, which He will do so for the elects sake. Dan 12v1, Mark 13v19,20, Rev 11v15-19

The Christian, if they are to come through this terrible great time of evil with an overcoming faith and flying colours will need to be fully prepared for it, otherwise they will most surely backslide and go into apostasy. It is **NOW** that each individual Christian needs to prepare themselves for the great darkness that lies just around the corner! Matt 24v12,42-44,48-51, Luke 6v47-49, 2Thess 2v1-4, 1Tim 4v1-3, 2Tim 3v1-9, Rev 16v15

Relevant Scripture

Mark 16v9-14 (**Please see Appendix XI**), Matt 28v18-20, Mark 16v15-18, Luke 24v44-49, Acts 1v4-9, Luke 24v50-53, Mark 16v19, Acts 2v1-4,14,16-21,38,39, Mark 16v20, Rev 7v9-17:

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen...And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the (full) end of the world (age)**...And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover**...And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. **And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high...And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.** For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But **ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.** (And he led them out as far as to Bethany) And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, (he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them) he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight...And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God...(So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.)...**And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.** And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance...But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them...**this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved...**Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call... And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following... **After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.** And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. **And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their**

robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

How Should The Christian Prepare Themselves For The Great Darkness That Lies Ahead?

1) When we look at the Whole Armour of God (**Please see Appendix IV**) as listed in Eph 6v10-20, that Paul exhorts us to put on, we see that most of the weapons are dealing with a correct and full knowledge of the Scriptures. This includes a full knowledge of the Foundation Truths (**Please see Appendix I**) as listed in Heb 5v11-6v2 and a correct understanding of prophetic truth on the Second Coming of Christ. (**Please see Appendices III, V, VIII, XII, and XIII**)

2) Just before the beginning of the Great Tribulation there will be a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the last and greatest in all of human history (there will already have been an outpouring just before the beginning of the last seven years of this age, which is the fulfillment of Daniel's 70th Week. Dan 9v27), this is referred to by Joel as the latter rains (this swelled the grain in the kernel for harvesting) which far exceeded those of the early rains (this prepared the ground for sowing). Before Our Lord's Ascension, He commanded the disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high, and this they did in the Upper Room. When the Day of Pentecost was fully come they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. The early Church prayed the Promise of the Father into reality and sustained that great outpouring and revival through diligent prayer (for almost three centuries), not only by praying (and singing) with the mind, but more so by praying (and singing) with the spirit, that is exercising the gift of tongues. Christians today should and **MUST** follow the example of the early Church to pray in the final and full fulfillment of Joel's wonderful prophecy and sustain it until the Lord's Second Coming through the diligent use of the gift of tongues. (**Please see Appendices II, and VII**) Psalm 133 (all), Dan 11v32, Joel 2v23,28-32, Mark 16v15-20, John 7v37-39, 14v12-14,16,17, Acts 1v4-8, 2v1-47, 4v23-31, 5v12-16, 19v11,12, 1Cor 14v4,15,18, 2Cor 12v11,12, James 5v7, Jude v20,21, Rev 11v3-6

3) To be able to stand in the evil dark days of the Great Tribulation and answer the lying signs, wonders and miracles of the false prophets, we will need to be baptised in the Holy Spirit and have certain spiritual qualities. Matt 24v24, 2Thess 2v1-12, Rev 13 (all) (**Please see Appendices VI, IX, X and XIV**)

Yahweh Shalom

Alister Hamilton, 18th June 2015

Appendix I: Foundation Truths

A Text Book for Young Christians

By C L Parker

Tutor Hampstead Bible School, Kenley, Surrey

(Formerly Chaplain, Fellow, and Tutor of University College, Oxford)

To my students, who by patient listening and unceasing questioning, have through the years, forced upon me hours of strenuous Bible study, this booklet, to which they have contributed so much, is affectionately dedicated.

Contents

Foreword

Introduction

Repentance From Dead Works

Faith Towards God

Baptism In Water

Baptism In The Spirit

The Laying On Of Hands

The Great Tribulation Overcomer

The Resurrection Of The Dead

Eternal Judgement

The Cross Of The Lord

The Foundation of Repentance from Dead Works, and of Faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of Laying on of Hands, of Resurrection of the Dead, and of Eternal Judgment. Heb 6v1,2.

Foreword

It is a pleasure to commend to the thinking student this first edition of a book by a painstaking scholar and theologian upon the intriguing subject, which he has called "Foundation Truths."

My mind was made up before first reading the script that I would not agree with the writer simply because he was a friend of mine. It is a happy mood to be in when one can disagree reasonably. That was how I first read this textbook.

I found, however, that after reading a few pages, this care-free mood was not guaranteed any permanence: for the writer's logic, careful application of abundant scripture references and sincere appeal to his readers to prove to their own satisfaction his interpretations of fundamental truth, made it very difficult for me to disagree. This I presume was just where he wanted me—thinking—thinking for myself.

This is a textbook for the careful reader: and its subject matter is worthy of painstaking study. The doctrines considered are vital and essential to an understanding of both God and man, sin and salvation, death and life, heaven and hell.

The chapter on Eternal Punishment is very provocative and should be studied prayerfully with an open Bible at hand. This subject is as much for the heart as for the intellect. One's heart is warmed as it is plainly shown that God is not a Being with a split personality, as many must have thought Him when considering His judgments: a loving God to His own people, but fearful in hatred and revenge upon a disobedient host of unbelievers!

God is love: and at no time nor in any circumstances does He change: for in His unchanging love and mercy He provides a secure Keeping Place for the unbelievers and thus preserves the eternal peace of His own beloved people. This is Hell—God's madhouse, for the ultimately irreconcilable.

If this brief foreword were for purposes of comment, then it would be as long as the book. It is not. It is a privilege granted me to commend this book to all students of God's Word and to those who love His appearing. **George Newsholme. (An outstanding Pastor, and former Principal of the Hampstead Bible School.)**

Foreword

It gives me great satisfaction to recommend this third edition of Foundation Truths by one of the Lord's most esteemed servants.

The value of these thought-provoking studies can never be truly estimated in mere words. I am most grateful to Lord for allowing me the privilege of hearing them expounded by the writer himself in the lecture hall of the Hampstead Bible College; there was never a dull moment!

Ever since Foundation Truths have been committed to print I have never been without a copy, and it has been my joyful practice to pass them on to others in the hope that they will be as enriched by them as I have been.

Clyde Young. Assemblies of God Minister, Sunderland

About The Author

A summary of the life of C. L. Parker by his son, John Parker

Cuthbert Layland Parker was born in 1887, gained 1st Class Honours at St. John's College, Oxford in 1908 in the Classics (Latin and Greek), was ordained priest in 1912 and became a Tutor at University College, Oxford, from 1912-1918. He also gained a blue and two half blues while at St. John's in Rugby, Swimming and Athletics respectively.

The Great Tribulation Overcomer

Mr Parker's varied and unusual career in the ministry meant that at one time he was General Secretary of Assemblies of God and at another was Vicar of St. James, Clerkenwell, London and Chaplain to the Royal Free Hospital when it was on Grays Inn Road.

It was during his first curacy at St. Luke, Redcliffe Square, that an old lady prayed for him to be saved - it must have been a rather well to do church, more traditional than evangelical. Mr Parker used to tell how, at this time, he was sitting in the garden, smoking a pipe and reading his Greek New Testament, when the Holy Spirit illuminated the Word, and he cried out 'By gad, the Bible's true!' He then went into the pulpit and told the people he had been telling them lies thus far - and now would tell them the truth!

In 1917, Mr Parker married Phyllis Harcourt Kent at St. James, Clerkenwell, of which at that time his father was vicar and of which he would become vicar 20 years later. It was during this latter period that the church experienced an outpouring of the Spirit, which must have made it one of the earliest charismatic churches of the 20th century.

Returning to 1917, Mr Parker, and his wife Phyllis, quickly absorbed and entered into the fundamental truths of New Testament Christianity, such as Justification by Faith, Divine Healing, the Second Coming, etc. It was not long before he commenced his teaching ministry at various Bible Colleges (including the Bible League College and the Assemblies of God Bible College in Surrey), and also as a Convention Speaker all round the country.

His style of teaching was to allow his students to ask questions as the lecture proceeded, and sometimes this would drive him back to the Word of God to search out the answers. So both he and his students grew in their understanding of the Scriptures, and there are many alive today who still remember with gratitude how his teaching revolutionised their Christian lives and their theology.

"Foundation Truths", based on Hebrews 6v1,2, contains the essence of his teaching, built around his graphic representation of man's Spirit, Soul and Body (1Thess 5v23) - to which he gave the name 'Archie'! Any readers of these pages will find themselves challenged and stimulated theologically and generally, whether or not they agree with all Mr Parker's conclusions.

A Guide to the Diagrams

The Serpent represents sin; dead when coiled, alive when upright

The Book represents Moral Law, whether of God or of conscience

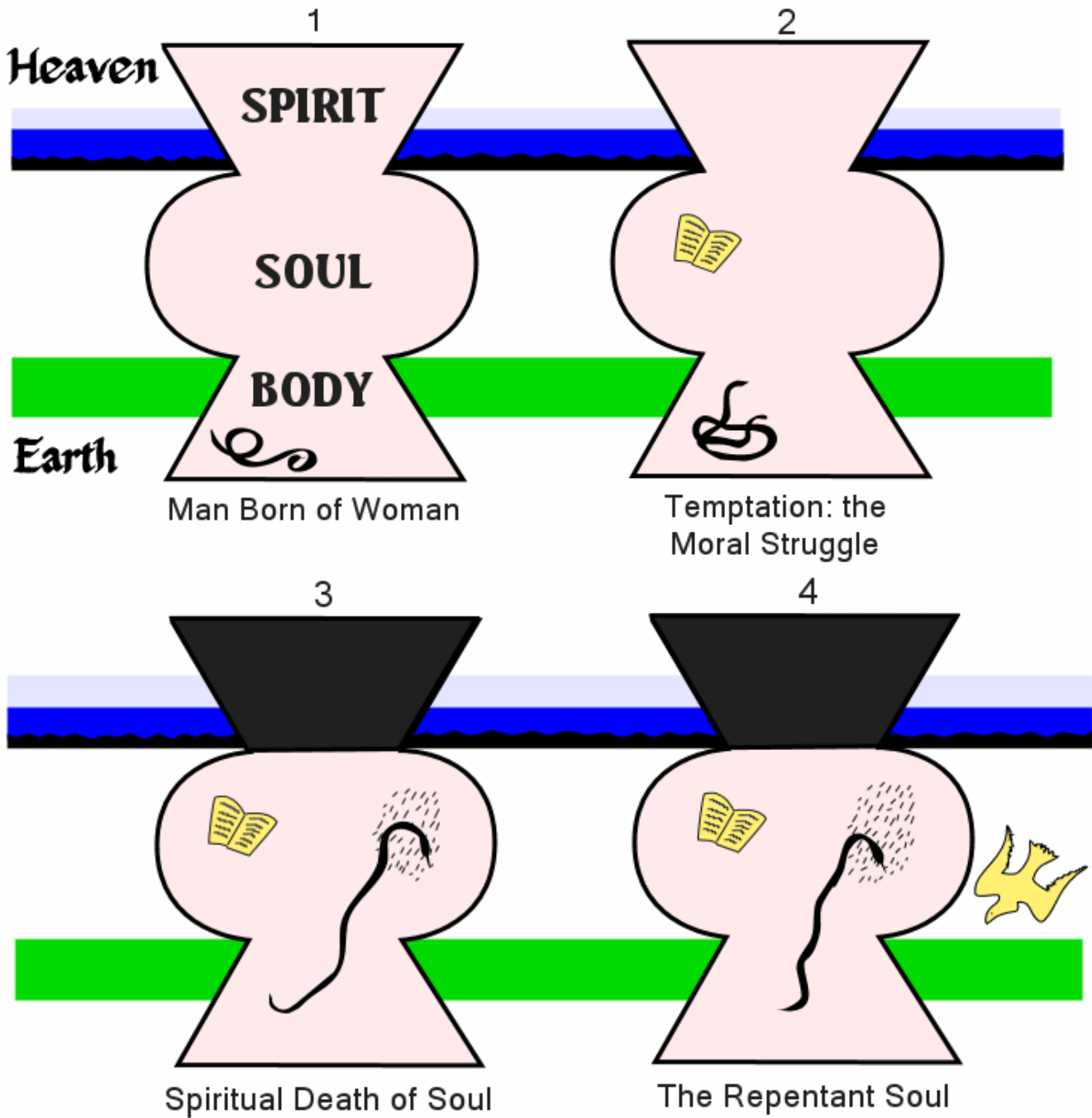
The Dove represents The Holy Spirit of God

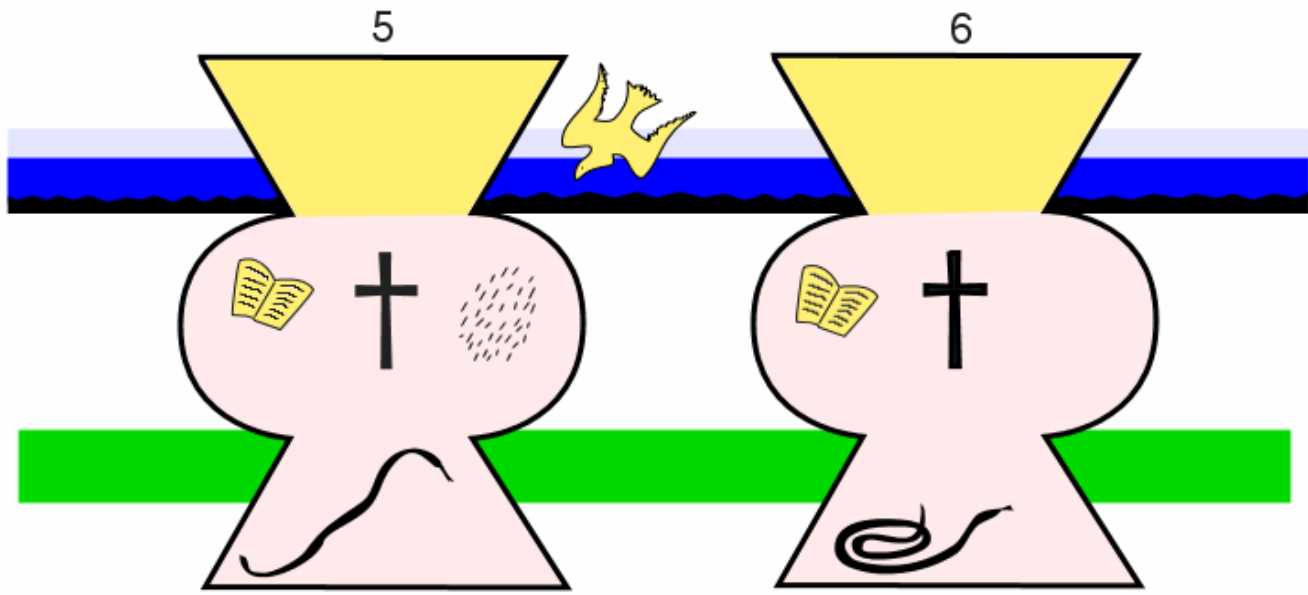
The Cross represents Calvary

The Black Line represents the first Heaven, the home of Satan

The Black Colouring represents that which is dead to God

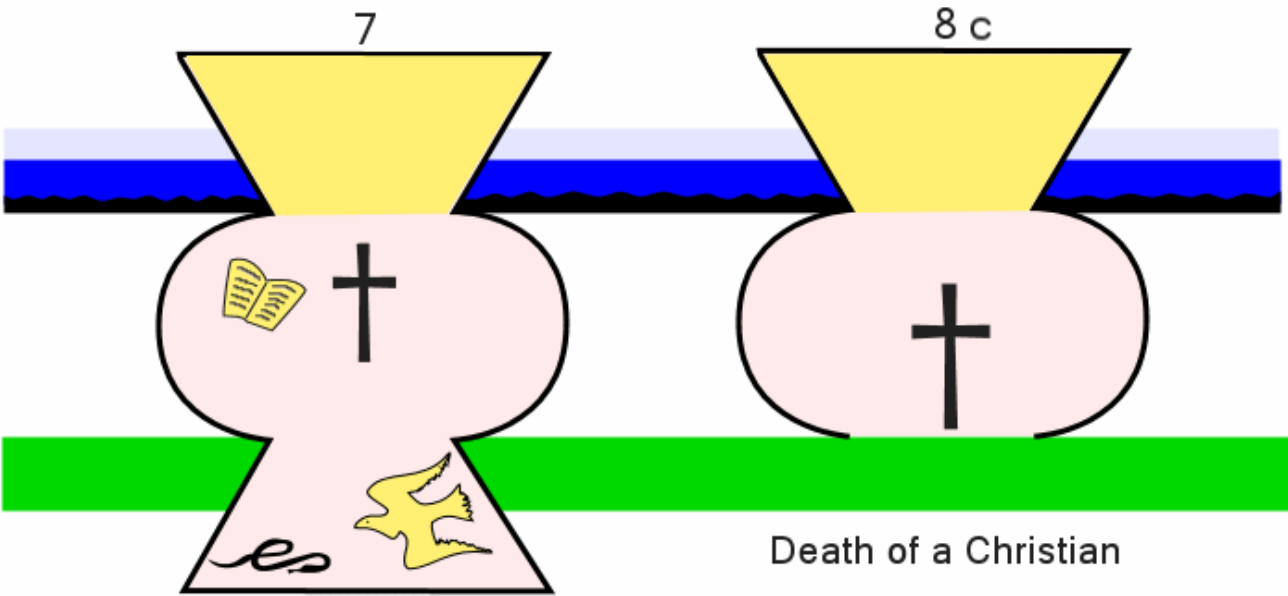
The Gold Colouring represents that which belongs to the Sons of God





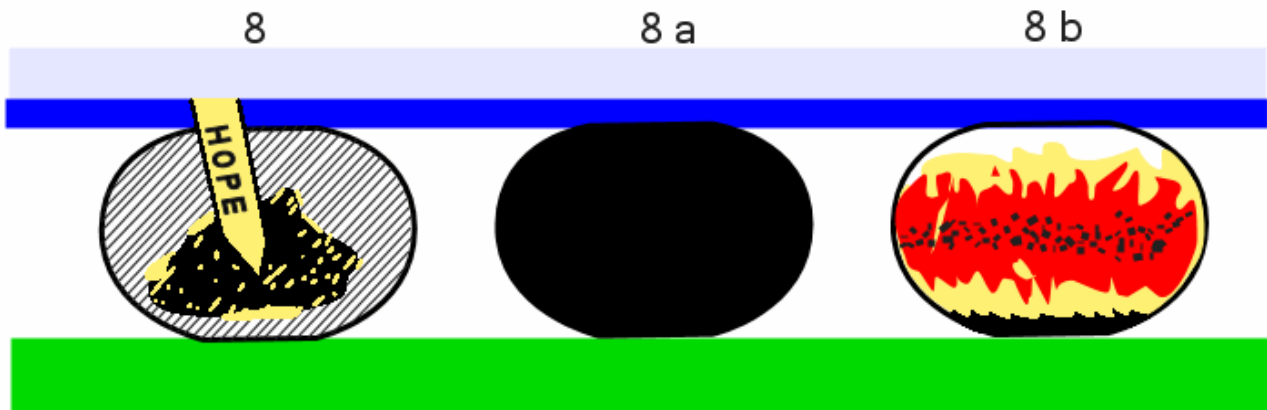
New Birth

Water Baptism



The Spirit filled Christian

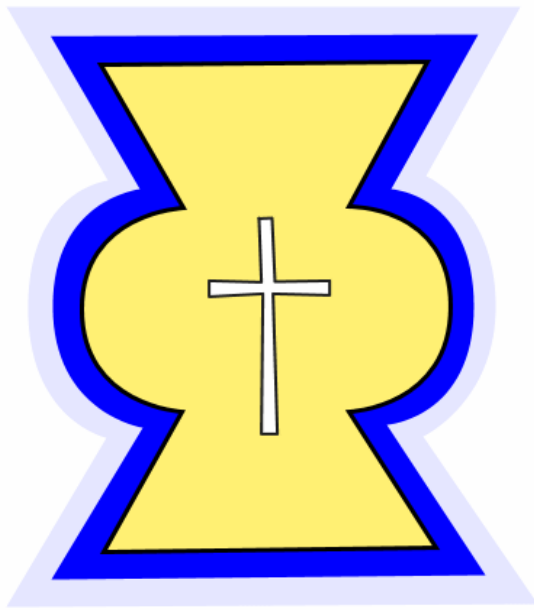
Death of a Christian



Death of O.T. Saint

Death of Ignorant

Death of God's enemies



The Resurrection
of a Son of God.

Introduction

New converts to Christianity are spoken of in the Bible as babes in Christ, with hearts full of desire for understanding, and minds equally full of problems and questions. Peter (1Pet 2v2) tells us that what they need is the sincere milk of the Word, if they are to grow to a healthy maturity. When they are grown up there is solid food for them too; but until then they need milk and not meat.

Many young Christians have suffered life-long spiritual indigestion or the diseases that spring from malnutrition owing to a wrong diet in their early days. Those who are ignorant of the Scriptures can be misled by any teacher with strong personality, and need to acquire for themselves that full assurance of understanding of which St. Paul speaks. (Col 2v2, Heb 10v22)

It is of the first importance therefore to know what is meant by the milk of the Word; and our Father has left us in no doubt on this matter, but has detailed it for us in Heb 5v11 to 6v2.

The Foundation Truths, the A.B.C. of Christianity, are seven in number, Repentance from dead works, Faith towards God, Baptism in Water, Baptism in Spirit, the Laying on of hands, Resurrection of the dead, Eternal Judgment. Only after he has learnt the truth in these simple matters is the Christian baby ready to consider the harder problems and deeper wisdom of God's Revelation.

These studies are designed primarily therefore to lead the new convert to those passages of the Bible in which these matters are most simply handled, that he may see for himself the Scriptural basis of his faith, and be fully persuaded in his own mind. In the hour of battle a man cannot stand upon another's teaching, but only upon those parts of the Truth that he has made his own.

It will soon become apparent to him that these Foundation Truths show the steps by which His Heavenly Father plans to change a "man born of woman," who was rightly at home on this earth, into a mature "Son of God" who longs for His Heavenly home and destiny.

I am indeed grateful to Mr. George Newsholme (Editor of Redemption Tidings), who has not only read the manuscript, but has also written the preface and helped in the final form of this booklet. My hearty thanks are also due to Miss E. F. Dodgson, who patiently typed and retyped the manuscript, and to my wife for the designs of the diagrams. May the Lord be able to use it to His own refreshment, Prov 25v13, and to the blessing of His people.

Chapter I: Repentance From Dead Works

The first Foundation Truth contains the arresting phrase "Dead works," which is aptly illustrated by our Lord's words, "Let the dead bury their dead," or St. Paul's phrase, "... is dead while she liveth." Fully to understand these words we need to consider the birth and constitution of a "man born of woman." (Luke 9v60, 1Tim 5v6)

The First Birth

He is tripartite; body, soul and spirit. His body comes from his parents, his spirit comes from God, and his soul, i.e., himself, is the result of this union of body and spirit, a new individual without experience of any kind, but good because made by God Himself. Man is a soul, he possesses a spirit and a body, the former whereby he can contact the spirit world, and the latter with which to enter and appreciate the material world. The soul, if it loses its body, is dead to this world; if it loses its spirit, it is dead to God and the Heavenly world. If it loses both, it is dead to both worlds, conscious only of the isolation and hopeless darkness of death. Gen 2v7—margin "lives," Num 16v22, Isaiah 57v16, Eccles 12v7, 1Thess 5v23, Matt 11v11, Heb 4v12, John 3v6, 1Cor 2v10-16, Job 10v21-22, Heb 2v15, Luke 12v5.

Every child therefore that is born into this world is alive to God through the spirit which He has given it, and alive to this world through the body which it has inherited through its parents. Its spirit is, of course, perfect like all God's works; but its flesh, coming down ultimately from Adam, is imperfect, and liable in varying degrees to desires which are sinful.

These desires, however, are not in the soul of the baby but in its flesh, and therefore this "sin in the flesh" is in the Bible phrase "Dead," i.e., harmless, and the child itself is alive to God through its spirit with which He has endowed it. So that looking at young children, our Lord said that of such was the Kingdom of Heaven; and exhorted us to become like them; which He could hardly have done if their souls had been as a matter of fact incapable of goodness, totally depraved, and fit only for eternal punishment, as so many Christians have thought they ought to believe! God's mercies are over all His Works, and the child of even the wickedest parents is not born without the gracious gift of spirit from the Creator.

Every baby then is born alive to God and well pleasing to Him, and receives grace from God through its own spirit, which God has given it, and its Guardian Angel whom God has appointed over it.

NB: The phrase "Original Sin," which, like that other phrase "born in sin," is not scriptural, would be shorn of its misleading implications if it were changed into the Scriptural language "Dead sin in the flesh." Every theory of "Original sin" which locates the effect of Adam's sin in the soul of his descendants, instead of in their flesh, or implies that the child is born without grace from God or in any way "Dead to God" is to be unhesitatingly rejected.

The first diagram therefore shows the condition in which all "men born of women" come into the world. (Rom 7v8-8v3, Mark 10v14, Matt 18v1-10, Psalm 51v5, Job 14v1-4, Job 15v14) See Diagram 1—Man born of Woman.

Note on various erroneous doctrines

There are several erroneous teachings about the fall of man, which crept into the Church at a very early date and should be noted at this point; since not only have they led to wrong practices, but they have also clouded the minds of men and dimmed the glory of God, presenting such a picture of Him that, while men could still fear Him as the Almighty, they could neither respect His justice nor discover His love.

The soul of a baby is not hopelessly corrupt because of Adam's sin; it is its flesh only which is tainted; its soul and spirit are pure, being made by God. Mark 10v14, Isaiah 57v3-7,16, Eccles 7v29, 12v7, Num 16v22.

A child is not born dead in sin, alienated from God and without knowledge of Him. It is the sin which is dead; the child is alive. Rom 1v19-21, Acts 17v27, Matt 18v3-5, Rom 7v8-9.

God (a) does not impute the sin of Adam to his children, nor (b) does He impute the righteousness of Christ to a Christian.

(a) In Ezek 18, God clearly teaches that a man dies for his own sin, not his father's; and that it would be wholly unrighteous to blame one man for the sin of another. (2Chron 25v3-4)

(b) Neither is the righteousness of Christ imputed to anyone; it is Christ's death, which is imputed, suffered on our behalf. The moral perfection of Christ cannot be imputed to anyone; but it is imparted as we obey Him. Each man will receive the reward of his own deeds. (2Cor 3v18, 5v10)

NB: The Greek word dikaiosune has two meanings: (a) Justification when brought to trial by the Law; this can take place in two ways;

1) The evidence shows you not guilty; and you are discharged;

2) The evidence shows you guilty, but you, or someone else, pay the penalty. Thus the convict who has done his time is "justified" and no longer a convict: it is libellous to speak of him as such! (b) A moral character, which deserves praise because, so far from breaking the Law, it goes the "second mile."

Diagram 2a Is the condition of the sinner when saved; he is "freed from the Law." But God wants him to live so that he becomes, **diagram 2b** and is "saved with glory." (2Tim 2v10, 1Pet 1v17, Heb 2v10)

It is not true that God is angry with us, for our "fallen nature," and would be justified in condemning us to Hell for it. Out of this slander upon the justice of God has arisen the erroneous practice of Infant Baptism, which is an attempt to counter the supposed danger by means of Baptismal regeneration. If it were true that we were so born that sin is inevitable, not only would repentance be impossible, but we should have a perfect excuse for our sin, and could not possibly feel guilty. Historically and practically the doctrine that sin is inevitable always leads to this very frame of mind, an acquiescence in it as a regrettable necessity: humanum est errare! God, of course, could not and does not, condemn us for what we cannot avoid; neither could men repent of actions which were forced upon them by their nature. They could only grieve over the fact that they were so badly created: and for that they would of necessity blame, not themselves, but their Creator. Gen 18v23-25, Rom 3v5-6, Rom 5v13.

NB1: The fact that all men do as a matter of fact sin is not due to some taint of "original" sin in their nature which makes sin inevitable; but as the Bible says, to the fact that "all like sheep go astray." It is the herd instinct and the fear of standing alone which operates so powerfully. We are to confess Christ before men.

Sin is not due to some flaw in the soul, but simply to the possession of free will. Both Adam and Eve sinned, though from different motives, in spite of the fact that they were created completely perfect in body, soul and spirit. Lucifer also sinned, though perfect in all his ways from the Creation. Perfection of creation is no safeguard against sin! (Eccles 7v29, Ezek 28v12-15, Isaiah 53v6, Gen 2v5-25)

Neither is perfection of surroundings a preventative. The first sins both in Heaven and Earth were committed under ideal conditions.

NB2: Even perfect flesh, such as Adam and Eve possessed, was endowed by God with desires, which unless curbed by the soul would lead it to sin. The realisation that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasant to look at is put first in the motives that led to Eve's sin! The stronger the bodily instinct, the greater the danger of misuse. The strongest and most lovely of all physical instincts implanted by God, the sexual, is also the most dangerous unless ruled by the soul. The perfect flesh of the perfect man contained within it the possibility of temptation and sin just as inevitably as did the fallen flesh of Adam! The only safety of the most perfect flesh lies in its control by a wise and loving soul. (Gen 3v6, Matt 4v2-4, Matt 26v41, 1Cor 9v27)

NB3: While it is true that Cain and Abel came into the world with smaller opportunities than Adam and Eve, since God no longer visited them intimately in the garden, it is also true (a) that God did not again ask so high a standard and (b) that Enoch walked with God and that Noah pleased Him. It is true that the fall of Adam brought the whole race down to a lower level of possibilities; it is also true that the lower level was capable of achievement, and that God could still be pleased with men. From Adam justification was no longer by works but by faith; and the rite of blood-sacrifice for sin was well known from Abel, who was the first of a long line of men who have pleased God by their faith. (Acts 10v35, Ezek 14v14, 2Chron 20v7, Heb 11v1-40, Hab 2v4)

"As in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1Cor 15v22), does not refer to our souls, but to our bodies. If it did refer to our souls, it would be a powerful argument for Universalism! Adam died physically not because he sinned, but because God drove him from the Tree of Life; otherwise in spite of his sin he would have lived for ever. For the same reason all men suffer physical death. Hence all, including the wicked, will be raised from death by Christ. The death of this resurrection body in the Lake of Fire, which is the second time a man loses his body, i.e., his second death, will be for a man's own unrepented and hence unforgivable sin: and will be eternal, leaving the soul in hopeless impotence and anguish. (Acts 24v15, John 5v28-29, Rev 20v11-15, Rom 2v1-9, Mark 9v43-50, Gen 3v22-24)

Moral Law

There comes a time, however, when moral law enters into the soul of a child, either from instruction in God's Word, or in the ordinary course of nature. When this has happened, and the child begins to pass moral judgment upon others, then sin in the flesh, which has hitherto been dead and harmless, comes alive, and proceeds to entice and try to deceive the soul, as in the Garden of Eden. Rom 7v9-11, 1Cor 15v56, James 1v14-15, Rom 4v15, Rom 5v13, Rom 2v1-16, Matt 7v1-5. See Diagram 2—The Moral Struggle.

Note on Temptation

It is essential to realise that temptation is not sin. God did not intend Adam and Eve to live without temptation; since it is only by resisting it that frail innocence can develop into strong purity, and learn not only to love good but also to hate

evil. Accordingly Satan was allowed to enter Eden; Job was left in his hand "without cause," the Israelites were led through that great and terrible wilderness, Jesus was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil; the disciples were handed over to be sifted as wheat.

The surest way to throw a maid into the arms of her lover is to speak against him! Every instinct of protection and loyalty rises up in passionate rejection of the imputation. So should it have been with Adam and Eve in the garden when Satan slandered their friend and Creator. They should have risen up in defence of Him they loved, clung the closer for the attack, and conceived such a hatred for Satan that he would no longer have dared to enter their garden. Such, no doubt, was the design of the Almighty, but it was frustrated by the folly and disloyalty of the perfect creatures, Adam and Eve! Eve allowed herself to be deceived by Satan's innuendoes, and Adam put his wife's companionship before his God's; as many another man has done, since the first one said, "I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come." It was God's greatest gift which brought about the downfall of the perfect man! Solomon, the wisest man, owed his downfall to his inability to use the gifts of God aright. It was Lucifer's wisdom and ability, the gifts of God, which fed the pride which caused his ruin. Every blessing, indeed, from God has in itself the seeds of temptation: and history is full of men whose heart was lifted up to rebellion by the very gifts, which should have made them grateful. (2Chron 18v1, 2Chron 26v16, 32v25)

Temptation is not sin; the hour of fiercest temptation can be the hour of greatest purity. By allowing us to inherit from our parents a body from which temptation is inevitable, God has not been unfair to us, but has given us the opportunity by resisting such temptation, of establishing ourselves for ever in His love and service. When God gave men and angels freewill He made it possible for them to disobey any command He might impose and to embark on a life of selfishness instead of love. Hence temptation was possible in Heaven before sin occurred. (Ezek 28v11-15.)

The fact that we are tempted, however severely, whether by the flesh, the world, or the Devil, is not accepted by God as an excuse for sinning. We are indeed to welcome, though not to invite, temptation, albeit with fear and trembling humility, for the overcoming of temptation is the royal road to the Throne of God. (James 1v2-4,12-15, Heb 2v18, 4v15, Luke 22v28-32, 1Pet 1v6-7, Gen 3, Deut 8v2-3,15-16, Matt 4v1-11, Job, chapters 1 and 2, Gal 6v1, 1Cor 10v13)

It is obvious that temptation and sin are permanent possibilities of a "free will"; by which we mean that a man can choose his own course, whether it be good or evil, even if he lacks the power to put it into action. The whole aim of God is therefore to do away with sin, not by excluding temptation but by making the soul immune to it; as the body becomes immune to disease not by elimination of bacilli but by the setting up of a sufficient resistance to them (Heb 1v9). Only the man who hates evil is safe against temptation. Therefore God has allowed evil great liberty in this world, that by awful experience of its effects, its deceitful promises might be exposed, and mankind might learn to dread it above all things and to achieve an iron determination never to commit it. (Luke 15v17, Heb 1v9, Psalm 119v97-104, Heb 12v4)

Note on Conscience

Conscience is not the voice of God, neither is it necessarily pleasing to God or according to His Law. It is that standard of conduct which a man lays down for his neighbour, to which he is himself accountable. This standard is formed by a man (a) out of his own heart in automatic reaction to his neighbour's acts, e.g., the last six of the ten commandments are the involuntary response of human nature to the selfishness of another which threatens its happiness "Thou shalt not steal" pours out of the lips of the man who is being robbed: "thou shalt not commit adultery" is the cry of the man whose wife is unfaithful: "thou shalt not covet" is the instinctive thought in the heart of the man who sees his neighbour eyeing his poultry too lovingly! (b) Out of the opinions of the society in which he lives. (c) Out of any revelation which he may have received of God. By this and by this alone will he be judged. (Rom 2v1-16, 5v13, 14v5, Luke 12v47-48, James 4v17, 1Cor 4v4, Acts 26v9, Matt 7v1-5, Titus 1v15, 1Tim 4v2)

Life or death

It is the peculiar glory of Jesus, which He shares with no other, that though tempted in all points like as we are yet He never yielded to the solicitations of sin, from whatever quarter they might come. Wherefore for this reason God has given Him the Name which is above every name. (John 8v46, Luke 4v1-13, 22v28, Heb 2v14-18, 4v14-15, 5v7-10, Phil 2v5-11)

It has been the tragedy of the human race on the contrary, that like sheep we have all turned to our own way and gone astray; so that, instead of growing strong in character by continuous and successful struggle against temptation, we have become the weak slaves of sin, and found out that the soul that sinneth it shall die. Let it be noted that only a living soul can die; a dead soul is already dead. Hence the salvation of God finds us in the condition of diagram 3, not from compulsion but of choice. The tragedy of Eden is continually repeated, so that each soul having once turned aside finds itself a captive, cut off from God by the death of the spirit; and able, and at first at any rate contented, only to live in the world of sense through its body. The whole life of such a person is described in the vivid phrase "dead works" or the life of a man dead to God.

There is a short story by H. G. Wells entitled "The Country of the Blind," which is an apt illustration of this condition. In this tale, a man with eyes strays into the kingdom of The Blind and is taken captive. The fact that he can see, however, is

not a help to him but a hindrance, since it rouses the jealousy and dislike of the blind, who prefer to think that no such thing as sight exists. In the end they will allow him to live in their midst only upon the condition that they may put his eyes out and make him as one of themselves. So would the world put out the Christian's eyes, and pull him down into their chosen darkness. (John 3v19, Rom 1v18-21, Isaiah 53v6, Luke 9v60, John 8v31-34, Rom 1v18-32, 5v12, 6v12-16, 7v9-11, Gal 5v15-16, Eph 2v1-3, 1Tim 5v6, Ezek 18v4, James 1v14-15) See Diagram 3—Death of a Soul.

Note on Death of the Spirit

Be it noted that a dead spirit is not an annihilated or non-existent spirit, but one which no longer performs the duty for which it was intended, that is, to contact God. A "dead spirit" though unable any longer to contact God, can yet get into touch with other dead spirits, both angels and demons, which inhabit the first Heaven and the earth: viz., the black line in the diagrams. (Eph 2v2, 6v12, 2Cor 4v4, 1Cor 10v19-21, Isaiah 8v19, 1Sam 28, 2Kings 21v6, 1Tim 4v1, 1John 4v1-3)

Repentance

The consideration of the phrase "dead works" has made it clear that man's estrangement from God is due in each case to his own deliberate act.

He who hides his action from his fellow man whom he can see, hides it also from the righteous God whom he cannot see; and comforts himself for having done so by some protective covering, e.g., "There is no God," or "God doth not see," "You can't expect to be too good while in the flesh," or even "God doesn't mind sin so long as you are saved."

The modern sinner hides himself from the true God as definitely as did Adam and Eve; and the various religions of the world have as their motive the desire to pretend that there is no righteous God who has revealed Himself to us, but only gods who leave us free to do evil. (Psalm 14v1, 36v1, 50v21, Eccles 7v16, Rom 1v23, 2Cor 4v4)

It is clear then that, until he is willing to retrace that step and come into relationship with God again, even God cannot help him. This willingness to change his attitude towards God is called repentance; and, since nothing can be done without it, all God's efforts are lovingly turned to bringing it about. The Holy Spirit uses in each case the most appropriate means to appeal to the heart of the one with whom He is dealing. It may be fear of judgment, fear of consequences, dreadful experiences of an ungodly life, revelation of the love of God in sending His Son to die for sinners, experience of His power in signs and wonders, the hope of eternal life instead of the fear of death. The variety of the means He uses is as great as that of the hearts with which He has to deal, but the end is always the same, to persuade the ungodly to be willing to come into contact with a living God, to be reconciled to the One they have distrusted. (John 16v8, Mark 1v15, Acts 9v32-35, 8v6-8, 16v27-30, 17v30-31, 2v37, Luke 11v31-32, 13v1-9, Rom 5v8, John 3v16)

NB1: God does give space for repentance, but does not wait beyond the appointed time. (Gen 6v1-7, Luke 13v1-9, Rev 2v21, Heb 12v17, 6v4-8, 10v26-30, Rom 2v1-11, Dan 4v27-31, Jonah 3v4, Jer 18v7-10, 2Chron 36v14-16, Eccles 8v11)

NB2: Repentance always leads to action. (Jonah 3, Luke 3v8, Acts 2v38, Luke 15v17-19, 19v8-9)

It includes hatred of sin, sorrow for those we have wronged, and a desire to put things right; remorse is sorrow for oneself, because one's sin has been exposed and must be paid for. (Matt 27v3-5, 2Sam 17v23)

Thus the first Foundation Truth is illustrated by—Diagram 4—The Repentant Soul.

Chapter II: Faith Towards God

The new Birth

As soon as the Holy Spirit sees that the soul is willing to believe the truth about God, He enables it to do so by begetting it a new spirit. Spiritual things are only discerned by spirit, and therefore the Lord told Nicodemus that what he needed was not teaching, but a living spirit. The body and spirit might be compared to a couple of radio sets for receiving and transmitting, the one tuned into the seen world, the other to the unseen: the soul being entirely dependent upon them for contact with either world. A room may be filled with all kinds of music, plays, talks from all over the world: yet its occupants are in complete ignorance of the fact, since they have never possessed or even heard of a wireless set! So it is with both spiritual and natural things. The world is full of sounds, but this one is ignorant of them as he was born deaf: in a similar way, heaven is shut to the man whose spirit is dead, since he has lost that part which alone can receive impressions from the spiritual world; and his one overwhelming need is that this part should be restored, i.e., born again, so that once more he may be in contact. (John 3v5, 1Cor 2v14)

The more the radio is used the wider the knowledge of the outside world. There are those who might be said to live at their radio: we are expected likewise to live in the spirit! Some radios have a wider range and more perfect reception than others: so the spirit of Christ is more sensitive than the spirit of a servant and opens to us a much wider range of understanding of spiritual realities. (Rom 8v15)

NB1: It is the spirit which is born again, not the soul; the soul, which has already lived in the human family, is adopted into the Royal Family of God, and has to learn how to live in its new surroundings. (John 3v1-8, Eph 1v5, 4v11-16, Rom 6v15-23, Gal 4v6, 2Pet 1v4, 1Tim 3v15, 2Cor 3v18)

NB2: That, which a Son of God receives at his new birth, is not the Holy Spirit Himself, but that which is born of Him, holy spirit. The Holy Spirit Himself is normally given through the laying on of the hands of one in whose body He has taken up His abode, and this happens after the new birth. The Holy Spirit is a person; the holy spirit, which He gives at the new birth, is a thing, just as the body, which the parents give, is a thing, not a person. (John 3v6, Acts 8v17, 9v17, 19v6, Eph 1v13 "after")

So the Apostles received holy spirit and were born again on the night of the Resurrection. After that they were continually in the Temple praising and blessing God. It was, however, not until the day of Pentecost that they received the Holy Spirit Himself, who immediately manifested His presence in a miraculous fashion. Much confusion has arisen through the failure to differentiate between the Person and the thing. Since there are no capital letters or other ways of distinguishing between them in the original MSS., every translator is free to use his own judgment in the matter, and so mistakes have been made. (John 20v22, Acts 2v4, Luke 24:53)

All Christians then have that which the Holy Spirit begets, and all Christians have also the Holy Spirit Himself "with them," for it was He who brought them to repentance and begat them again. It is, however, those who are baptised in the Spirit who have Him "in them." (Rom 8v9, John 14v17, Acts 19v2-6.)

The body of every Son of God is a temple of the Holy Ghost: but that temple is empty until the Spirit enters it, of which entry there is always a clear sign. Even as the Tabernacle and Temple were first prepared and built, and after that manifestly filled with the glory of God. (1Cor 3v16-17, 6v19, Exodus 40v33-34, 1Kings 8v10-11, Mal 3v1)

The Gift of God

Faith is therefore the gift of God, because it is the result of the new spirit, which is born; just as hearing is the result of an ear, or sight of an eye. A man believes because he has been given a living spirit; and because he has such a spirit he cannot help believing, even if for some selfish reason he may wish to do so. Only by spiritual suicide can he kill this spirit and become "twice dead." In such cases he knows what he has done and lives in apprehension of fiery judgment (1Pet 1v23-2v2, Eph 2v8-10, Heb 6v4-8, 10v26-29, Jude 12)

It is essential that faith should be the gift of God and not a human ability. Were it not so, a man might be discouraged by the thought that he had always found faith difficult, and was in this way handicapped: but, since it is the gift of God, all men may have it, for God gives it freely to all who will accept it. Indeed, men whose thoughts have been far from God have found themselves suddenly believing in Christ so that to their great surprise the whole course of their lives has been changed. God has made it possible for the most difficult and unlikely soul to believe, by giving him spirit, the source of faith, that through which the unseen is apprehended. The soul by itself is not in touch with spiritual things: but as soon as its spirit is quickened by God, the soul finds itself believing in what before seemed to it foolishness. (1Cor 2v10-16.)

The Food of Faith

The food of faith is the Word of God. Without regular feeding, the spirit grows weakly and eventually dies, just as the body cannot remain alive without its proper food. Christian weakness is due generally, not to inherent inability or wickedness, but simply to malnutrition or positive starvation. This God-given food rightly used, is sufficient to ensure spiritual victory on earth, and to give us our inheritance in heaven. Like the body, the spirit needs not only food but also exercise. This exercise is most naturally taken in prayer. A spirit, which is fed by the Word, soon grows strong enough to engage in prayer and to exercise spiritual gifts. (Matt 4v4, 2Tim 3v14-17, 1Tim 4v13-16, Deut 8v3, 1Pet 2v1-3, Acts 20v32, Jer 15v16, John 6v26-63, Job 23v12, Ezek 2v8-3v3)

The Fight of Faith

The fight of faith is allowed by God to bring us to a state of strength and purity. Faith, the gift of God, brings justification; tried faith covers us with glory. (Job, chapters 1 and 2, James 1v3,12, 1Pet 1v7, Luke 22v28-29, 1Tim 6v12, 2Tim 4v7, Eph 6v12, Matt 4v1-11)

The Rest of Faith

The effect of such a tried faith is peace of mind, and the ability to depend not upon ourselves, but upon God. (Heb 3v13-4v11, Rom 5v1-11, 1Pet 1v21)

Life in the food

There is no lesson more vital to the young convert than the realisation of his dependence upon the Bread which came down from Heaven. Babies grow, not because of their own health or strength, but simply because they are fed. The life is in the food. The Christian is entirely dependent upon his living bread. (Cf. Psalm 1)

NB1: The New Birth is wholly a gracious act of God, and is not the result of any action on man's part. It is not the consequence, but the cause of faith. (John 1v13, James 1v18, 1Pet 1v3, Eph 2v8-10, cf. Luke 6v10)

This living faith, given by God through the New Birth, is what God counts as justification. It is of the heart, and not just the intellect; and includes:

(a) An understanding and grateful acceptance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, so that we believe as He did about sin and its consequences and atonement; we are His brethren, like-minded on these vital subjects. (Isaiah 53, Luke 24v25-28,44-47, Rom 3v21, 5v21, 10v9-10, Gal 3v1-15, 1Pet 1v17-21)

(b) Actions, which proceed naturally from it. (Matt 3v8, Luke 19v8, James 2v14-26, Mark 16v16, Acts 2v38, 8v36-38, 10v47-48, 19v18-19, Rom 1v5, 16v26, Gal 5v6, 2Cor 4v13, Heb 11)

NB2: The New Birth does not put the believer back into the position in which he was born. Then he was "born of woman" with the spirit of a servant of God, looking upon God as his Creator and Lord, and upon this earth as his natural habitat. At death he expected to go to Hades, an experience which he dreaded, since he was cut off from God's presence for a season through the loss of his spirit; but his hope was a resurrection to life upon the earth at the last day, when God should restore all things. He was in fact of the earth earthy, for God had created Adam and Eve to live for ever upon this earth through the Tree of Life.

At the New Birth, however, he becomes a child of God with the same spirit of Sonship that Christ has. Earth is no longer his habitat, but Heaven. At the death of his body, since he retains his spirit, he goes, not to Hades, but to Paradise and the presence of God; and at the resurrection he will receive a body fitted for life, not on the earth, but in Heaven. His fellowship is no longer with man born of woman, but through the help of the Holy Spirit of God, with his Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the rest of the Royal Family of God in Heaven and earth. Although the New Birth is an experience which is highly individualistic, yet the effect of it is to place this lonely person into a family in which he should grow to maturity. (Rom 8v9-15, John 8v35, Heb 11v40, 2v14-15, 2Tim 1v10, Matt 11v11, Luke 16v19-31, 2Kings 20v1-3 (contrast Phil 2v21-23, Acts 7v55-59), Rev 5v9-11, Acts 3v21, John 11v24-26, Job 10v21-22, 19v25-27, Ezek 37v11-14, Dan 12v2, Heb 12v22-24, Phil 3v17-21, Col 3v1-4, 1John 1v3, Matt 12v46-50, 23v9) See Diagram 5—The New Birth

Chapter III: Baptism In Water

Baptism in water, as a divine ordinance connected with repentance and forgiveness of sins, was already known to Israel through John the Baptist; he announced it as a preparation for the coming Messiah, Who should baptise in the Holy Ghost, and also open the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matt 3v1-12, Mark 1v1-8, Luke 3v1-17, John 1v26,27,33)

Christian Baptism, however, had an even deeper meaning added to it after the death and resurrection of Christ.

(a) It is the way appointed by God whereby we wash away in water the sins which God has forgiven through the blood of Jesus, and receive a glorious consciousness of complete cleansing from the past. (Eph 1v7, Rev 7v14, Acts 22v16, 1Pet 3v21, Mark 16v16, Titus 3v5, Rev 1v5 (R.V.), Heb 10v22, Psalm 103v12)

(b) It is also an act, which typifies the death and burial of the old worldly unbeliever and the rising up of a new spiritual believer to live in a new and holy fellowship, that is, that of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is the birth of a sanctification which is to grow to perfection. (Matt 28v19, Rom 6v1-11, 1v17, Col 2v12, 3v1-4, 1John 1v1-3, 2Cor 7v1, 3v18, Heb 12v6-14, John 1v16)

NB1: It is a definite command of both Christ and His Apostles. (Mark 16v16, Matt 28v19, Acts 2v38, 10v48)

NB2: Being associated with salvation and the washing away of sins, it was also treated as a matter, not of choice, but of urgency. (Acts 2v41, 8v36, 16v33, 9v18, 22v16, Mark 16v16)

NB3: The Christian is freed from sin, but not from temptation. (John 15v3, 8v31, Rom 6v1-8:4, 1Cor 10v1-13, James 1v2-4)

NB4: Christian Baptism, being in the Name of the Spirit, as well as of the Father and the Son, must include some instruction about the Spirit of God, and so paves the way for the next Foundation Truth, the Baptism in the Spirit. (Matt 28v19) See Diagram 6—Water Baptism

Chapter IV: The Baptism In The Spirit

The Great Tribulation Overcomer

The Baptism in the Spirit is a phrase used in Scripture to describe the experience wherein the Holy Spirit enters the Temple of God, i.e., the body of a Son of God. The Holy Spirit, who brought the sinner to repentance and begat him again into the family of God, desires a still closer union, whereby He that was "with us" now enters "into us." As an evidence that He has entered the believer's body, He begins to use the most unruly part of it, i.e., the tongue, to speak in a language of which the believer is ignorant; thus making it manifest that there are now two occupants of the one body.

The Baptism of the Spirit is spoken of by John Baptist and Christ as a vital element in the work of Salvation He came to procure. (John 1v29-33, 7v37-39, 16v7-15, 14v17, 2v21, Luke 24v49, Acts 1v4-8, 2v3-21, 10v44-48, 11v15-17, 19v1-6, Mark 16v17, 1Cor 3v16, 6v19, 2Cor 6v16.)

The actual Baptism in the Spirit is, however, only the initial experience of a fellowship, which is to be eternal; and the initial evidence is meant to be followed by further manifestations of the Spirit's presence. The New Testament Church is a society of the Sons of God, in whose bodies dwells the same Holy Spirit of God, manifesting His Almighty presence by the various miraculous Gifts of the Spirit. (1Cor 12v1-14v40)

The Church, the present earthly Body of Christ, who is its head, is therefore to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, even as was Christ's own earthly body, so that the will of God may continue to be done by the Spirit of God in the Sons of God. (John 14v16-26, 15v26, 2Cor 3v17-18, Acts 4v31, 5v3,32, 7v51,52, 8v29,39, 13v2. etc.). See Diagram 7—The Spirit-filled Christian

NB1: In the Old Covenant it was the Holy Spirit who laid hold of the chosen Servants of God, even against their desire, that they might perform the task allotted to them. The instances of Moses, Amos, Jonah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel spring to the mind.

In the New Covenant the privilege is opened to all the Sons of God at their own desire. (Exodus 3 & 4, Jer 1v4-7, Ezek 3v14, Jonah, Amos 7v10-15, John 7v39, Acts 2v38-39, 5v32, Gal 4v6)

NB2: The Holy Spirit comes as Comforter, Guide, Teacher, Co-Worker and Lord. We are to please Him, therefore, and not to cause Him grief. The great essential for all who seek the Baptism in the Spirit is a determination to obey Him when He has entered. Failure to do so, and continuous stubbornness, will lead to the disaster which overtook Saul. (1Sam 16v14, Josh 5v13, Eph 2v22, 4v30, Heb 6v3-8, 10v26-31, 1Tim 1v19)

NB3: The Baptism in the Spirit is not a means whereby the believer is sanctified; it is the means whereby the already sanctified believer is enabled to do the miraculous works of God, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God. (Acts 1v8, Luke 24v49, 1Cor 12-14, John 5v19-30, Luke 4v14, Matt 12:28)

NB4: Sanctification is the effect of the Word of God on the obedient hearer. As the true state of affairs enters the believer's heart, he is more and more powerfully drawn not only to forsake sin, but also to throw himself heart and soul into his Master's business. For sanctification is not the cultivation of one's own soul, which leads to Pharisaism, but the whole-hearted interest in the souls of others. (Luke 15v25-30, Isaiah 65v1-5, John 8v31-2, 15v3, 17v17, Eph 5v26)

Chapter V: The Laying On Of Hands

The teaching of Scripture is that spirit is a divine substance which can come direct from Heaven, or be imparted by physical contact with one in whom the Spirit of God is. As such a substance it is capable of having a physical effect upon the material substance of which the world is composed; so that a house can be shaken by it, or a new eye formed.

It is also clear that spirit is subdivided into different types, even as light is composed of different colours. So that, when Jacob was blessing the sons of Joseph, it mattered which hand was placed upon which boy, since the blessings were different, and came through different hands. (Gen 48v13-19.) So also the "divisions of spirit" of Heb 2v4 refer to this difference; each separate kind of spirit carrying in itself the blessing that was to be given. The same thought is given in "the seven spirits of God" of Rev 1v4.

The Laying on of Hands, i.e., physical contact—even of the whole body in the raising of the dead—was the usual way whereby spirit was imparted, though at times the unction was so great that even without actual contact those near a spirit-filled person would receive it. Even inanimate objects could be so impregnated with spirit as to convey it to a person at a distance. (Acts 8v18, 9v12-17, 5v15, 19v12, 20v10, Matt 14v36, Mark 5v27-30, 2Kings 13v21, 1Kings 17v21, 2Kings 4v34-35)

The following are typical of the blessings imparted by the Laying on of Hands:

The Baptism in the Spirit and the Healing of the Body. (Acts 9v17, 8v18, 19v6, 28v8, Mark 16v18)

The Great Tribulation Overcomer

The spirit of Wisdom. (Deut 34v9)

An unspecified gift. (1Tim 4v14, 2Tim 1v6)

A future career. (Gen 48v13-19)

The impartation of spirit through the Laying on of Hands means that the blesser is the poorer and the blessed the richer for the transaction (Luke 5v17, 6v12-19, 8v46), and therefore the blesser needs a continual refilling if he is to continue imparting. Hence, the Lord's habit of retiring for prayer in the midst of such ministry, e.g., Luke 5v16 (Greek—"kept retiring in the desert places and praying").

In all these matters we have the example of our Lord, who laid hands not only upon the sick (Mark 1v40-41), but also upon the babies (Mark 10v13-16)

While it is true and scriptural that spiritual blessing is imparted through the Laying on of Hands, it is equally true that God could and did dispense with any such medium when it so pleased Him, e.g., Acts 1v2-4, 10v44-45, John 4v50, Matt 8v8-13, John 11v43

Since spirit in all its varieties can therefore be imparted through physical contact, it is clear that the Laying on of Hands for such a gracious purpose is indeed one of the Foundation Truths, to be not only understood, but also put into practice. Here again, as in everything pertaining to God, the safeguard against misuse is an honest heart.

By the act of the Laying of Hands you cannot impart what is not in you; and if you attempt to do so the result will be failure and disappointment. Matt 7v22 makes it clear that many will claim to have served God in the spirit who never knew Him. It is for this reason that care is necessary in all things pertaining to the spirit life; just as Israel needed to be watchful in Canaan (Josh 8v7,9,14). It was because of the dangers that awaited them in Canaan that the people refused to go over. Many Christians have been kept from a full Pentecostal experience by the same motive. They are unable to trust the Lord to see them through the undoubted dangers, and prefer to play for safety. (Num 13 & 14)

Chapter VI: The Resurrection Of The Dead

Belief in the Resurrection of the body is implicit in all Bible history. It lay at the very root of the Patriarchal and Jewish theology. The promises of God, which had no fulfilment in the life time of those who believed them, could only be received and enjoyed after a resurrection from the dead; without it they were null and void.

This belief runs all through the Old Testament like a golden thread. Abraham believed in the resurrection of Isaac, the Patriarchs died in this hope; Elijah and Elisha saw the dead raised to life before their eyes; Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Job all spoke of it with confidence. It was the only hope of Martha in the hour of Lazarus' death. (Heb 11v9-21, 1Kings 17v22, 2Kings 4v34, Job 19v25-27, Isaiah 26v19, Ezek 37v1-14, Dan 12v2, John 11v24)

Belief in the resurrection of the body was also the centre of our Lord's life. He spoke repeatedly and confidently of His own death and resurrection, and of what He would do afterwards. It was lack of this faith in His disciples, which so bitterly disappointed Him, and was responsible for their own collapse.

Their own teaching after the Ascension of the Lord centred round His Death and Resurrection and physical return. The whole Christian position depended entirely upon its truth. For, as St. Paul said, if in this life only we have hope in Christ then we are miserable indeed. Faith to raise the dead persisted in the Apostolic Church, and the last book in the Bible ends with the plain vision of a Universal Resurrection of all the dead of all the ages. It is the only doctrine which can give meaning to a Creation, which relentlessly slides into the darkness of frustration and death. (Luke 9v22-45, 24v25-27,36-47, Mark 16v14, Acts 2v22-36, 4v33, 17v32, 26v18-23, 9v36-42, 20v9-12, Rom 8v19-25 (compare Ecclesiastes), 1Cor 15, Rev 20v13)

There was, however, in the Bible a clear development of revelation concerning the resurrection of the dead. The original design of God, foiled by the Fall, was that man should live for ever upon a perfect earth, their bodies being sustained in health by eating of the Tree of Life continually. It is evident that the Tree contained elements which maintained the body in perfect condition. (Gen 3v22, Ezek 47v12, Rev 22v2) It was the action of God in cutting off the human race from this perfect food, which resulted in the universal death of the body. Nothing short, of this diet will restore earthly bodies to their original health. (Gen 3v22, 1Cor 15v22, Rom 5v12-14)

The Bible speaks of the death of the body as an unmitigated evil. It is the greatest and last enemy of the human race. Not until its final defeat will perfect victory be enjoyed. (1Cor 15v22-28, Rev 20v14) Hades (Greek) or Sheol (Hebrew) was the name of the place to which the souls of those who lost their bodies went. It had two sides to it, as the Lord showed in the

parable of Dives and Lazarus, and between those two sides was a great gulf fixed. (Isaiah 14v9, Ezek 32v17-32, Luke 16:19-31)

(a) In the one division were the believers in God. The darkness of their experience was relieved by their faith in the resurrection at the Last Day; so that they might be said to rest in hope, together with Abraham the Father of the believing. Yet dread even of this softened experience kept the Old Testament saints all their lifetime in bondage, and made the hour of death highly unwelcome, since the loss of their spirit cut them off from God, and the loss of their body cut them off from the world. At this Resurrection they would enter into the enjoyment of the promises of God in Palestine during the Millennium. (Heb 2v15, Matt 4v16, Job 10v20-22, 2Kings 20v1-3 (contrast Phil 1v21-23), Luke 1v79, 16v19-23, Psalm 16v9-11, Isaiah 26v19, Ezek 37v1-14, Dan 12v2 (compare Ezek 44v13))

(b) In the other division were:

1) The ignorant dead, who in the darkness of the disembodied state had no ray of hope of any escape from their miserable condition. The final resurrection will come to them as a wholly unexpected shock.

2) The enemies of God whose hearts are filled with expectation of fiery judgment and punishment. (Psalm 73v18-19, Ezek 32v17-32, Mark 9v43-48 (compare Matt 8v29), Matt 25v41, Jude 6 & 7, 2Pet 2v4-9, Heb 10v27)

See Diagrams 8, 8a and 8b

Through Jesus Christ, however, came a mighty revelation, and also a great change in these matters.

(a) He revealed that against those who believed in Him the gates of Hades would not prevail at the death of their body. Since they retained their spirit at death they would not be cut off from the presence of God, but, on the contrary, would enjoy the happiness of Paradise in the spirit, instead of entering the darkness of Hades. He brought life and immortality to light. (John 11v21-26, 8v35-36,39-40,50-52, Matt 16v18, Luke 23v43, Phil 1v21, Acts 7v55-60, 2Tim 1v10, 2Cor 12v1-4.) See Diagram 8c

(b) He also revealed that unlike the Old Testament saints, who looked for an earthly resurrection in an earthly body in which they would enjoy earthly happiness, the Sons of God were called to mount up into Heaven and rule with Christ over the universe, and so would need Heavenly bodies like His. (John 14v2-3, Matt 24v31,47, Heb 3v1, Eph 1v18, 4v1, 1Cor 15v35-54, 1John 3:1-3) See Diagram 9—The Resurrection of a Son of God

(c) The Millennium, therefore, or 1,000 years of Christ's reign over this earth with a rod of iron, was to begin with a double resurrection:

1) That of Israel in earthly bodies to live in Palestine.

2) That of the Royal Family in Heavenly bodies to reign over this earth from the Heavenly Places. (Rev 20v4-6, Job 19v25-27, Isaiah 26v19, Ezek 37v1-14, 44v9-16, Dan 12v2, Phil 3v10-21, Luke 20v35, John 6v40, 1Cor 15v23-24, 1John 3v2)

(d) After the Millennium was over and the last revolt had failed, and after Heaven and earth had passed away, would come the final resurrection of all the dead of all the ages, and after that the Last Judgment, in order that those whose names were written in the Book of Life might enter into the eternity of Peace in the new earth, and those whose names were not found therein might enter into the torment of hell for the same everlasting period of the Ages of the Ages. (Rev 20v11-21, John 5v28-29.)

(e) This final resurrection of the dead and Last Judgment upon the Sea of Glass would be followed by, as it were, a glorious resurrection of the old Heaven and earth into the glory of the New Heaven, the New Jerusalem and the New Earth, in which would be fulfilled the promise of Rev 21v4-5.

Note on Resurrection

A study of 1Cor 15v35-50 brings out the following points:

That, whereas our present earthly bodies may entirely mislead our neighbours about the state of our souls, our resurrection bodies will correspond to our souls, and so will differ in glory.

That recognition, therefore, will be not solely of the body but more essentially of the personality, e.g., the distorted body of a hunchback will give way to the glorious form of a Son of God. Peter knew that he had been with Moses and Elijah, but he had not recognised their bodies! (Luke 9v33)

NB: Our Lord's resurrection body was for the purposes of recognition different from His ascended and glorified body, as shown in Rev 1v13-17.

Chapter VII: Eternal Judgement

God having created the Universe, is also responsible for its well-being. He is, therefore, the judge of all His creatures who possess a moral nature.

He has revealed that this present Creation will pass away and be replaced by a New Heaven and New Earth. There is also in the eternal State to be a Lake of Fire, which was not part of the original creation. (Gen 1v1, Isaiah 65v17, Matt 24v35, Rev 20v11-21v8)

While God, as Judge, is constantly passing judgments upon His creatures, e.g., at the Flood or Nineveh, yet these judgments are temporary and may be revised or revoked, as justice or mercy dictate. There are, however, before the eternal state begins two inexorable judgments which must be universally passed:

(a) The Judgment of whether a person is to exist eternally in the Kingdom of God or in the Lake of Fire.

(b) The Judgment of where in that vast Kingdom of the New Heaven and Earth each one whose name is in the Book of Life is to be placed; whether in Heaven or Earth, and in what position in either. These Judgments, once passed, are unalterable. (Gen 6v7, Jonah 1v2, Jer 18v7,10, Matt 11v21-24, Rev 20v11-15, Mark 16v16, Luke 19v11-27, Heb 12v17)

Originally Heaven was created for Angels and earth for men; but the passage of time and the intrusion of sin have brought about modifications in the original structure. The number of those who dwelt in Heaven and shared in its government has been greatly depleted by the rebellion of Satan and his Angels. God has revealed that it is not His intention to create more Angels to take their places; but, instead, to choose from amongst men those who might become His Sons by adoption, and hold a place higher than that ever offered to Angels, so that Jesus Christ would not be ashamed to call them brethren. (Rev 12v7-9, 21v7, Heb 2v5-18)

Every Christian, being begotten again by the Spirit of God, has this Heavenly calling by right of inheritance; it is his natural development from a babe in Christ to a full-grown Son of God. Yet it is an inheritance which has to be won, and may be forfeited by incompetence; for God cannot put responsibility and honour upon those who are manifestly unable to bear it. (Eph 1v5-11, 4v13, Rom 8v14-19, Phil 3v13-21, Heb 3v1)

The gift of God to His children is their eternal life, and the only qualification for this is faith in Christ, however slight; but God is leading many Sons to glory, if they will come His Way. Glory is something which cannot be given, it must be won. It is a faith, which has stood the trials of life victoriously, an overcoming faith, which will alone be found to praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. There is the possibility of being ashamed from Him at His coming because we have been disobedient or idle or lukewarm. (Heb 2v10, 12v17, 1Pet 1v7, 2Tim 4v6-8, James 1v12, Rev 3v16, 1John 2v28)

The headmaster of a school may give all the pupils a holiday, but he cannot give all the first prize, or, indeed, any prize at all. It is the essence of a prize that its winner has accomplished some feat which has marked him out from his brethren. He has written a better essay or run a faster race than the others, and so has gained a position of honour. The whole value of the prize is that it is the badge of achievement. Glory is that feeling of respect that rises in the minds of men when they hear of what you have done. Even Christ was moved to admiration of the believing centurion and the poor widow woman. (Matt 8v10, Luke 21v3-4)

So far as a Christian is concerned the first of these Judgments, that is, of Life or Death, is passed at his new birth; he then has eternal life, and nothing and nobody can deprive him of it: for God will not allow anything too powerful for him to come against him. So long, therefore, as he continues to believe in Christ he is justified by faith and a member of God's Kingdom. (John 5v24, 10v27-29, 1Cor 10v13, Rom 4v5, 5v1, 1Pet 1v5)

It is possible that he himself may throw away the gift that was his, and commit spiritual suicide. But this will need the most determined effort and continuous rebellion on his part, and be as unnatural as is physical suicide. There is, of course, nothing that can ever take away from man his freedom of choice; there is a backsliding which knows no repentance, a final shipwreck of faith. (James 5v20, 2Pet 2v20-22, Jude 12, 1Tim 1v19, 6v9, Heb 6v6, 10v26, 1John 5v16-17, Phil 3v18,19, 1Chron 10v13,14)

NB: There are two touchstones by which every theological dogma may be tested. The first, that God is Love (1John 4v16); the second, that man's will is free, though not necessarily his actions (Luke 13v34, Gal 5v17)

The Great Tribulation Overcomer

Rom 7 gives us a vivid picture of a man whose will is set upon righteousness, but whose actions are forced upon him by habitual sin in the flesh. The drunkard, the drug addict are obvious examples of this pitiful condition.

And, on the other hand, the old lag in the cell gives us an illustration of the exact opposite. Here we have a man whose will is all for evil, but whose actions are forced into a blameless mould of stone breaking or oakum picking, such as a saint might copy!

Men have always feared the responsibility which attaches to free will, and longed to believe that God can do something which will relieve us from the burden. Yet the truth remains that although God is Love and will secure us from all outside aggression or internal decay, yet even He is not master of men's wills but only of their actions. Were He so, all would be saved; for He is not willing that any should perish: but the decision of salvation or destruction is man's own decision; and his only eternal security lies in his eternal determination to obey God. It is man's spirit, not his soul, which is born again. His soul, adopted out of his earthly family and introduced into his heavenly family, may yet hanker after the old home and bring God to a dreadful decision. For God having saved a people out of Egypt, after destroyed them that believed not, and they knew God's breach of promise. It is unfortunately true that there are those who by their own choice and with determination have repeated their original transgression, and are therefore twice dead. (Heb 10v26) For the soul that once received a living spirit from the Almighty can also kill it, and again plunge into the darkness from which it once emerged. (2Pet 2v20-22, Jude v5-12, Num 14v34, Heb 3v12-4v2)

On the other hand, while the Christian is sure of Eternal Life, he is not sure of glory. The reward of the Christian is to be allowed to share with His Lord in the Eternal government of His Kingdom; in a word the faithful servant is, as always, rewarded by more work and higher responsibility!

The Judgment of Christians for position in the Kingdom will take place at the Lord's return before the Millennium. All who appear thereat are assured of life in the Kingdom; it is only their position in the Kingdom that is at stake. Full accounts are given of this Judgment that no one may have any misunderstanding in the matter. Verdicts will range from "Well done good and faithful servant" to "Thou wicked servant," from being entrusted with all that belongs to God, to being deprived of what is rightfully one's own, from joy in the Lord's Presence, to being bound hand and foot and cast out of it. Those Christians who have proved by their lives on earth that they are unfit to rule over it, will have to wait in darkness till they can be found a place upon the New Earth, where maybe some faithful servant of the Old Testament will find himself exalted to take his inheritance amongst the Brethren and to rule over him for his good. The Lord has clearly spoken of the weeping and gnashing of teeth amongst those of His children, who, too late, find that they have forfeited the blessing they despised, and must content themselves with second best for Eternity. (Cf. Ezek 44v10-14.)

It is madness to imagine that because we are Sons of God we shall automatically inherit the Government: to forget the "if" of Rom 8v17. We may be Sons who cause shame, who cannot be rightfully entrusted with even the slightest responsibility upon earth, whose lives cause shame to the Family, and are a stumbling block to the world. The greater the responsibility the higher the standard!

The Biblical illustration is the contrast between Abraham sharing God's secrets upon the mountain top, and Lot drinking himself drunk in a lonely cave; both saved, but worlds between them! (Gen 18v17, 19v30) When an Apostle runs his hardest, we may well determine to do our best! (1Cor 9v24-27, Phil 3v10-15) The rationale of this Judgment of the Sons of God by the Son of God is that the Government of the earth during the Millennium is to be in the hands of Christ and His Brethren, who will take the place of Satan and his Angels, who will have been cast out of their thrones in the heavenlies. It is necessary, therefore, for this Judgment to precede the setting up of the Millennial Kingdom. (Matt 25v14-30, Luke 12v31-48, 16v1-12, 19v11-27, Rom 8v17, 1Cor 3v10-15, 2Cor 5v9-10, Heb 2v3, 12v16,17,23, Rev 3v11, Prov 17v2, 29v21)

The Great White Throne

There remains, however, the final Judgment Throne of God at the close of the Millennium, at which will appear all the dead of all the ages, including Angels and demons as well as men. Here again, the first question to be decided is that of Life or Death. Will one be in the Kingdom or in the Lake of Fire? And therefore the Book of Life is opened. (Rev 20v11-15, Jude v6, 2Pet 2v4)

NB: The present course of events upon this earth is most deceptive to the natural mind. God in His mercy, though He condemns instantly every work of evil, does not immediately execute His sentence, but waits to see if His forbearance will lead the sinner to repentance. Unfortunately, so hard are the hearts of many sinners that this very forbearance only emboldens them in their wickedness, as was the case with Pharaoh, who was hardened by God's repeated forgiveness, till he lost all fear of God's justice. God's children are often perplexed when they see the wicked apparently unscathed, and themselves chastened! Calvary, however, has shown us in one glaring example God's real estimate of sin. The soul that sinneth it shall die, and Christ died therefore for the doomed. God's wrath is indeed mounting up steadily, till it shall be revealed at the Day of the Lord and the Great White Throne. (Psalm 73, Eccles 8v11, Isaiah 26v10, Rom 2v4-9, 9v17,18,22, Rev 6v16-17)

It has often been hastily assumed that all who appear at this Judgment are lost; but there is, of course, no scripture to support this, and a moment's reflection will show that it cannot possibly be so; for at this Judgment will appear those who have been born during the Millennium as well as those who have either rejected or never heard of God's salvation, and the great assembly of Angels and demons who have been waiting for the execution of sentence uttered long ago. It will, indeed, be a mixed company. The Book simply says, "And if any man was not found written in the Book of Life, he was cast into the Lake of Fire," and in Rev 21v8 it gives a description of the characters of such. (Matt 25v41, 2Pet 2v4, Jude 6)

It is a scene of unimaginable solemnity. Here upon the brink of eternity are gathered a vast concourse of beings to hear a verdict, which will carry with it their eternal fate. The Judgment, we are told, will be in the hands of the Royal Family, every member of which will have passed through the temptations of life and know the infirmities of human nature. At their head will be the Son of God, who took our nature upon Him that He might be qualified to perform this very duty. The Judgment will be in the hands of Him, who is not willing that any should perish. (1Cor 6v2-3, Dan 7v22, Rev 20v4, John 5v27)

Why then in face of this loving mercy of God, will there be any who throughout eternity will know no alleviation of their pain? Eternal punishment is not the retribution for the sins that men have committed in the past—it is neither vindictive nor remedial nor punitive. It is, however, the only safeguard against the sins which the finally unrepentant intend to go on committing for eternity if left at liberty. Eternal punishment is God's answer to eternal sin: and the responsibility for it lies, not with God, but with the soul that is set upon sin, scorns mercy, and would gladly destroy the happiness of others for his own base ends. (Acts 17v31, 1Tim 2v4, 2Pet 3v9, Mark 3v29 (R.V.))

The Lake of Fire is the second death: i.e., it is the second time a man loses his body. The first time was because God had taken away the Tree of Life after Adam's sin: the second time is because of his own sin. On both occasions it is torment; the first time temporary, the second time eternal. God cannot prevent a free will desiring to do evil, but He can and will prevent it doing it. This He will do by depriving them of their bodies, without which they can do nothing. The ruin and anguish of those in Hell is irremediable and eternal, and rests solely upon the truth that it is impossible to renew them to repentance, and so make them fit to live with others.

It is as if a father had given his son a penknife that with it he might be enabled to do all sorts of needful things, only to find that instead the boy is cutting things up just to suit himself, and spoiling other people's property. That boy could, if he refused to listen to admonition and warning and continued in his folly, force his father to take away the knife, lest others should be inconvenienced. A razor is a good thing for shaving; but when used for cutting throats it is always confiscated! The Lord pointed out that disembodiment was a ceaseless torment allowing of no rest; so that even a swine's body was better than none, allowing its tenants to do at least one more act of senseless destruction. (Rev 20v14, 21v8, Gen 3v22-24, Heb 6v6, 10v26, Dan 7v11, Luke 16v19-31, Matt 10v28, Luke 8v32,33, 11v24)

NB: It is perhaps worth pointing out here that the parable of Dives and Lazarus is a physical picture of the suffering or peace of the souls of the departed. Dives' body was not actually being burned: it was in the grave where it had been buried: nor was Lazarus actually reclining on Abraham's bosom. That was the ordinary Jewish description of the destiny of the believing dead, i.e., with faithful Abraham awaiting the resurrection in faith.

Hades was the place of departed souls not of dead bodies. In the same way the bodies of those destroyed by the Lord at His coming will lie in the Valley of Gehenna: their souls will be in Hades, just as our Lord's body was in the tomb while His soul was suffering the pains of death in Hades. (Isaiah 66v24, Luke 16v22, Acts 2v24-31, John 11v24)

The torment of Hell will not in any sense be vindictive; God will not needlessly afflict even the wicked, nor add to their pain any unnecessary suffering. The awful truth is that their endless pain will be absolutely unavoidable, and spring from the fact that never again will they be free to do anything: since all they desire to do is evil. They will spend eternity in fruitless remorse and hatred of God and each other and the whole creation; yet in the mercy of God not able to inflict physical torment even on each other. Their souls wrapped round in endless lying pride they will refuse to admit their own guilty folly and will instead throw the blame for their awful condition upon a long-suffering Judge, whose love and mercy they spurn and whose every act they treat with suspicion and hatred. To come to the place where you cannot even trust the Almighty, and see a trap in His every word, and throw a doubt upon His every promise, is the last darkness of despair, from which there is no deliverance.

It has been said that not only must justice be done, it must also appear to be done; lest there should be any possibility of doubt about the righteousness of it. There are always those who feel that surely punishment will bring repentance. God has lovingly safeguarded us against this by leaving Satan in prison for the Millennium and then allowing him to come out. We shall then see that he is at once at his old ways of life in hatred and destruction. Hell then is the painful duty, which the unrepentant force upon a long-suffering God. They are hardened, not softened, by forbearance, and His only choice is

either to abandon the righteous to the tender mercies of the wicked, or else to bring the wicked to a full stop. He has in His love for the righteous chosen the latter step. (Rev 20v7-9, 19v1-3, Rom 2v4-6, Eccles 8v11, Exodus 4v21)

It is often said that this end would be equally achieved by the annihilation of the wicked. In the first place, the language of Scripture will not allow of such an interpretation. It is torment, not just the smoke of it, which is everlasting. In the second place, the very severity of the penalty will doubtless frighten into the sanity of repentance countless numbers, who would cheerfully have had their fling at the expense of others, if there had been no retribution to be feared. The fear of the Lord may not be the last attitude of wisdom, but it is often the beginning. In the third place, there will likely be many who will be eternally safe because the smoke of Hell, continually ascending in their sight, will play its part in the steeling of their determination to obey God. For the saved will include not only those saved with glory, but also those who are scarcely saved, and only brought to repentance with the greatest difficulty. In the vast Kingdom of God will be vessels to honour, but also to dishonour; yet in the Kingdom. God will save into Eternal Life everyone who can by any manner of means be induced to turn from evil and do good.

Finally, and most important of all, it is the very fact that man is eternal that gives him his importance, and makes him different from the animals. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Let him think of himself as the mere creature of a day, and you prevent him from thinking highly of himself. The evolutionist who tells man that he is but the short-lived head of an animal creation must not be surprised if men live like animals. It is the very fact that man is eternal which gives him dignity, rescues him from the frustration of death, and allows him to live in hope and eternal purpose: the Christian is saved by hope, and in the light of eternity pulls himself together as one whose actions matter, and will have eternal consequences. Deprive man of eternity, and you have but a dying animal. (Rev 20v10, 14v10-11, Isaiah 66v24, 1Pet 4v18, 2Pet 3v9, Jude 23, 2Tim 2v20-21, John 15v22-25, Ezek 18v23)

NB1: It is essential to remember that all who will be in Hell will be there because they hate God without any cause. They would spoil the happiness of Eternity if they could, and they cannot be induced to repent and receive a free pardon and Eternal life. It will be the unreasonable hardness of their own heart, not of God's, which will be responsible for their fearful condition. Yet God will make use of them as an eternal warning to the righteous.

NB2: If it be objected that it had been better for God not to have created at all, with His foreknowledge that the result of so doing would be the creation of Hell as well as Heaven, the answer is:

- (a) That He is in no sense responsible for Hell; it is an unwanted addendum forced upon Him by the wicked,
- (b) That it would be most unfair to deprive the righteous of their happiness, just because some elected to play the fool and preferred misery to happiness, without a cause.

What amazing joy it will be to know that a happy eternity in a glorious place with a loving God and kindly companions is finally assured! No wonder that those who believe the promises of God are exhorted to shout upon their beds! True emotion is the inevitable effect upon the soul of facts. The greater the facts, the greater the emotion. No emotion can be too great in the face of the greatest of all facts, Eternal Life in the Kingdom of God.

The Justice of God

Finally God has laid down in His Book certain lines which He always follows in Judgment. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

- 1) Matt 11v21-24. God will take into account at that day not only what one did, but what one would have done under happier circumstances. Cp. Matt 10v15, 1Sam 30v21-25.
- 2) John 15:22-25. There is a real sense in which men have not sin until they see and hate God. It is the person who knows it all and yet falls away, who is utterly hopeless. Heb 6v4-8, 10v26-31, 2Peter 2v20-22.
- 3) Matt 10v41-42. A man will be credited with doing the thing with which he sympathised though he had no opportunity himself. It is the intents of the heart which count with God. Cp. Matt 20v6-7.
- 4) Matt 25v31-46. Love for and kindness to any Son of God, will be counted as love and kindness to the unknown Son of God. Cp. Matt 10v40, 18v5.
- 5) Rom 2v11. God is no respecter of persons. All will be treated with scrupulous fairness and generosity. There will be no one in Heaven or Earth through their own righteousness, but all solely through the forgiving mercy of God, who is rich in pity. Cp. James 2v1.
- 6) 1Cor 3v13. Quality, not quantity is God's criterion. Cp. Mark 12v41-44, Luke 16v10.

Chapter VIII: The Cross Of The Lord

The faith whereby the Old Testament saints were justified varied greatly in its content. They had to believe whatever revelation God had made to them. Noah believed the Flood was coming, Abram believed that he was to have a seed; Rahab believed that Jericho would be taken.

The faith whereby a Son of God is justified has however always the same object; it is faith in the death of Jesus as an atonement for sin, and in the resurrection of Jesus as an evidence of God's acceptance of His sacrifice.

This faith is capable of great expansion as the Christian baby grows to maturity. It may begin as a very personal blessing; it will grow to be an event of universal significance. (Rom 3v21-26, 4v23-5v11, 10v9) The central reason for Calvary was that the Law of God might be established in all its awful majesty. The whole success of the Creation depended upon the voluntary obedience of God's creatures to His Law, the Law of Love and Liberty. Anyone who broke the law of unselfishness, and wished to embark upon a life of self-pleasing, could at any time upset the whole loving plan. Therefore, because of the exceedingly dangerous nature of sin, that is, disobedience, God laid down the law that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," because it is too dangerous to be left at large. Indeed, the whole happiness of Eternity will rest upon the unceasing obedience of all in it. (Gen 2v17, Jer 31v30, Ezek 18v4)

The fearful nature of sin, therefore, and its awful consequences had to be burnt in upon every conscience. To do this and so ensure the prosperity of the Ages of the Ages God has taken two steps:

(a) He has allowed one sin to work itself out to its bitter end, so that all may see and understand the misery of a world in which evil is allowed. (Rom 5v12-21, Isaiah 14v12-13, Ezek 28v15, Gen 3v6)

(b) He has satisfied the righteous demands of His Law that the death of a sinner is the inevitable result of his sin by sacrificing, not sinners, but their sinless Creator, to establish the inexorability of His Law's decree. No one will enter the Kingdom who has not understood the horrible danger of sin, and made clear to the Almighty his intention never to commit it. By the Cross all hope of escaping the punishment of sin is taken away (no sinner can hope to get away with unrepentant sin). The Law is the custodian of the happiness of Society. Contempt of it brings its inevitable reward. To forgive the sinner without establishing the Majesty of the Law would encourage sin, and render justice impossible. (Isaiah 42v21, Psalm 138v2, Rom 3v21)

The Leprosy of Sin. Leviticus 13

The plague of sin is:

(a) That successful selfishness at the expense of others tempts them to play the same game, and so fills the earth with violence, and leads to the final triumph of the most unscrupulous, and the servitude of the righteous. (Gen 6v11, Rev 13v3-4)

(b) That the risks of living with those who will take advantage of one are so great as ultimately to force a man into a similar line of evil conduct for mere self preservation. The righteous make themselves the prey of the wicked, (Isaiah 59v15, James 5v6)

(c) That it provokes retaliation from those who are wronged and plants a root of bitterness whose fruit grows more and more bitter with the passage of time. The wheel of nature, when once it has started rolling, is not too easily stopped. Ishmael still despises Isaac, and Esau hates Jacob! (James 3v6)

(d) That when unchecked it advances from evil to evil, until at last there is no part of the soul which is not infected with a perfect selfishness, which knows no repentance and has no regrets, but finds its satisfaction in the torture and misery of others, and in a self-advancement which rises upon the slaughter of its rivals, and plunges its possessor into a ceaseless apprehension of retaliation from its victims. It is the same tree which bears Athaliah and Herod, Nero and Hitler! (Gen 6v5, Prov 4v14-17, Micah 7v1-6)

Meditation upon these awful truths must lead, however, to an ever-increasing understanding of the Love both of God the Father, who laid our sins upon His own Son; and of His Son who delighted to do the Father's will and set us free. This is not the legal but the personal side of Calvary, and reveals to us not simply the inflexible righteousness of God, but also His tender love for each one of His creatures. (John 3v16, Gal 2v20, Rom 5v8)

These two great truths, **(1)** that the wages of sin is death, **(2)** that God has out of love given His own Son to carry our sins in His own body on the tree, were in the mind of God before the Creation; and the revelation of them was given through the prophets of Israel.

Yet although they were plainly stated in the Old Testament, no one believed them or understood them till Jesus came. He believed, but He could not get even His Apostles to agree with Him till after His death and resurrection. They had no fear of punishment for sin; nor any desire that Jesus should die for their Sins. Indeed, they did what they could to prevent Him doing so. They were quarrelling about the positions they would hold in His Kingdom, when the King was realising that unless He died for them they would not be able even to enter that Kingdom. It was His post-resurrection ministry, which explained to them the victory of Calvary. Before that they refused to consider or discuss His death and resurrection; after that, this was the centre of their message, as it has been the centre of the family life ever since. (Rom 6v23, Rev 11v18, 1Pet 1v20, Isaiah 53v11, 1Cor 1v23, Luke 24v25,44,45, 9v45)

The world has always hated such truth; it seems to lay upon them an insupportable burden. Their thought is that free will carries with it liberty to do as they please; and not, as is the truth, liberty to keep the law of God. It has always been the dream of the world that in some way or other universal selfishness could lead to universal happiness; whereas the truth is that universal happiness is the fruit of universal obedience to the Law of Love.

They hated Jesus, therefore, who pointed out this truth, and laid upon man, not God, the responsibility for the world's prosperity. It is the work, however, of all the Sons of God to preach this simple but unwelcome truth, that the happiness of Heaven will depend upon man's obedience and not upon God's power. They, too, must take up daily their cross with all the explanation of it which God has given; that all men may clearly grasp that selfishness will bar them from Heaven and plunge them into Hell; that only Christ could avert from them the doom that is pronounced upon disobedience; that God loves them like His own soul, but that even He can do nothing for them except they turn from sin; that one sin in its outworking is bound to defile and wreck the peace and happiness of a whole society, whether in Heaven or upon earth.

So the study of the Foundation Truths has drawn to its close, leaving us safe in the everlasting arms of the Creator and Redeemer. Continued study will only serve to enlarge our love of God and give us the full assurance of understanding of His heart and mind.

Appendix II: The Gift of Tongues

This is spoken of in the New Testament as "new tongues," "other tongues," "divers kinds of tongues," and even as "the tongues of men and angels." Mark 16v17, Acts 2v4, 1Cor 12v10,28, 13v1. It is a precious gift from God.

1) The gift of tongues is certainly not gibberish

To say that speaking with tongues by a blood-washed, Spirit-filled Christian is "gibberish," or "of the Devil," is to come very close to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Nothing could be further from the truth than to call speaking with tongues, "gibberish," for those who have been able to understand the languages that Christians have spoken while speaking with tongues, have said that they are perfect. For example, a ten-year-old girl named Irene Piper was enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak to a Chinese man in his own language. He was told that he was to come to church and accept salvation. The Chinese man said that "her accent was perfect, and her forms of speech were so exact that ten years study would not give the average Occidental such knowledge of the language." This is confirmed by Acts 2v6,8, where it is said that the 120 disciples spoke in not only different languages but in different dialects. These believers were mainly illiterate people who knew only one dialect of one language, yet they were speaking in different languages and different dialects of the same language. We are told that the Medes and Elamites (Persians), spoke the same language but with different dialects. "Dialektos" occurs only in the book of Acts, Acts 1v19, 2v6,8, 21v40, 22v2, 26v14, the other word for language is "glossa," i.e. "tongue," and is used for the organ of the body known as the tongue, the tongues of fire, as well as a language. Mark 7v33,35, 16v17, Acts 2v3,4,11,26, 10v46, 19v6, 1Cor 12v10,28,30, 13v1,8, 14v2,4,5,6,9,13,14,18,19,22,23,26,27,39, Rev 7v9 etc.

"Glossolalia," speaking with tongues, is certainly not like the incoherent, unmeaning, broken ramblings of some wild false religions. It is the intelligent speaking of God's mysteries, i.e. God's hidden secrets and purposes. The disciples at Pentecost spoke fluently and powerfully of God's wonderful works, it was only those who did not understand the language who said that it was drunken gibberish, those who did understand it said it was perfect and inspiring language and were converted as a result. It was the hearers of tongues who were "beside themselves," amazed and "ecstatic," not the speakers in tongues, "existemi," Acts 2v7,12, 10v45; "ekstasis," Acts 3v10, Mark 5v42, 16v8, Luke 5v26, Acts 10v10, 11v5, 22v17. The person who is worshipping God in tongues will sometimes have real depths of feeling, but the Holy Spirit will never cause them to lose control of themselves, He is a perfect gentleman.

Sometimes even Christians who have been filled with the Spirit and spoken in tongues doubt their experience because they seem to repeat again and again certain sentences or phrases in their unknown tongue. These Christians should realise that in their native tongue they do not use an extensive vocabulary when they are praising the Lord. Many Christians just say, "Praise the Lord," "Wonderful Jesus," etc., they do not use a great many words to express their worship and praise.

Here is an extract from page 32 and 33 of W.F.P. Burton's book "Signs following:" This extract shows that on occasions the Holy Spirit may inspire us to speak only a few words, but that these words can reach the very highest levels of praise and express the very deepest love and devotion for God.

"In 1921 the Pastor of a meeting in Toronto, Canada, confided in me, "Brother Burton, there is something I do not understand in our assembly. When the meeting is warmed up into a real fervency of spirit a woman bursts out into an ejaculation. It never varies, and it seems to me like nonsense. She says in a kind of intonation 'Kalombooo Vidyee. Vidyeeeee Kalombo.' I don't like to stop her. What would you do about it?" I said, 'Oh, do let me hear it, brother. That is an expression used by our natives in the highest respect to their big chiefs.' On my return to Lubaland I was much struck by the monotonous regularity with which the village counsellors keep up an excited 'Kalombo Vidyee,' in reverence to their chiefs during sessions of the court, and one can well understand both what an ejaculation of loving worship it was on the woman's part and also how it might have puzzled her Pastor." End of quote.

This shows how careful we have to be in judging utterances in tongues that seem repetitive and sound very peculiar. Many languages sound like utter nonsense to those who do not understand them, indeed, some sound so primitive, that even the best and most intelligent linguist might doubt the genuineness of what is in reality a complicated, beautiful and meaningful language. Even the very greatest linguist knows but a fraction of the world's languages. "World Digest" informs us that there have existed at least 6,760 languages, and only 2,296 are still spoken. There are, then, 4,464 dead languages on earth, which one could speak in other tongues, besides the tongues of angels of which we are told nothing except that there are obviously many of them as Paul speaks of them in the plural in 1Cor 13v1. It is a fact that children of God have spoken by the Holy Spirit's inspiration, both modern and ancient languages, and linguists have understood them. However, we need to remember that God does not cast His pearls before swine; such manifestations like this are usually for the sincere and seeking heart. The gift of tongues was not given to enable people to preach in languages that they did not know, in Christ's time Greek was known throughout the Roman Empire, but it has always had a great effect as a sign to confirm the Gospel. The gift of tongues is certainly not gibberish; it is a lovely and precious manifestation of God the Holy Spirit.

2) The gift of tongues is certainly not a useless, unprofitable, and unimportant gift

Every gift of God is precious and good, and the gift of tongues is certainly no exception, it can bring great blessing to us.

a) Diligently used the gift of tongues transforms our ability to pray and worship

The gift of tongues enables the Christian to utter and fully express the otherwise indescribable longings of their soul and their unspeakable feelings of love for God. It gives the Christian the ability to pray to God and worship God as we ought, it frees us from the limits of human speech and knowledge, for the Holy Spirit Himself gives us the vocabulary and blessing to fully express the needs, feelings and desires of the soul. The gift of tongues enables the Christian to pray on a new level of prayer, for it is God praying through us to perform things exceeding more abundantly than we can ask or think.

b) Diligently used the gift of tongues transforms our appreciation of spiritual things

It brings a new realisation of the value and power of the Scriptures, and a new insight into their meaning; indeed, it is only the Spirit-filled Christian who can really understand much of the experience of the New Testament early Church. The diligent use of the gift of tongues enables us to have a deeper level of fellowship with Christ and His Father, and to see and worship them in a new and deeper way. Through the use of this gift God the Holy Spirit edifies the soul and spirit and makes spiritual things real to the soul. Which brings us to our next point.

c) Diligently used the gift of tongues transforms the character and blesses the whole personality

It is given to build faith and love in the soul and edify, bless and transform the character and life of the believer, as Paul said the person who speaks in tongues "edifies himself." 1Cor 14v14. **It has the same effect in the prayer life and devotional life that prophecy has in the church.** In blessing the soul and spirit it can have the most beneficial effect on the body, it can throw off conscious and subconscious worries, and can relax and refresh a tired body and mind as well as bless the soul. Isaiah 28v11,12 with 1Cor 14v21 and Rom 8v11. The gift of tongues can defend us from spiritual foes and give us the victory over them, for through this gift the Holy Spirit Himself comes to our aid and ministers to our spiritual needs and makes the soul strong, i.e. edifies the soul.

d) Diligently and properly used it can transform a Christian meeting

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 showers of blessing.

So we can clearly see that God intended the gift of tongues to be an immense aid to the devotional life and prayer life,

and it is also very profitable in the church when it is correctly used. This explains why Paul used the gift of tongues more than any of the Corinthians. 1Cor 14v18. We will consider the value and use of the gift of tongues at greater length later; this will involve some repetition, but it will serve to impress upon our minds, the great blessing and benefits that the Holy Spirit can bestow upon us through the use of His precious gift.

3) The apostle Paul certainly did not reject, despise, or belittle the gift of tongues, and neither should we

The apostle Paul spoke in tongues more than any of the Corinthians, he obviously looked upon it as absolutely indispensable and necessary for his spiritual welfare. 1Cor 14v18. Paul criticises the Corinthians selfish and noisy misuse of tongues in their public meetings, not the gift of tongues, and he instructs them to use the gift in the correct way. Paul certainly does not say in 1Cor 13v1, that the gift of tongues is unprofitable, he says that the selfish and noisy use of the gift of tongues in public does not profit the church. "The more excellent way" that 1Cor 12v31 tells us to walk in, is not the way of love severed from, or separate and distinct from all the other gifts, graces, attributes and talents; it is love as the motivating force and guiding principal of all these lovely and desirable things. It is certainly not, as some would have us to think, love in opposition to the gifts, or love without the gifts. It is the gifts of the Holy Spirit being sought and used out of the love of God and others.

It is very foolish to say, "You can seek the gifts, but I am going to seek for love." Those who seek for love from the God of love will also seek HIS gifts. The fact that a Christian lacks spiritual gifts does not mean that they possess love, indeed it may mean the very opposite, for it is impossible to follow after love and despise or criticise our heavenly Father's spiritual gifts. If we really desire and follow after love, we shall desire, follow after, and encourage spiritual gifts. We are not glorifying God by extolling love at the expense of the gifts that He has given. Paul does not say in 1Cor 13 that the gifts are "nothing" without love, for they are given by the God of love and are wonderful, it is the possessor that is "nothing." 1Cor 13v1-3. Spiritual gifts manifested in love profit both the recipient of the gift and others who are ministered to. It must be remembered that Paul said that without love, not only spiritual gifts, but also knowledge of sacred things, gifts to the needy, and even martyrdom for Christ's sake, are profitless to us without love. **Though spiritual gifts lose some of their value without love, love is helpless without them. Love needs God's power to meet the needs of the broken in heart, the sick in body and the oppressed, and in the ministry of Jesus we see the lovely co-ordination of divine love and divine power meeting the needs of suffering humanity.**

Paul does not say that the gift of tongues and other spiritual gifts are of little consequence because they are only temporary. In Heb 6v5 the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit are spoken of as "the powers of the age to come," so we can see that the gifts of the Spirit are a temporary and partial use of the powers of the eternal kingdom. The gifts of the Holy Spirit do not cease in the sense that there will never again be any miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit; the temporary manifestations of the Holy Spirit and the partial manifestations and revelations of God are swallowed up in the continuous and eternal enjoyment of the supernatural power and blessing of God. The part is swallowed up in the whole. The same way our present knowledge will come to nought, or vanish away, in the sense that our limited knowledge will be swallowed up in the infinite knowledge of God. Paul is telling us that the temporary and occasional manifestations of divine power through the gifts will be swallowed up in the continual, permanent and eternal manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Paul emphasises the need for gifts as well as love until the Lord Jesus comes and the kingdom of God is set upon earth. The temporary gifts help to produce eternal love and when they give way to the eternal and permanent manifestations of divine love power and wisdom. The gift of tongues is important because Paul says that it is given to produce love and faith in the soul, it is given to edify the believer, it is only like "roaring brass and clashing cymbal" when it is used in a selfish way by an unconsecrated and loveless Christian.

When Paul speaks in 1Cor 12v31 of prophecy and the other gifts as being "greater gifts" than the gift of tongues, he is speaking in the context of public meetings of Christians. For **Paul makes it quite clear that the greatest gift in the devotional life of the believer is the gift of tongues. The diligent, devotional and loving use of the gift of tongues in the secret place will result in other gifts being manifested in public.** 1Cor 14v2,4,18 with 2Cor 12v12. Paul spoke more in tongues than any of the verbose Corinthians so that he might edify his fellow-Christians in public; this was one of the secrets of Paul's spiritual power and godly character. From his own experience Paul tells us that the gift of tongues will build love, faith and spiritual strength in the possessor of the gift, if it is used diligently and devotionally. Indeed, **Paul states that it is the one gift whose primary aim is the spiritual well being of the possessor.** A Christian cannot manifest the other gifts of the Spirit when he desires, and when they are manifested they are nearly always for the benefit of others, but he can speak in tongues when he desires and be spiritually edified as a result. Paul certainly did not disparage or belittle the gift of tongues; he used it very diligently and was greatly edified and spiritually blessed as a result.

It is a great tragedy that many Christians do not appreciate their heavenly Father's provision for them in His gift of speaking with tongues, indeed, it is a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to many Christians. Here are some of the reasons why they do not want to speak in tongues.

a) Some Christians are ignorant of the great blessing that this gift can bring

They say, "What is the good of speaking with tongues? It is the least of the gifts." they feel that it is of no real benefit. This attitude shows that a person is ignorant of the Scriptures upon the subject, for the great benefits of this gift are shown in the New Testament. However, even if a Christian does not know the benefits of this gift as revealed in the Scriptures, they should not question the wisdom of God in giving this gift. They should say, "My heavenly Father has given this gift, so there must be some very good reason for it and some very profitable results of its manifestation, for God only gives good and perfect gifts." James 1v17. **The gift of tongues may be the least important gift as regards to public ministry, but it is the greatest gift in relation to the devotional life and prayer life, which is the source of an anointed public ministry,** so we can see that there is certainly nothing little about the gift of tongues.

b) Some Christians love the praise of men more than the praise of God: John 12v42,43

Some Christians count the cost of losing friends who reject the Pentecostal experience, and so they also reject the lovely gift of tongues. Two young men who had dictated to the Lord, "We want the baptism in the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues, were asked why they prayed in this manner, they replied that it was because speaking in tongues was unpopular. It is a sad thing that many more Christians are choosing to please men rather than God by criticising, avoiding and condemning the gift of tongues given by their Saviour and heavenly Father. Acts 2v4,33.

c) Some Christians have a fear of the supernatural

Some Christians are frightened by the operation of spiritual forces, and they cannot trust God to give them "good gifts," to preserve them from dangers in the spiritual realm, so they prefer to stop in the wilderness instead of conquering their spiritual Canaan. The Lord Jesus stated that this attitude is due to a lack of faith in our heavenly Father's love and power. Matt 7v7-11, Luke 11v9-13. Comp. Heb 3 and 4. Paul certainly never belittled speaking with tongues, and neither should we, he said that the gift of tongues, like any other gift, should be correctly used by Christians, and this brings us to our next point.

4) The gift of tongues should certainly not be misused

Paul tells us that we should take special notice of the following.

a) We should not monopolise church meetings with speaking in tongues

The aim in the church should be public and not private edification; therefore, we should curtail noisy or excessive speaking in tongues and seek God for a prophecy. 1Cor 14v5,18,19. We can use the gift of tongues in the church, but Paul says that we should usually speak quietly to ourselves and God. A background murmur of praise or speaking in tongues is quite all right as long as it does not hinder others praying or prophesying. 1Cor 14v40. 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. A Scriptural order will result in a greater measure of blessing on the church.

b) We should exercise special restraint when the unconverted or unlearned are present

When the unconverted or people who are unlearned in spiritual gifts come into a Pentecostal meeting, the Pentecostal believers must act wisely and restrain themselves from any loud outbursts in tongues, otherwise the visitor will say that everybody is mad. 1Cor 14v23.

If there is to be any public manifestation of the gift of tongues in such circumstances it must be by tongues and interpretation, however, Paul makes it quite clear in 1Cor 14v24,25, that prophecy is by far the best gift to manifest under such circumstances. The noisy use of the gift of tongues is particularly wrong when an outsider is in a meeting, and it will invariably produce consternation and criticism whereas, the use of the gift of prophecy may well result in the conviction and conversion of the "outsider." The gift of tongues is only a sign to the unbeliever when he can understand the language spoken in tongues.

c) We should set a definite limit to the number of tongues for interpretation

Utterances in a tongue in the church that are for interpretation should be limited to three utterances, and if there is no interpreter in the church there must be no public utterances, the person must speak quietly to themselves and to God. 1Cor 14v27,28. Only one person should interpret each utterance even though several might be able to do so. It also definitely seems from 1Cor 14v16, "everyone hath a tongue," that Paul said that one person should only give one tongue; it is certainly a good thing to share the ministry of spiritual gifts. We should not speak an utterance for interpretation at all unless the Holy Spirit moves us in a very definite way, those who do insist on speaking without the Holy Spirit's direction, will find that there is very limited blessing on it.

Paul had several reasons for limiting tongues for interpretation to three. Paul did not want the Corinthians to have an excessive emphasis upon utterances in tongues; he desired them to have a correct and sensible balance, and to seek after prophecy and the other gifts. Paul also knew that three tongues for interpretation was as much as the Christians could remember, weigh and profit from. It is certainly a very sensible limitation, and if we observe this and the other limitations that Paul lays down, we will be preserved from fanaticism, selfishness and disorder, and we will enjoy a profitable manifestation of speaking with tongues.

5) We must not confuse devotional tongues with tongues given for a ministry to the Church

It is a proven fact that only a small percentage of Christians, who speak with tongues, have a ministry in the church of "divers kinds of tongues." 1Cor 12v10. Only a small percentage of Christians who speak in tongues, speak out a tongue that is interpreted in the church. This is what Paul is speaking about in 1Cor 12v30, when he asks, "Do all speak with tongues?" The failure to distinguish between tongues that are for private edification, and tongues that are interpreted as a ministry to the church, has caused some critics of the Pentecostal experience to seize upon 1Cor 12v30, as an excuse for not speaking with tongues. However, Paul in 1Cor 12v27-31 is speaking of ministries that God has set in the church to build up the church, people with God-given gifts for public ministry, and the ministry of speaking tongues for interpretation is mentioned amongst them. There are Christians who have been given outstanding ministries of speaking with tongues, Christians whose utterances in tongues are of such great beauty and carry such a divine benediction that one feels that they are upon holy ground, even before there is any interpretation. The gift of tongues that is interpreted and ministers to the needs of the church is an enlargement of the ability to speak in a tongue, or tongues, that a Christian receives when they receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. However, all are not given this ministry, some quite properly, only use their tongue for private prayer and devotion, while others have in addition to this ministry for the church.

Definition: The gift of tongues is the supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to speak in a tongue that is unknown to the speaker. The primary purpose of this gift is devotional; it is intended to be a divine aid to the prayer life. For though this gift can be used by God to speak to people in their own language, and when interpreted it can speak to the church; the person who speaks in an unknown tongue almost always, "Speaks not to men, but to God; for no man understands him." 1Cor 14v2.

The Value and Use of the Gift of Tongues

Let us now consider the great blessing that come through the correct manifestation of this gift of the Holy Spirit, these will clearly show why every Christian should desire to speak in tongues, and why God desires every Christian to speak with tongues.

1) Speaking with tongues brings into play the highest faculty of the Christian, the spirit

Christ said that we must worship God with our spirit if we are to worship Him acceptably, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." John 4v23,24. The most elaborate and highly organised worship is only a dead form if the spiritual worship that Christ spoke of is missing. However, by the simple act of speaking with tongues we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to worship God on the very highest level, it is truly acceptable worship if we let love for God and others direct our lives. When the Holy Spirit enables us by this gift to magnify and bless God and to give God the love and worship of our hearts, He enables us to do the greatest thing that the Christian can do, for worship of God is the greatest act of the creature. Acts 10v46, Matt 22v35-40, Mark 12v28-34. The use of the gift of tongues lifts the Christian into a new realm of worship; it enables us to worship God to the limit of our capacity. Eph 4v18, Rom 8v26,27. We can also pray with our spirit, "If I pray in an unknown tongue my spirit prays." 1Cor 14v14. We can sing with the spirit, "I will sing with the spirit." 1Cor 14v16. So that we can see that the gift of tongues enables us to reach the highest levels of worship in spirit and truth, the very thing that Jesus said God desires. John 4v23,24. Spirit and truth worship is the most important act of the Christian life. How then, can some despise the gift of tongues and call it "The least of the gifts?"

2) The gift of tongues brings into the personal prayer life the ability of the Holy Spirit

When you speak in tongues you are not limited by your own ability, God the Holy Spirit takes our needs, prayer, praise and desires, and the needs of other people and brings them to the Father. When we pray in tongues we can pray for deep needs that we do not know, and the burdens that would be too big for us and would shatter or overwhelm us if we knew them, we can bring them to God and have complete assurance of victory through the Holy Spirit's aid.

The gift of tongues is as important in the personal prayer life as prophecy is in the church. In the secret place the gift of tongues is the most important gift for personal deification, and the youngest convert and most mature Christian can build themselves up in their most holy faith by the use of this lovely gift. Jude v20,21, 1Cor 14v4,18. A diligent use of the gift of tongues in the private prayer life will result in a very blessed and fluent use of this gift. On occasions a completely new language will be given by the Holy Spirit, which possesses all the phonetics and rhythm of a perfect and

complete language. However, whether the Holy Spirit gives us many or few words to express our praise or prayer, the exercises of the gift of tongues will bring great blessing and mighty power in prayer. When we use the gift of tongues our devotional life, we pray or praise as the Holy Spirit directs and in the way that He thinks best. We always pray for the right things in tongues, because we pray as the Holy Spirit directs, whereas, in our own tongue we can pray selfishly, ignorantly, incorrectly, and even with unsanctified ambition and denominational pride. When a Christian prays in tongues, it is prayer and worship on the very highest level. **The balanced prayer-life demands praying and singing in tongues, as well as prayer and singing in one's own language.** 1Cor 14v15.

In 1Cor 13v1, Paul implies that the Holy Spirit may cause us to speak in the tongues of angels. If an angelic tongue can express the praise of a great angelic being living in the eternal and uncreated glory and splendour of God's majestic presence, it can surely express the praise of the redeemed children of God living in this dark and sinful world. How wonderful it is to be freed from the limits of our own small vocabulary and limited eloquence, into the excellence and eloquence of earthly and even heavenly languages by the aid of the Holy Spirit. How wonderful to speak our praise on such a high plane. A gift that is of such importance in the prayer-life of the Christian should not be disparaged or termed little, least, or unimportant; such talk is a slight upon God, who is the giver of this good gift.

3 Speaking in tongues brings into operation the other gifts of the Spirit

Prayer and praise 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 greater a person's ministry is, the more they need to speak in other tongues.** One well known evangelist found that miracles were ceasing in his services because he had been neglecting speaking in tongues. Another well-known evangelist tells us that he does not expect much to happen unless he prays for several hours in tongues before he goes to the services. **The Holy Spirit's ministrations through this gift in the secret place of prayer will result in a blessing upon one's public ministry.** Matt 6v5,6 with 1Cor 14v4,18.

4) Speaking with tongues makes the Lord Jesus and God our Father very real to us

Those who use this gift of tongues diligently in the secret place can testify that speaking with tongues really brings one close to our heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus, and it really deepens our love for them. What a precious gift this is! This alone would be a more than sufficient reason for desiring this gift. John 16v13-15. A gift that makes God the Father and God the Son more real and precious to the Christian should never be disparaged or belittled.

5) Speaking with tongues edifies the church when it is interpreted: 1Cor 14v5

An anointed message in tongues can be a really wonderful blessing, and the interpretation can bring great comfort, solace and needful instruction. God has set this gift in the church as a valuable means of public as well as private edification.

6) The gift of tongues nourishes the spirit with divine truth

Some people have said that the gift of tongues is the least of the gifts, or that it was "infant prattling" and not for mature Christians. However, the apostle Paul 24 years after his conversion was speaking in tongues more than the verbose Christians at Corinth and he was certainly not immature. 1Cor 14v18. Paul tells us that when we speak in tongues we speak "mysteries," i.e. the hidden counsels and secrets of God, which were once hidden, but are now revealed to the children of God. Matt 13v11, Luke 8v10, Rom 11v25, 16v25, 1Cor 2v1,7, 4v1, 14v2, 15v51, Eph 1v9, 3v3,4,9, 5v32, 6v19, Col 1v26,27, 4v3, 2Thess 2v7, 1Tim 3v9, Rev 10v7, Psalm 25v14. When we speak in tongues, we speak hidden and exalted spiritual truths; this is an exalted sphere of utterance. The hearers at Pentecost called these "mysteries," "The wonderful works of God;" they looked upon the utterances of the disciples as anything but "infant prattling," those who understood the languages were so awed and moved by the sublime words that they heard, that they became Christians. In 1Cor 13v11,12, Paul speaks of our present limited knowledge of the future heavenly "mysteries" as "infant prattling," but he never refers to speaking in tongues in this way.

Our minds are limited in their ability to absorb and appreciate heavenly realities, our spirits are not limited in this way. Speaking in tongues enables our spirits to appreciate and feed on spiritual realities and Divine mysteries, and our spirits grow through the spiritual truths and blessings that come through speaking with tongues. This by-passes and rests the mind, so that even when we are too tired to think upon truth with our minds, our spirits and souls are nourished by the use of this gift. Isaiah 28v11,12, 1Cor 14v21. However, we cannot grow in God if we neglect the Scripture, its truth feeds our minds; so we should. "As new-born babes, for the pure milk that is for the mind eagerly crave, that thereby ye may grow unto salvation." 1Pet 2v2. Rotherham.

We will now give two instances where people have actually heard Christians speaking of the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" as they spoke in other tongues.

H. Horton writes on page 160 of his book, "The Gifts of the Spirit," what a missionary in the Congo heard when he

was present at the baptism in the Spirit of a young coloured man. The missionary was amazed to hear the young man speaking in perfect English and repeating Old Testament instances of creation and history. The young man did not know a word of English and what is more, nothing of the accounts of Scripture that he was repeating. The missionary left the hut to search for his wife so that she could witness this remarkable manifestation of the Spirit. When he returned with his wife the young man was still speaking in English, and was speaking of the New Testament revelation concerning the second coming of Christ.

W.F.P. Burton gives an account of another inspiring incident that occurred at Mwanza in the Congo, on page 30 and 31 of "Signs following." When the churches were getting spiritually cold it was their practice to gather the believers together for several days of prayer, ministry of the Word and waiting upon God. During one such occasion Mr. Burton was keeping "a quiet eye" on the meeting to make sure that there was no "undue excitement or extravagance," when he was struck by the earnest expression of a young man named Ziba, who was obviously being deeply affected by the real power of the Holy Spirit which was moving upon the men gathered there. Mr. Burton quietly moved around to where the young man sat and was surprised and moved to hear Ziba speaking in absolutely perfect English of Christ's second coming to earth to reign and the glories of His millennial kingdom. Ziba was a simple village lad without any knowledge of the English language, but here he was speaking in perfect English without any ungrammatical expressions or any trace of foreign accent, and what he said was absolutely true to the Scriptures.

So we can see that when the Holy Spirit enables a Christian to speak in tongues it nourishes their spirit with divine truths and builds them up spiritually. It is foolish and wrong to forbid Christians to speak with other tongues, for this is a good and lovely gift of God the Holy Spirit, and God ordained that we should have this gift and use it for our spiritual benefit.

7) Speaking with tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Spirit

At the outpourings of the Spirit mentioned in Acts 2v4, 10v45,46, 11v17 and 19v6, when the Christians received the baptism of the Spirit, they spoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. **They received one common evidence that they had been baptised in the Spirit, speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.** With the exception of the outpouring at Ephesus, we do not read of any other manifestations of the gifts, and there they prophesied after speaking with tongues.

Aaron Linford writes on the outpouring of the Spirit at Ephesus on page 55 of his book, "The Baptism in the Holy Spirit." "Again the construction of the Greek (in Acts 19v6.) determines the fact that they all spoke in tongues. The expression is 'elaloun te glossais kai epropheteuon.' When 'te' is followed by 'kai' it may be rendered 'both,' or 'not only... but also.' Closest union is expressed by 'te kai.' We could translate thus: 'The Holy Spirit came at once upon them, and they began not only to speak with tongues but also to prophesy.'.... sliding joyously and naturally from inspired language they did not know to inspired language they did know- but speaking by the same Spirit." End of quote.

From humble housewives to mighty apostles the initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit was speaking with tongues. At the baptism in the Spirit of these believers the Holy Spirit did not give various gifts as the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit He gave the gift of tongues to all. If the Holy Spirit had decreed that the manifestation of any Spiritual gift indicated that a Christian was baptised in the Spirit, then He would certainly have manifested them all on the day of Pentecost, but tongues was the only initial evidence of the Spirit's baptism at Pentecost. When Paul speaks in 1Cor 12v11 of the gifts being given "severally as He will," he is referring to the manifestations of the Spirit in a church meeting or to the other activities of the church. He is not speaking of the baptism in the Spirit, for at Pentecost, the house of Cornelius, and Ephesus, the gift that was given to all was the gift of tongues. In the other two cases in the Acts where it is stated that Christians received the baptism in the Spirit, even non-Pentecostal commentators agree that what Simon saw in Acts 8v18, was the Samaritan Christians speaking in tongues, and we know that Paul spoke in tongues from 1Cor 14v18, Acts 8v14-20, 9v17.

To those who question that tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit, we would ask, "What other evidence can you supply from the Scriptures that will prove that a person is baptised in the Spirit?" All the other gifts, except the gift of interpretation of tongues, were used by the Old Testament prophets and the disciples of Christ before Pentecost. If a great ministry or many conversions were to be used as a claim for the possession of the baptism of the Spirit, John the Baptist and the apostles could have claimed that they were baptised in the Spirit before Pentecost, however, John 7v39 assures us that this was not so. The Holy Spirit was **WITH** them but **not IN** them with His permanently abiding presence, they had not received the baptism of the Spirit, as the Lord Jesus states in John 14v16,17.

The Holy Spirit has even given revelations to the unconverted, e.g. Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and Cornelius. Cornelius received words of wisdom and knowledge, and a discerning of spirits, before he was converted or baptised in the Spirit. Peter did not say that the household of Cornelius had received the Spirit because they were filled with joy, or were living sanctified lives, desirable as these are; Peter said that they were unmistakably filled with the Spirit because they had spoken in tongues like the 120 on the day of Pentecost. Acts 10v1-6,43-48, 11v17,18. Joy, peace, sanctification, or love for the brethren cannot be looked upon as a claim for being filled with the Spirit; these are a result of abiding in Christ

and being led of the Spirit.

The baptism of the Spirit is a conscious experience and should be an overwhelming experience; to be immersed in the mighty power of God the Holy Spirit is just as real an experience and spiritually more uplifting than being baptised in water. The book of Acts shows us that meeting and being baptised with the gracious and mighty Holy Spirit is a great and overwhelming experience. Some Christians think that they have received the baptism of the Spirit when they have received a temporary anointing of the Holy Spirit. However, the Old Testament saints had this experience, and the apostles too, before the baptism of the Holy Spirit was given. Ezek 2v2, 3v24, Judges 14v6, 15v14, Numb 11v25, Luke 1v67, 2v27, 2Pet 1v21 with John 7v37-39. The gift of speaking with tongues is the evidence that we have received the New Testament experience of the baptism of the Spirit. Speaking with tongues gives the Christian undeniable and unmistakable evidence that they are filled with the Holy Spirit, and it also enables them to express the "unutterable gushings" of praise, and worship and adoration that fill the soul when a Christian receives the mighty baptism in the Holy Spirit. The other spiritual gifts and graces do not certify that a Christian has received a Pentecostal experience of the baptism in the Spirit, the only certain Scriptural proof of a Pentecostal gift of tongues.

We do not always need a word of wisdom or a gift of healing, or some of the other gifts, however, we always need to build up ourselves in our most holy faith, and this is why after the baptism in the Spirit, God enables us to manifest this gift whenever we desire to do so. The apostolic band did not quibble about the gifts of tongues, or God's choice of it as the initial evidence of the baptism of the Spirit, they accepted it and rejoiced in the use of it, and all Christians should do the same. The only safe pattern of Christian experience is that written in the New Testament, the good and best can lead us far astray, the Word of God alone can lead us safely on.

Some Christians teach that the Christian receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit at conversion; however, this can be shown to be incorrect by many passages of the New Testament Scriptures. The apostles were converted before Pentecost, their names were written in heaven, Luke 10v20; they were "clean," John 15v3; they were Christ's flock and Christ's brethren, Luke 12v32, John 20v17; they belonged to God, John 17v6,9,23, but it was after Calvary that these disciples received the baptism in the Spirit that had been promised to them. Acts 1v5-8. Pentecost was not the time when the apostles were saved, they were rejoicing in their salvation before Pentecost. Luke 24v52,53. They received Christ and believed in His name and so they were saved, John 1v12, even though it was not until the resurrection that they understood the atoning work of the Lord Jesus. Luke 24v44-49.

Paul was saved when he met the Lord Jesus on the Damascus road, he owned the Lordship of Christ, he said, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" Acts 9v6. Ananias was able to call him "Brother Saul," and he was sent that Paul might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit; this was three days after Paul's conversion. Acts 9v9,17. At Samaria the people accepted Philip's message of salvation and became joyful believers; it was several, or many days later that Peter and John came to Samaria to lay hands on the converts so that they might receive the baptism in the Spirit. Acts 8v5-18.

Even if, as some say, the "disciples" at Ephesus in Acts 19v1-6, were disciples of John Baptist, who became Christians when Paul spoke to them, (a thing that I do not myself believe,) it still follows that they were baptised in the Holy Spirit some time after their conversion. For it would take some time to find a suitable place where they could baptise the disciples, and some time must have elapsed between this and the baptism in the Spirit, even if it were only a matter of minutes or hours. Their baptism in the Spirit occurred, therefore, some time after their conversion, when the apostle Paul laid hands upon them. The apostle Peter tells us in Acts 2v38,39, that as a general rule, the baptism in the Spirit takes place after repentance and faith in Christ. The exceptions to this rule are found in Acts 10v44-48, and possibly Acts 9v18.

We see in John 1v29,33, that the experience of salvation is looked upon as a quite distinct experience from the baptism of the Holy Spirit, a fact confirmed by Eph 1v13, where it states that "after ye had believed (in Christ,) ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." This promise of the Spirit was not the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, which all Christians enjoy before the baptism in the Spirit as a result of salvation and the new birth; it was the promise of the baptism of the Spirit, the promise of the Father, the endowment of power from on high. Luke 24v49. The baptism in the Spirit can occur a few seconds after conversion, as at the house of Cornelius, or many years after conversion, as was probably the case of the Ephesian believers of Acts 19v1-6. There are thousands, indeed, millions of Christians today who have proved the truth of the Scriptures, that after conversion a Christian can experience the mighty baptism of the Holy Spirit. Paul desired every one of the Corinthians to experience their personal Pentecost and speak with other tongues. 1Cor 14v5. This must have been the will of God or Paul would not have dared to say such a thing. Paul was not content until Christians had received their personal Pentecost and spoken with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. It is very sad that many Christians are as ignorant today of their Pentecostal heritage as the Ephesian believers of Acts 19v1-6, they do not know Christ as the baptiser in the Holy Spirit. John 1v33, Acts 2v32,33. However, those of us who are filled with the Holy Spirit can rejoice in this precious experience and rejoice in the gift of tongues, which is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit.

8) Speaking with tongues can be a powerful sign to people when they understand the language

Though this is not the normal use of the gift, 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. It can convict and convert the sinner, and be a great encouragement to the believer. 1Cor 14v22, Acts 2v4-12, Mark 16v17-20. The gift of tongues is not intended to replace the preaching of the Gospel however, on rare occasions God does use the gift of tongues to confirm the Gospel message by speaking in a language that the listener understands. This sign is intended to prepare the listeners for the preaching of the Gospel. The disciples at Pentecost spoke in tongues that were unknown to them, but many listeners recognised the languages and were captivated and amazed at hearing the rapturous praise of God and His wonderful works in their own language. The listeners at Pentecost knew that these disciples did not know their language, and so when Peter explained what had happened they were instantly willing to accept the Gospel Peter preached. The tongues gained the attention of the people and prepared them for the preaching of Peter. We will now give some well-documented modern instances where the Lord has used the gift of tongues as a sign to convert the unbeliever and encourage the believer.

W.F.P. Burton gives the following testimony:

"We used to hold gospel services beside Lytham lifeboat house on Sunday evenings. One Sunday when a big crowd was listening to the preaching, the power of God fell on a Mrs. Whiteside, and she began to speak in a strange language. This dear sister would certainly not mind my stating that under ordinary circumstances she was far from grammatical, even in her own language, and she never learned any other. As she spoke I found that I could understand all that she was saying. A solemn silence fell on the crowd as Mrs. Whiteside spoke in tongues, and I gave the interpretation in English. As soon as we had finished a big, middle-aged man stepped into the ring of listeners and, falling on his knees cried to God to save his soul. He had been a prominent tailor in Lytham, with a big business, but had lost practically everything through his craving for liquor. He was more often inebriated than sober, but he was as sober as a judge and declared that every word of that message in tongues and interpretation went straight to his heart.

Now it happened that a young Japanese man, who was studying shipbuilding in Lytham shipbuilding yard, had stood listening among the crowd outside the lifeboat house. He went home and asked his landlady, 'Who are those people who preach and sing on Lytham beach?' She replied, 'They are a lot of fanatical, religious enthusiasts. Some say that they are religion mad,' he remarked, 'but I heard a most remarkable thing. One spoke in perfect Japanese, while another gave the exact equivalent in English.'

There one had both the tongue and the interpretation corroborated, while the result, in a soul won for the Lord Jesus, was ample evidence that the thing was from God." End of quote.

Another account of this same incident is given in Mr. Burton's book "Signs following," on pages 28 and 29:

The writer recommends all readers of this book to obtain this excellent booklet. This booklet gives the additional information that Mrs. Whitehouse spoke in tongues about the death of Christ on the Cross for us. Mr. Burton goes on to tell on page 29 and 30 of his book, of a highly respected Methodist minister who heard Pentecostal Christians speaking in praise and adoration to God in seven languages which he knew, they were speaking about the death, resurrection and second coming of Christ, and extolling Christ's blood and His risen power. This so moved the minister that on his way home on the train he longed for the same experience, he through his pipe and tobacco out of the train window, he earnestly sought and received the baptism in the Spirit with speaking with tongues before the train reached his station.

We can clearly see that there are many reasons why every Christian should desire to speak with other tongues as the Holy Spirit gives them utterance, the gift of tongues is one of God's good, valuable and perfect gifts. God has given the gift of tongues to His Church because He considers it to be absolutely indispensable and necessary for the spiritual welfare of His Church. God does not give any gifts that are mean or paltry, they are all priceless, magnificent, good, beautiful and precious, and we should bow the knee at His wisdom, love and authority. Who are we to criticise the "good and perfect" gifts that our heavenly Father has given to us? He is the Lord, let us recognise the value and importance of what He has given. How dare we criticise His gifts, or neglect to seek them, when He has commanded us not only to pursue after love, but earnestly seek spiritual gifts as well? 1Cor 14v1. The gift of tongues is one of His gifts, let us recognise its value and use.

(Please also see "The Baptism And Gifts Of The Holy Spirit" and "The Nine Gifts Of The Holy Spirit" which can be found at www.truthforthelastdays.com)

Appendix III: Looking For And Hastening The Coming Of The Day Of God

It has been the consensus amongst Christians for many centuries that they individually or collectively can do absolutely nothing to hasten the coming of the day of God. However, it is the complete opposite that is true, 2Peter 3v12 states:

"Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?" (NKJV)

"Hastening" is in Greek, "speúdontas," the present active participle (accusative also) of "speudo" (Strong's NT:4692), which means "to speed" i.e. urge on (diligently or earnestly); by implication, to await eagerly, (make, with) haste unto, to cause something to happen soon, to hurry up. Archbishop Trench, in his work "The Authorized Version of the New Testament" makes the following comment:

"...Hastening on;" i.e. "causing the day of the Lord to come more quickly by helping to fulfil those conditions without which it cannot come; that day being no day inexorably fixed, but one the arrival of which it is free to the church to hasten on by faith and by prayer."

Both "looking for" and "hastening" in the Greek are in the present continuous tense (active voice), which shows that each individual believer **MUST** keep praying (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336) and "entunchano" (Strong's NT:1793), both of which have the meaning, "to make "interventions" (with power) so as to affect a change in the circumstances.") and watching for the signs of the Lord's Second Coming to appear and to keep it up until He actually comes in great power and glory to destroy the wicked and to take His people home. Luke v17v20-18v8 (esp. 18v1), Luke 21v36 (RSV), Rev 5v1-14 (esp. v8), 8v2-6 (esp. v3,4).

With this in mind, each individual believer can by praying (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336) and "enteuxis" (Strong's NT:1783), which mean, "to make "interventions" (with power) so as to affect a change in the circumstances.") hasten the coming the day of God. The following seven **NBs** contain the thoughts and great desires that are upon God's heart at this present time that He is seeking His Church to pray ("proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336) and "entunchano" (Strong's NT:1793)) into being and so to quicken the coming of the day of God.

NB1: 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, Matt 24v15-28, Rev 7v9-17), the Devil is busy 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 (both believers and non-believers) and destroy as much as possible, before they themselves are destroyed at Christ's 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 (the Devil's evil plan) will work fully; which will be the result of the Devil and his evil Angels being expelled from the Heavenly places by Michael and his Angels into the Earth, and God's restraint upon the Devil and the powers of darkness being completely removed, hence The Great Tribulation will begin, which should be pointed out is due to the "great wrath of the Devil, because he knows that he has a short time," and **NOT** the wrath of God. Rev 12v7-17 (esp. v 12), 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 (Matt 4v8-10, Rev 13v1-10, 16v12-16), so it is **NOW** most vital, that we, the believers, are obedient to this most important injunction made by Paul in 1Timothy 2v1-8 (with Rom 13v1-7), to make "interventions" (with power) ("proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336) and "entunchano" (Strong's NT:1793), 1Tim 2v1), (for and against) "for all men, for kings and all who are in authority," that God will put honest, upright, wise, godly and compassionate persons into places of power and authority, and thwart the Devil's attempts to put his own evil servants into these places; for it is the Most High Who rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He wishes, and sets over it the lowest of men. Daniel 4v17.

NB2: Rev 12v6,14 states:

"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where **she hath a place prepared of God**, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days...And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that **she might fly into the wilderness, into her place**, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

This group of specially prepared Christians (that flee from Antichrist in Jerusalem and the surrounding area) is definitely said to have a place prepared by God for them to escape to at the beginning of the Great Tribulation; it is **MOST** important that Christians should pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) **NOW**, for God to prepare the areas of Edom, Moab and Ammon ("the wilderness" that is referred to in Rev 12v14 and which are situated in the eastern part of modern day Jordan) to be ready to receive this "glorious woman" at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Christians firstly should invoke the following covenant names in the heavenly places over these three areas (and modern day Jordan), Yahweh Tsabaoth, the Lord of Hosts (1Sam 17v45, Psalm 46v7,11), and Yahweh Jireh, the Lord Who See and Provides (Gen 22v14), that these areas will know continuous angelic protection from this time forth, right up until the second coming of the Lord Jesus, but especially during the dark evil days of the Great Tribulation, and that **ALL** things will be **FULLY** "prepared" by "the Lord Who Sees and Provides" for His people. Secondly, Christians should also impart the divine benediction by using the priestly blessing of Numbers 6v22-27 upon Edom, Moab, Ammon and modern day Jordan. If Christians pray like this **NOW**, these areas of Edom, Moab and Ammon, will most certainly be **FULLY** prepared and

protected by God, to receive His people at the beginning off the Great Tribulation, so that they are fed, kept, guarded and protected right up until the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. **NOTE:** Rev 5v8, "...which are the prayers (Greek "proseuche" (Strong's NT:4335), "to make interventions with power so as to affect a change in circumstances.") of saints." 2Pet 3v12. (We see in Rev 4 and 5, the preliminaries in Heaven just before the seals are opened, that is, before the events of the last seven years of this Age start to come to pass (Daniel's Seventieth prophetic week, Dan 9v27). The seven seals reveal Satan's evil plans for the world during the last seven years of this age. Paul calls Satan's plans "the mystery of iniquity." 2Thess 2v7. The seals reveal the major catastrophic stages of the career of Antichrist from the time when he makes the covenant, until the great day of the wrath of the Lamb brings his evil career to a close. It is the "prayers of the saints" (Rev 5v7,8) that precipitates God the Father to invite the Lord Jesus to take the Book out of His right hand so as to loose the seven seals thereof to bring to pass the last seven years of this age. Dan 9v27, 6v1-17, 8v1)

NB3: We read in Matt 9v37,38:

"Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, **but the labourers are few**; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, **that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.**"

It is also most essential for Christians (especially those Christians in Israel) to pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336), "to make interventions with power so as to affect a change in circumstances.") **NOW** for God to raise up the Two Witnesses, and other Christians whom He will set in the Body of Christ with the same level of power and authority as the Two Witnesses. We **MUST** also pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) for God to give these "labourers" the same kind of power and authority that He gave unto the prophet Elijah (1Kings 17v1-21v29, 2Kings 1v1-2v11 Dan 11v32, Rev 11v3-6), and then to "send them forth into His harvest." It is also a necessity for us to pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) for God to fulfil such prophecies and promises, as those stated in Rev 11v3-6 and Zech chapter 4, but especially the wonderful promise and prophecy that He spoke through His servant Malachi in Mal 4v5,6 (with Luke 1v17 and Matt 17v11):

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Christians **MUST** pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) **NOW** for "last day Elijah ministries" to be set in the Body of Christ by God! Rev 5v8.

The number of "last day Elijah ministries" that God will be able to set in the Church will be directly proportional to the amount of praying (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) performed by the Church for God to set such ministries in it; i.e. the more the Body of Christ prays (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) for God to set such ministries in the church, the **MORE** "last day Elijah ministries" will **actually be set in it by God!**

Behind every great prophet and prophetess, there has **ALWAYS** been someone behind the scenes, who has earnestly sought the Lord and prayed (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) them into their ministry. Very often this is the result of the prayers (Greek "proseuche" (NT:4335)) of a godly loving mother or aunt; as in the case of Jeremiah, when his aunt, the great Old Testament prophetess, Huldah, was the person responsible for praying (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) him into his prophetic ministry as a young man. We can gauge the depth of her spirituality and prophetic ministry from the incident when King Josiah asked Hilkiah, the high priest, to inquire of the Lord as what should be done at that time, Hilkiah promptly went and sought out Huldah, and as soon as he had asked for the word of the Lord, Huldah was able to give it too him straight away. However, when the remnant of those left in the southern kingdom came and asked Jeremiah to seek the word of the Lord for them, it was ten days before the reply came from the Lord for them (which they didn't heed anyway); and so from this, we can see just how in touch with the Lord Huldah was and the depth of her spirituality and prophetic ministry! 2Kings 22v3-20 (esp. v14), Jer 1v1-19 (esp. v6), 32v7, Jer 42v1-22 (esp. v7).

NB4: Rev 12v1 (with Rev 12v2-17) states:

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

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 (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) people, with prepared hearts and special ministries for the last days, who will operate with awesome power as a prayer-warrior group behind the scenes. God also gives 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 Israel and other parts of the world.

Another of the desires upon the great loving Heart of our Heavenly Father, is the necessity for His people to get ready and prepared for the dark evil days of the Great Tribulation; however at the present moment in time, very few, if any, Teachers or Preachers in the Church are talking about these vital Truths, and when they do mention it, it is nearly always to state that the Christian does not need to be concerned about the Great Tribulation, because they will miss it, having been raptured before it starts. **I wish to state here and now, that those (so called) preachers and teachers who propagate such lies, the Lord Jesus plainly states are amongst the false prophets and teachers of the last days, and a severe judgement awaits them!** The Lord Jesus clearly states that His Second Coming will be visible to every eye, and will be with great power and glory, the elements melting with fervent heat, which will be accompanied by the greatest earthquake that the earth has ever known! It is **NOW** vital for **EVERY** Christian (especially those Christians in Israel) to get close to the Lord Jesus, and pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) that He will prepare His people into such groups (as represented by the glorious woman in Rev 12v1) in every country around the world, but **ESPECIALLY** in Israel! Dan 11v32, Joel 2v28-32, Zech 12v8, Matt 24v21-30,48-51, 28v20, Luke 18v1-8, 2Pet 3v10, James 3v1, Rev 1v7, 12v1-17, 16v18.

NB5: Psalm 2v8 and Rev 5v7 reads:

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession...**And he came and took the book** out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne."

The "He came and took the book," is the fulfilment of the "ask of me" of Psalm 2v8, it is when God brings to pass the prophetic events that will close the Age, and bring in Christ's kingdom. Psalm 2v8, Dan 2v44,45, 7v13.

It is most important for **ALL** believers to pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336), "to make interventions with power so as to affect a change in circumstances.") **NOW** that God will invite the Lord Jesus to come and ask Him for His inheritance and possession, so that He takes the Book out of His Father's right hand, so as to open the seven seals thereof to bring to pass the last seven years of this Age, so that the Father can then, at the end of these seven years, send the Lord Jesus to come and deal with the wicked once and for all, to take His people home and bring in everlasting righteousness by sealing up vision and prophecy and setting up the Millennium Kingdom. **NOTE:** Rev 5v8, "...which are the prayers (Greek "proseuche" (Strong's NT:4335)) of the saints..." with Matt 6v9,10, "After this manner therefore pray (Greek "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT4336)) ye...**Thy kingdom come.**" (It is the "prayers of the saints" (Rev 5v7,8) that precipitates God the Father to invite the Lord Jesus to take the Book out of His right hand so as to loose the seven seals thereof to bring to pass the last seven years of this age. Dan 9v27, 6v1-17, 8v1) Dan 9v27, Matt 6v5-15, Luke 11v1-13 (esp. 11v2), 2Pet 3v12, Rev 11v15-19.

(The seven seals show the major stages in the career of Antichrist, from the covenant, to seven years later, when he and his evil system is destroyed on the great day of the Lamb's wrath. An angel asks who is worthy to rule the world after Antichrist has brought the world to almost complete ruin; the answer is only Christ and His faithful brethren. Rev 5v5,9,10, Rom 8v19. This age will close when Jesus has enough brethren to rule the Millennial kingdom with Him. Rev 14v1-5, 17v14, 2Pet 3v12. John's vision in Rev 4 and 5, was not a revelation of events in Heaven in the time of John, it was a vision of events in Heaven just prior to the last seven years of this age. When Jesus opens the seven seals, it starts the last 7 years of this age, and the mystery of iniquity. Dan 9v20-27.

Satan's plans are restrained by God, and even when the mystery of iniquity is allowed to have its final fling, God reigns and His kingdom will surely come quickly. All of Heaven's inhabitants are perfectly satisfied at Christ's worthiness to open the seals and receive the kingdom, and they rejoice that divine love will rule the nations, after the evil rule of men. John was heartbroken and wept because no one could open the book and loose the seals, but one of the elders comforted John and said, "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book, and loose the seals thereof." As God, Jesus was the source of David's family and the means of its sustenance, anchorage and strength; as a man He was the offspring of David. Isaiah 11v1,10, Rom 1v3,4, Rev 22v16. John looks for this Lion of Judah, but sees a Lamb as it had been slain. The most courageous act of the Lion of Judah was His death as the Lamb of God, this shows His courage and love more than all else. The title "Lamb" occurs 29 times in Revelation, but it is only applied to Jesus 4 times in the rest of the New Testament. John 1v29,36, Acts 8v32, 1Pet 1v19. Men often use mighty beasts and birds of prey as symbols of power, but God uses a Lamb to show the greatest act of courage, strength and love the world has even known; Calvary is the ultimate act of power and love. The Lamb of God is worthy to reign because of the sacrificial love revealed in His death upon Calvary.

The Lamb of God has not only redeemed sinners, but has made them kings and priests unto God as well, and the faithful saints will reign with Christ in the Millennium and eternity. Rev 5v10, 20v4-6, 22v3-5. Christ has won the right to reign, the Father has no favourites, He has "no jobs for the boys," those who rule will have to prove their worthiness to rule, even as Jesus has proved His worthiness to reign. Rev 3v21, 5v5, Phil 2v6-11, Rom 2v11, Acts 10v34, Heb 5v5-10, Dan

7v13,14. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

NB6: On the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up and said in Acts 2v16-21 (with Joel 2v28-32):

"...This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; **And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh:** and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, **before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

The Lord Jesus, during the His Post-Resurrection ministry to the Apostles, had told them "I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high," when He (the Holy Spirit) that was with them, would then enter them, which was the Baptism in the Holy Spirit that they would receive. Luke 24v49, John 7v39, 14v17, Acts 2v4,38. It was during the Post-Resurrection ministry that the Lord Jesus had instructed them regarding Joel's prophecy, that this was the glorious prophecy which referred to the "Promise of the Father" (i.e. power from on high), and that it was **vital** for them to tarry in the Upper Room, and pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336), "to make interventions with power so as to affect a change in circumstances.") this great prophecy and promise into reality. The Lord Jesus did not tell them the precise timing of when they would receive the Promise of the Father (this was because that if they had known, some of them might have just sat back and said, "well I don't need to pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)), God is going to do it anyway"), but simply said, "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts 1v5. The Apostles were obedient to His command, and with other disciples (one hundred and twenty of them in all), they prayed (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) Joel's wonderful great prophecy and promise into reality. Acts 1v14,15, 2v1-4. The great outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was only a partial fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, which also had a fulfilment throughout the whole of the Age of Grace to encourage the Church to pray for revival, blessing, spiritual gifts and ministries from their risen Lord. 1Cor 12v7-11, Eph 4v7-16. Joel's great prophecy and promise has a final and complete fulfilment at the end of the Age of Grace, for it specifically says, **"it shall come to pass in the last days...I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh...before that great and notable day of the Lord come."** Even as the one hundred and twenty disciples in the Upper Room prayed (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) Joel's wonderful prophecy and promise into reality on the Day of Pentecost, it is also **VITAL** for the Church to pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) **NOW** for God to pour out of His Spirit upon the Church and the world...i.e. **"upon ALL flesh."** God's people need to claim the complete fulfilment of Joel's great prophecy and promise **NOW**, and **MUST** continue to claim the complete fulfilment of it right up until the Lord's Second Coming. There will certainly be a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit when Daniel's Seventieth week starts, when Antichrist "confirms a covenant with many (including Israel) for one week," which also refers to the opening of the First Seal. Dan 9v27, Rev 6v1,2. Another and even greater outpouring will occur, when Antichrist breaks the covenant, and sets up his image in the Temple in Jerusalem (at the beginning of the Great Tribulation). During the last seven years of the Age of Grace, the Church and the world will know a time of the greatest worldwide revival that has ever been experienced, and **NOW** is the time for the Body of Christ to pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (NT:4336)) so that this great outpouring becomes a reality very soon, and also is **FULLY** experienced during the last seven years of this Age. Acts 2v16-21, Rev 5v8, 11v3-6, 12v1.

NB7: With the Devil and his evil angels being cast out of the heavenlies into the earth, and God's restraining hand being removed from them, the Great Tribulation then ensues. The responsibility for the restraint upon the powers of darkness and the wicked upon the earth, during the Great Tribulation, will be the Church's, and it will be through each individual believer's prayers (Greek, "proseuche" (Strong's NT:4335)) and "interventions" (with power), (Greek, "enteuxis" (Strong's NT:1783)), both of which mean, "to make interventions with power so as to affect a change in circumstances.", that this restraint will occur. The amount of evil and wickedness that will be found in any society around the world during the Great Tribulation, will be inversely proportional to the amount of prayer (Greek, "proseuche" (Strong's NT:4335)) and "interventions" (with power) (Greek, "enteuxis" (Strong's NT:1783)) that the believers of that society will make, in other words, the more prayer and "interventions" (with power) that the believers make for their society in which they live, the less evil and wickedness will be manifested in it. Hence, as soon as Antichrist sets up his image in the Temple in Jerusalem and breaks the peace treaty with Israel, the Great Tribulation then ensues and these are the signs that the Christian should be earnestly watching for, so that as soon as they appear, the responsibility for restraint upon the powers of darkness, wicked persons and wickedness in the world will lie solely with the Church. It is at this time that each individual believer **MUST** start making prayers (Greek, "proseuche" (Strong's NT:4335)) and "interventions" (with power) (Greek, "enteuxis" (Strong's NT:1783)) against the evil angels and wicked people upon earth to restrain their activities. When the wicked see Divine judgement falling upon other evil persons (which will be via the believer's prayers (Greek, "proseuche" (Strong's NT:4335)) and "interventions" (with power) (Greek, "enteuxis" (Strong's NT:1783))), many (although not all) will think twice before putting their evil desires into practice to hurt, harm or kill God's dear children, hence, the believer's prayers and "interventions" (with power) will actively restrain the wicked. It will be during the Great Tribulation that the last World War will occur (before the 2nd coming of Christ), and the desire of the Devil (through

Antichrist) will be to smash the world completely, which Antichrist will do with vast conventional armies and limited exchanges of nuclear weapons. So, it is vital for Christians to exercise prayer (Greek, "proseuche" (Strong's NT:4335)) and "interventions" (with power) (Greek, "enteuxis" (Strong's NT:1783)) **NOW**, so that they will be spiritually prepared for those terrible dark evil days, and can act as an effective restraint upon the powers of darkness and the wicked during the last three and half years of this Age, so that the country and society in which they live is not completely destroyed by Antichrist's armies and followers. Isaiah 26v9, Dan 9v27, 11v32,41, Zech 12v8, Luke 18v1-8, 2Thess 2v1-12, 1Tim2v1-8, Rev 6v7,8, 9v13-21, 11v3-6,18, 12v13-17.

(Also NOTE: Another reason why God cannot let the last seven years of this Age (of Grace) begin to come to pass is that the required number of overcoming Sons, who will replace the present world rulers (the Devil and the evil angels) in the heavenly places during the Millennium, must first be begotten, educated and tested; and so when God knows that this number is at hand, He will then invite the Lord Jesus to take the Book out of His right hand, so that He might loose the Seven Seals thereof; which will then bring to pass Daniel's 70th (prophetic) week, which will end with the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus when He comes in great power and glory (so that **EVERY** eye will see Him), to deal with the wicked once and for all, to take His people home and bring in everlasting righteousness by sealing up vision and prophecy. It will be when the six and seventh seals are opened and the seventh Trumpet sounds (these all occur on the last day of this age (the Age of Grace) at the Second Coming of Christ) that the "mystery of God" will be completed. (The "mystery of God" is God's plan to put both Heaven and Earth under the rule of His Son Jesus and His bride (i.e. the Church), and to fulfil upon the earth the promise made to Abraham and his seed, Israel, that they should inherit the earth. The inhabited earth to come is not again to be put under angels, but under Christ and His brethren who overcame.) The believer who accepts the call of their Lord, to rise up with Him into the heavenly places, to conquer and defeat the Devil and powers of darkness, so as to enter into and inhabit their Heavenly Canaan, will be exercising a priestly ministry of the Melchizedek Priesthood (by manifesting God's great power and love to the worlding and Church through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, upon earth and the heavenly places), with Jesus as their Great High Priest (after the Order of Melchizedek). It is the Christians who are exercising a priestly ministry of the Melchizedek Priesthood who will be praying (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336) and "entunchano" (Strong's NT:1793), which mean "to make interventions with power so as to effect a change in circumstances.") for the Lord Jesus to take the Book out of the Father's Right Hand and so bring to pass the last seven years of this age. These Christians will also be praying (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336) and "entunchano" (Strong's NT:1793)) for God to bring judgement upon the wicked who are persecuting and killing Christians during the dark evil days of the Great Tribulation. These Christians are a group of people, who are foreknown, designed, specially created and empowered by God for the Great Tribulation; a group of praying people, with prepared hearts and special ministries for the last days, who will operate with awesome power as a prayer-warrior group behind the scenes. God also gives 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. Some of these Christians will belong to a group of believers in Israel during the dark evil days of the Great Tribulation, who are represented by the glorious woman of Rev 12v1 (already mentioned in **NB2** and **NB4**), which 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. It is these Christians who will be exercising a priestly ministry of the Melchizedek Priesthood during the last seven years of this age (and even more so during the dark evil days of the Great Tribulation) and who will be amongst those who will rule with Christ during the Millennium. (Rev 5v10, "...and hast made them kings and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.") Dan 9v20-27 (esp. v27), 10v13-21, 11v32, Matt 25v41, Mark 16v15-18, Luke 17v20-18v8, 19v11-27, 24v46-49, John 3v13, 7v37-39, 12v40, 17v24, Acts 1v4-8, 2v16-21, Rom 1v17, 4v1-25, 8v12-39, 1Cor 9v24-27, 12v1-14v40, 12v31, 15v50-54, Eph 6v12, Col 3v1,2, 1Thess 4v13-18, 2Thess 2v1-12 (esp. v8), 1Tim 2v1-8, 2Tim 4v8, Heb 2v4,5-13, 3v1-4v16, 7v25, James 1v12, 1Pet 2v1-9, 5v1-4, Rev 1v7, 4v1-5v14, 6v12-17, 7v1-8, 8v1,2-6, 10v1-11 (esp. v7), 11v15-19, 12v1,6,7-9,14-16, 14v1-5, 21v7.)

The believer, by praying (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT:4336)) and making "interventions" (with power) (Greek, "enteuxis" (Strong's NT:1783)) as indicated in these seven NBs ("nota benes"), will surely "hasten the coming of the Day of God." 2Pet 3v12.

Appendix IV: Put On The Whole Armour Of God

We have to overcome Satan by answering every lying temptation with the Truth, we have to put on **ALL** the armour of God. Matt 12v18-30, Mark 3v22-30, Eph 6v10-20. We can only defeat Satan if we wear all our Christian armour. It is as follows: -

The belt of truth: A right knowledge of God's Word and Christian Doctrine.

The breastplate of righteousness: God's Word of Truth is applied to the life and it results in a practical holy life, the heart is kept pure, there is integrity of purpose, truthfulness, sincerity, genuine love and faithfulness.

The feet shod with the Gospel: An evangelistic fervour; a desire to extend God's kingdom and preach God's good news

of forgiveness and peace.

The shield of faith: The 4 feet by 2 feet Roman type shield is spoken of here. A complete trust in God and His word at all times, can quench all Satan's flaming darts.

The helmet of salvation: A disciplined and pure thought-life. We think what God thinks, and weigh everything up in the light of God's Word and our salvation. False doctrines, impure thoughts, and worldliness are banished from the Christian mind. All is looked upon and judged in the light of an eternal future.

The sword of the Spirit: The ability to use God's Word against Satan and his children. This presupposes a knowledge of the Scriptures and essential Christian Truth.

Prayer: (Greek, "proseuche" (Strong's NT:4335) and "enteuxis" (Strong's NT:1783) which mean "the making of interventions with power so as to affect a change in circumstances"). The spear, or bow and arrow? A vigilant, intelligent and persevering prayer life, for all the saints and the ministries that God has set in the Church. Rom 12v6-8, 1Cor 12v28, Eph 4v8-11.

Appendix V: Oil For Our Lamps!

We can gauge the importance of Christ's Second Coming by contrasting the number of times it is mentioned in the Scriptures alongside other teachings:

- 1) The "new Birth" (conversion) is mentioned 9 times in the New Testament.
- 2) Baptism is mentioned 20 times
- 3) Repentance is mentioned 70 times

4) The Second Coming is mentioned 380 times in the New Testament alone!

Matt 25v1-13 states:

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

The question is: "What does the oil in the lamps represent"?

The "virgins" represent Christians who are waiting for the return of the Bridegroom (Christ), 5 are wise and 5 are foolish, the wise have extra oil the foolish do not. The Bridegroom tarries and they all fall asleep, suddenly at midnight a cries goes up, "The Bridegroom cometh." They all awake, the foolish find that their lamps have gone out, but the wise are prepared. The foolish try to get the necessary oil, but it is too late, there just isn't time!

This is what the oil is NOT:

It is not grace, for we receive grace for the day.

It is not holiness, for all were virgins, all were pure.

It is not prayerfulness and watchfulness every moment, for all (including the wise) fell asleep.

It is not constantly being filled with the Spirit, for the oil was something they (the wise) acquired before they fell asleep.

It is not the Baptism in the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit, for these don't need to be "stored", they can be received anytime and many will receive these things when they are converted during the Great Tribulation. You only get Baptised in the Spirit once, thereafter you keep getting refilled. There are a lot of Christians who get Baptised in the Spirit who are not ready for the Great Tribulation. The gifts of the Spirit do not constitute extra oil, for once a gift has been given it is always there; and there are many with the gifts of the Spirit who are scared to death to even think about the Great Tribulation.

What difference is there between the wise and foolish virgins? All were pure and ready to meet the Bridegroom. All were waiting for the Bridegroom to return. The wise were not more watchful and prayerful than the foolish for all fell asleep. The **ONLY** difference was the wise took extra oil. What for? **For THE DARKNESS!** They wanted to be sure they had light for the darkness! The foolish didn't bother about the darkness. They didn't need lamps to meet the Bridegroom, they needed the lamps for the darkness that they knew they **WOULD HAVE TO** pass through **BEFORE** they met the Bridegroom!

The oil in the lamps then represents the correct interpretation of end-time prophetic truth! 2Peter 1v19 states:

"And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts."

In Matt 24v3 the disciples had asked the Lord Jesus the following question:

"...Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

So in response the Lord Jesus had given them the end-time signs to look out for, i.e. end-time prophetic truth. He refers them to Daniel's 70th prophetic week in Daniel 9v27 (with Dan 11v31, 12v11) and the Great Tribulation which immediately precedes His return. The 70th week of Daniel, the time of the 7 year treaty between Antichrist, Israel and many other countries, will be the darkest time in the world's history, midnight representing the start of the Great Tribulation when Antichrist breaks the covenant with Israel and sets up his image in the Temple. 2Thess 2v1-12, Rev 13 (all) Hence the cry goes up, "The Bridegroom cometh." Notice, it doesn't say "The Bridegroom's here," **BUT** that He cometh, i.e. He is on His way. He comes **AFTER** midnight, after the Great Tribulation. Matt 24v29-31. In the parable He comes after midnight when the foolish have gone to try and buy oil (the point being that once midnight comes there won't be time to prepare!)

Why does the lamp of the foolish go out at midnight? Because they did not believe they would see darkness – as far as the Church is concerned the last three and a half years and the reign of Antichrist, they thought the Bridegroom would have come before then. Hence the foolish only take notice of prophecy up to the commencement of the middle of Daniel's 70th week. Once the last three and a half years of this age starts (the Great Tribulation), they have no more prophetic light and their lamps go out. The fact that half of them were foolish shows that half of the Church will find itself in this position!

Why did the wise fall asleep? Well, there are many who have learned, or are learning, about the reign of Antichrist and the Great Tribulation, they believe they have to face the darkness before meeting the Lord. They have learnt the Scriptures and stored the oil of prophetic truth. At first they were very intense and keen about the subject looking for the time of the treaty (and so forth), but as time has passed their interest and zeal has cooled and they have fallen asleep, "the Lord tarries", nevertheless, when the time comes they will awake and they will have the **ALL IMPORTANT** oil"

Matt 25v1-13 is simply carrying on from Matt 24, especially from the parable of the faithful and wise servant and the evil servant in Matt 24v45-51:

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

So, these servants represents Pastors and Teachers who are to teach the Body of Christ Truth (including end-time prophetic truth), however, the evil servant not only believes the lie of a secret pre-tribulation advent and rapture, **BUT** has also taught it to those Christians in his church as well, i.e. the foolish virgins, with the result that **BOTH** the evil servant and the foolish virgins backslide and go into apostasy. Matt 24v51, 25v12

Psalm 119v105: **"Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path."**

These 2 parables in Matt 24v45-25v13 are teaching the Body of Christ just how important the correct interpretation of last day prophetic truth is, it does **NOT** teach that that is all you need to get through the dark days of the Great Tribulation! In the parable of the 10 virgins the Lord was illustrating how vital it is to have light for the darkness – **THE LIGHT HE (the Lord Jesus) HAS PROVIDED!** You can have everything else like the foolish virgins, purity, grace, looking for the coming of the Lord and so forth and yet backslide and go into apostasy in the time of darkness, during the Great Tribulation.

The Great Tribulation Overcomer

Let me give you an example of just how important the correct interpretation of prophecy is:

I want you to think of a Christian with a tremendous ministry, someone who has a healing ministry in which he sees blind, deaf, dumb, lame, paralysed, even the leprous and cancerous healed. Someone who has seen the power of God through them alter the forces of nature, who has seen miraculous provision of finance and food, experienced supernatural transport from one place to another. Someone with a ministry where they have seen the dead raised to life again. Someone who has seen Jesus face to face, not once but many, many times. Someone who has even had the Lord Himself give them studies in the Scriptures. Imagine someone who sees demons cast out in his/her ministry. Someone who has seen thousands upon thousands of people come to Christ.

Now let me ask you this question: How many of you believe that such a person would be prepared for any trouble or tribulation that came along? I suppose that very many people would be of the opinion that they definitely would be. However, the people who think that are **VERY** wrong!

The people I had in mind when outlining the above great ministry is the Apostles. Matt 10v1,8:

"And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease...Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give."

They saw miraculous provision of finances, food, clothes (Matt 10v9,10), the fish with the coin (Matt 17v27), the miraculous catch of fish (Luke 5v4-7), Peter walked upon the water with the Lord (Matt 14v28-31), the disciples in a boat with the Lord were all transported with the boat to land (John 6v21), they saw the power of the Holy Spirit in preaching (Matt 10v20), the momentous ministry of Jesus, His miracles, raising the dead, casting out demons, stilling the storm, feeding the multitudes with a few loaves and fishes, thousands upon thousands turning to Christ, His tremendous preaching and wisdom, He gave them studies in the Scriptures (Luke 18v31, Mark 8v31 and so forth), they were in His presence not for a few days, **BUT** for over 3 years. Peter, James and John were taken up the mountain where they saw Him transfigured (and so saw His pre-incarnate Glory) and heard the voice of the Father.

Yet in spite of all this, when Jesus was taken prisoner, **WHEN THE HOUR OF DARKNESS CAME**, even though they **ALL** said they were ready to follow Him into prison and to death (Luke 22v33, Matt 26v33-35..) when the time came they **ALL** forsook Him, and fled and were in unbelief, defeat and despair. (Matt 26v56) Luke 24v21 states: "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel..." Now they even doubted that He was the Redeemer! After His Resurrection the Lord reminded them through the women of what He has previously had told them about His suffering and death but they would not believe! Luke 24v11: "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not."

What was the cause of their defeat, unbelief, despair and forsaking the Lord? Why did they fail in the hour of darkness? They had great ministry, power, experience, why did they collapse?

THEY FAILED BECAUSE THEY IGNORED BIBLICAL PROPHECY, THEY DELIBERATELY SHUT THEIR EARS TO THE PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUFFERING AND DEATH!

Luke 24v25: "Then he said unto them, **O fools, and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken:**"

The disciples only listened to the prophecies they liked, i.e. John 1v45: "...We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." They recognised Him as the Messiah of whom the prophets wrote, **BUT** they ignored other things the prophets wrote regarding His suffering and death (Isaiah 53, Psalm 22 and so forth), even though the Lord Jesus pointed out these things many, many times to them! Matt 16v21-23, 17v9, 20v17-19, 26v1,2, Luke 9v43-45, 17v25 and so on...

Luke 24v25-27: "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? **And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.**"

They refused to accept the Truth of a suffering Messiah, because they had received and believed the false man made traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees, which taught of a Messiah coming in great power and glory, Who would throw the Roman yoke from off Israel and restore the kingdom to them.

They missed the first Coming of Christ completely and only saw the Second! Matt 15v1-20, 16v6, Mark 8v15, 1Peter 1v18

John 16v12: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

Indeed, so ingrained in their minds and spirits were these unscriptural man made traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees, that even after the 40 days of post resurrection ministry to them by the Lord Jesus, they still retained the old lies of the Scribes and Pharisees on this. Acts 1v6 states: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, **Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?**"

HOW BINDING ARE UNSCRIPTURAL MAN MADE TRADITIONS!

In Matt 24v3, the disciples ask the Lord Jesus this question:

"Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

So, the first thing to watch out for is when he (the Prince who is to come) makes a covenant (peace treaty) with many nations, including Israel (for one week), which is the start of Daniel's 70th week, i.e. the last 7 years of this age. Three and a half years later, Antichrist breaks the treaty with Israel and sets up his image in the Temple in Jerusalem claiming that he is God, Christ comes at the end of this second three and a half year period (known as the Great Tribulation), i.e. "...immediately after the tribulation of those days..." Matt 24v15-21, 29-31 (with Dan 9v27, 11v31, 12v11) to destroy the wicked and to take His people home. 2Thess 2v1-12, Rev 11v15-18. NOTE: Luke 17v20-18v8, esp. Luke 17v26-30:

"And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; **but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom** it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. **Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.**"

The day that Christ comes to take His people home and destroy the wicked is the SAME day, NOT separated by three and a half years!

Appendix VI: The Spiritual Qualities That Make Up The Character Of The Overcomer

Mention must be made of this subject as it is so important, the promises given to the overcomer are so great that the subject deserves special consideration. Christ has solemnly warned the Christians of the last days that they will have to live very careful, prayerful and godly lives if they are to overcome and come through the gross darkness with flying colours. Matt 7v24-29, 24v11-13, 42-25v13, Luke 8v14, 18v1-8, Mark 4v19, 1John 2v28. Let us consider the spiritual qualities that cause a person to be an overcomer and the things an overcomer does and is.

1) They Love The Word Of God. They are not lazy in Bible study, they learn the doctrines and truths of God's Word, they know Truth and long for more, it is the joy and rejoicing of their heart. Joshua 1v8, Psalm 1 all, John 17v17,26, Acts 17v10,11, 20v32, Rom 6v17, Eph 6v14,17, 2Tim 3v15-17, Heb 5v11-14, 2Pet 2v2.

2) They Love To Do God's Will. They actively serve God, they seek the lost, they have an evangelical fervour. Isaiah 52v7, Matt 6v10, 26v42, 28v18-20, John 4v34, 5v30, 12v26, Rom 12v1,2, Col 1v9, Heb 10v7, 12v23. They obey the will of God as revealed by the Spirit of God. Rom 8v14, Eph 4v30, 1Thess 5v17, Rev 2v7,11,17,29, 3v6,13,22. They obey the will of God as revealed by the Word of God, e.g. "follow after love and desire spiritual gifts." Matt 7v21, 12v30, Luke 6v46, 11v34, John 14v21-24.

3) They Love To Seek Their Father's Face. They love to pray, they have a life of public and private praise and prayer, they tarry for the Spirit, they wait on God. Psalm 27v8, 34v3,6, 37v9, 62v1,2,5,6 84v4-10, 91v1,2,9,14,15, Matt 6v5-15, Luke 11v1-13, 18v1-8, Eph 6v18,19, 1Thess 3v10, 5v17, Jude v20,21.

4) They Love To Walk With God In Their Daily Lives. They live a practical holy life. Rom 8v5-14, Gal 5v16-26, Eph 4v1-3,17-32, 5v1-6v9. By the grace of God they keep themselves pure and in victory. They are not in bondage to sin. By the grace of their Saviour they have overcome the world, the flesh and the Devil. Psalm 37v23,24, Matt 5v8, John 16v33, Rom 6v14-23, 2Cor 7v1, Phil 3v7-21, 1Thess 4v2,3, 1John 2v13-17, 3v1-10, 4v4, 5v4, Rev 14v1-5.

5) They Love the Brethren. Psalm 133v1-3, John 13v34,35, 1512-15, Acts 1v14, 2v1,44-47, 4v32,37, Phil 4v1, 1Thess 2v11, 1John 3v10-24, 4v7-5v3. They love to have fellowship with God's people, and dwell on the things of God together. Deut 6v4-9, Prov 27v17, Mal 3v16-18, Heb 10v24,25. In home as well as church building. Matt 23v37-39, Acts 2v1-4 with 1v13, Rom 16v5, 1Cor 16v19, Col 4v15, Philemon v2. Our conversation should be centred on heavenly things and should be such as becomes the Gospel of Christ, gracious and loving like those of our gracious Lord, "They were all astonished at the beautiful words that fell from His lips." Luke 4v22 cf. Col 4v6. If this is not so, there is a definite need of reconsecration. Matt 15v10,11, Mark 7v20-23, Eph 5v4,5.

6) The letters to the churches in the book of Revelation give us a very good idea of what the Lord expects of the Christian, and what an overcoming Christian is like. We read the Christians are to have works, love, service, faith, patience, increasing works, a willingness to be faithful unto death, a separation from the world, spiritual alertness, and the thing that will assure all these, they must keep their fervent first love for Christ. Perhaps more qualities of the overcomer could be added to these, but these will suffice. In ALL things we are to follow the example of Christ, for by His grace we can overcome ALL that comes our way. Matt 11v28-30, 13v23, Luke 8v8,15, John 15v1-8, 1John 2v6, 4v17, Rev 12v10,11.

When the Church or a local church lives in victory, there are multitudes of souls saved and bodies healed and an abundance of miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, as well as a lovely manifestation of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. When a church was overcome by sin, the Lord gave these Christians the most scathing rebukes. Rev 2v5,16,21-23, 3v15-17. These Scriptures make it quite clear that the Lord in the midst of His churches will not pass over sin or coldness of heart. Because Christ loves His people He chastens them, so that they might not be condemned with the world. 1Cor 11v29-32. Sometimes people may be beyond repentance and the only thing that the Lord can do is to make a public example of them. Heb 6v4-6,8, 10v19-39, N.B 26-31, Rev 2v22,23. It behoves us all to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Psalm 2v11, Isaiah 66v2, Rom 8v15, Eph 5v15, Phil 2v12, Heb 12v21,28,28, 1Pet 1v17, 1John 4v18. Let us also keep our minds on the great grace of our God and the wonderful promises that He has given to us to encourage us on the Christian way. John 17v23, 2Pet 1v1-10, etc...

Appendix VII : The Lord's Prayer

In answer to the request of the disciple in Luke 11v1, in Luke 11v2-4, the Lord Jesus then gives them a "pattern" of how to pray (i.e. this is the "pattern" He had used during the first thirty years of His life at Nazareth and in His Earthly ministry, except He had **NO** sin to confess in connection with the phrase "and forgive us our sins/debts, Matt 6v12, Luke 11v4). This "pattern" is commonly referred to as "The Lord's Prayer," however, it is not an actual prayer, but the "pattern" of how we should pray (Greek, "proseuchomai" (Strong's NT4336), which is used in both Matt 6v9 and Luke 11v2). This is the 2nd place in the New Testament where this "pattern" has been recorded, the first being in Matt 6v5-15 (esp. v9-13).

Matt 6v9-13 states:

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

Luke 11v2-4 reads:

"And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

The Essential Attitudes Of Heart And Mind In Prayer.

Jesus tells us the attitudes of heart and mind that bring a knowledge of God, a fullness of the Spirit and answered prayer.

We must realise our position in Christ, we are sons of God.

"When you pray, say, Father." In Jesus we have a new and blessed relationship with the Father; we are brethren of Christ, joint heirs with Christ, and God's own beloved children. 1John 3v1, John 15v9, 17v23, Rom 8v17, Heb 2v10-20, 6v13-20. Hallelujah!

We must have a continual spirit of worship.

"Hallowed, revered, and honoured, be thy name." God is seeking worshippers, not empty flattery, which God deplores. True worship recognises with sincere gratitude and deep love that we owe everything we are, have and will have to our Creator and Redeemer. John 4v23,24, Matt 15v7-9, Mark 7v6-9, God is worthy of all our respect, adoration, love and esteem. Rev 5v11-14.

We must desire to see God's kingdom and will to be manifested on earth.

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." There is not only desire and longing; there is positive action and costly sacrifice, under God's direction, to see His kingdom extended. This is a personal matter between ourselves and God, we must always be very careful to distinguish between people who put pressure upon us to build up

their personal kingdoms, or other human pressure groups, and the will of God. John 21v19-22, Matt 10v37-42, Acts 15v25,26.

We must be free from anxiety over material needs.

"Give us this day our daily bread." We must believe, as it is absolutely true, that our heavenly Father loves us intensely and will meet all our needs. Phil 4v19, Matt 6v25-34. A spirit of materialism and worldly anxiety will effectively incapacitate us from useful service for the kingdom of God. 1John 2v15-17. This does not mean, of course, that we have to neglect our families, those who do this "have denied the faith," and are "worse than unbelieving heathen." 1Tim 5v8.

We must have a tender conscience and repentance from any known sin.

"Forgive us our sins." In Luke 11v4, Luke uses the word "hamartia," "sins;" whereas, Matt 6v12 uses "opheilemata;" a word that Paul uses in Rom 4v4 to speak of legal debts. Christ obviously used both; He taught that our sins are debts to God and others. Wilful sin closes our hearts to the blessing and love of God. Heb 10v19-39, 1John 1v5 to 2v6.

We must have a forgiving spirit towards those who have sinned against us.

We must beware of roots of bitterness and an unforgiving spirit, for Jesus warns us that we can only ask for forgiveness "in proportion as, or like as," "hos," we forgive others, a truly solemn warning, which is reiterated by Christ elsewhere. Matt 6v12,14,15, Mark 11v25,26. Jesus tells us to rebuke Christians who sin against us, and IF they repent, we must forgive them. Luke 17v3,4. Let us make every effort to achieve reconciliation and forgiveness with Christians, and make it easy for those who have offended us to repent, and exercise a forgiving spirit to them. However, Jesus said that repentance is necessary before fellowship can be restored, and failure to repent after the procedure laid down in Matt 18v15-17, means that a person loses their rights to be treated as a Christian. Let us remember that God's forgiveness is always conditional upon repentance. Matt 5v23,24, 18v20-35, Mark 11v22-26, Luke 6v37, 23v34, Eph 4v30-32, Gal 6v1-3, 1John 4v20,21. Jesus certainly did not try to be reconciled with Israel's religious leaders; His attacks upon them were extremely contentious. Matt 23v13-39, Luke 11v39-54. Christ asked the Father to forgive the soldiers who were crucifying Him, they really did not know what they were doing; however, there was no such prayer for the religious leaders of Israel, who knew full well what they were doing, Jesus said they had seen God and hated Him. Luke 23v34, John 15v22-25. Stephen manifested a forgiving spirit to his implacable enemies, and asked God not to lay his murder to their charge; however, God could not forgive them, for He cannot forgive unrepentant sin, even though He may long to restore and pardon. Acts 7v59,60, Matt 23v37-39, Luke 19v41-44. Christians who hurt and offend others, and do not repent, face an inevitable discipline from their heavenly Father, and so do those who fail to forgive others, when those who offend them repent. We know that we have a genuine revival when Christians get right with each other and fervently love each other. Rom 12v14-21, 2Cor 13v1, Gal 6v1. Our enormous debt to God should keep us from fighting over our comparatively trifling debts to each other. Matt 18v21-35, Heb 12v14,15.

We must allow God to lead us from dangerous paths.

Christians should have a fear of sin, and a fear of getting out of the will of God. As someone has said, "lead us not into temptation," is an Eastern way of saying, "Father, please keep us from going out of your will, into paths that lead to spiritual danger or sin." God can, by various means, stop us from going into spiritual danger, if we are prayerful and willing to be led by Him. Psalm 141v4, 1Cor 10v13, Acts 16v6-9. We should always be prepared for our heavenly Father's stops or diversions.

We must trust God to deliver us from evil, and the Evil One.

In the phrase, "lead us not into temptation," Jesus was speaking of dangers and temptations that can be avoided by prayerful living. See Luke 22v40. Here He speaks of conflicts with evil that we cannot avoid and must face. These conflicts demand a prayerful life and a real faith in God, for we cannot defeat Satan on our own, we must draw near to God before we can effectively resist the Devil. James 4v6-8. Persecution or opposition of some kind or other will always come against the consecrated child of God, and supernatural opposition from Satan is often channelled through his earthly friends. Matt 4v1-11, Acts 13v50-52, 2Cor 1v8-10, Eph 1v2, 6v10-20, 2Thes 3v1-3, 2Tim 2v12, 3v12. We must believe that God will deliver us, and will answer our prayers, as we follow and obey our Lord's pattern of prayer, and if our prayers accomplish anything, we must remember that His power has brought it to pass, and we must give Him all the glory.

Appendix VIII: Concerning The Promised Return Of The Lord Jesus (By W F P Burton)

Mr Burton writes: I cannot even remember the time when I was ignorant of the promise of the Lord Jesus to return again and take the saints to Himself. As soon as I learned to spell, I could decipher on our sitting room wall the text, "Surely I come quickly," Rev 22v20, and underneath, in red letters, "Perhaps today."

I was saved at nineteen years of age, and very literally, for over sixty years, my whole life has been, and still is, one great yearning longing for His return. Such passages as, "To those who look for Him shall He appear..." Heb 9v28. "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." Matt 24v44. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Titus 2v13. Such passages, I say, and many others of a similar nature, were construed as meaning that I must be in a constant attitude of expectancy. Hundreds and thousands of times, by day and by night, I have looked up and thought that those fleecy coverings of the sky might burst asunder and reveal my beloved Lord, the Bridegroom of the Church, coming for His bride.

Of course, I know all about the sceptic's jibe, that "up" in Great Britain would be "down" in New Zealand. I know, too, that there are billions of clouds over the earth. Nevertheless, "Behold He cometh with clouds and every eye shall see Him." Rev 1v7. At least ten times in Scripture His return is associated with clouds. Since He has promised to take the dead in Christ and the living in Christ, I shall be caught up, for I am in Christ. 1Thess 4v16,17. "We shall all be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye." 1Cor 15v51,52.

Some have imagined a secret coming, when the unsaved will suddenly find their Christian associates and relatives missing. They have imagined, for example, the Christian engine driver caught up and his train hurtling on driver-less to destruction. I could not agree to that, since the shout and the trumpet blast must be heard by all alike. 1Thess 4v16. It will be with blazing splendour, like the lightening, or day-dawn. Matt 24v27, 16v27. True, His coming is likened seven times to that of a thief, but that must be in its unexpectedness; hardly in its secrecy. It will not be silently, but with a mighty shout. "Every eye shall see Him." Rev 1v7.

I have given years of intensive study to dispensational truth. Some Christians dismiss prophetic teaching as something incomprehensible, or at least as a hobby for a few visionary cranks. Early in my Christian experience, however, I saw that the young Thessalonian believers were not ignorant of the times and seasons, so I must be ignorant either. 1Thess 5v1,2. For example, concerning "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet," the Lord Jesus said, Matt 24v15, "Whoso readeth let him understand." I determined to understand and have frequently given whole days to ferreting out these precious truths, reading through the whole Bible repeatedly in over twenty different versions, in four different languages, marking and tabulating with concordances and lexicons at my elbow, lest I should miss some truth. Of late I have devoted from twelve midnight till two or three in the morning to Bible study, when the world is quiet and there are no interruptions.

In my early Christian experience, I was taught to believe that first Christ would come **FOR** His saints, into the clouds, and that after an indeterminate period, covering at least part of that unparalleled tribulation which is to precede Christ's return, He would descend **WITH** His saints to earth.

It is evident that the last days of this dispensation are to be the darkest. "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith." 1Tim 4v1-3. "In the last days perilous times shall come..." 2Tim 3v1-5. "That day shall not come except there come a falling away first." 2Thess 2v1-4. "In the latter time of their kingdom, when transgressors are come to the full..." Dan 8v23-25. "At that time there shall be a time of trouble such as never was..." Dan 12v1,2. "Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be." Matt 24v21. "At midnight... Behold the bridegroom cometh." Matt 25v6.

As I have ministered God's Word in assemblies large and small, white and black, for over sixty years, I have desired to be most careful that I was in line with the Truth. I have consulted the standard works on dispensational truth by Seiss, Trotter, Savage, Anderson, Pember, S. D. Gordon, Tregelles, McConkey, Samuel Wilkerson, David Baron, and many others less well known. These books I have not only read, but also studied deeply, making marginal notes, etc. In order to facilitate my study, I have devised a series of marks in one of my Bibles: a yellow arrow **UP** indicates verses dealing with Christ's coming in the clouds and our rapture to Him, and a yellow arrow **DOWN** beside verses which speak of His return to earth with His saints. Here, however, I found myself in some quandary, for certain passages obviously refer to both. For instance:

1) When Christ rose from the Mount of Olives and disappeared in the clouds, the two messengers in white declared that, "He shall come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven. Acts 1v11 with Luke 24v50,51. Bethany is on the Eastern slope of the Mount of Olives and when the Lord returns to deliver Jerusalem "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives.... and all the saints with Thee." Zech 14v4,5. That obviously calls for a yellow arrow **DOWN**, yet the spectators of His ascension were believers, and if He is to return for believers, that should be indicated by a yellow arrow **UP**. The messengers in white spoke of no intermediate coming for His saints, nor of a subsequent coming to the earth. It was just **ONE** coming for His saints to the Mount of Olives.

2) I have used Acts 15v14-18 as a clear passage, showing God's programme in the administration of His authority in this world. The passage shows four definite steps: first Israel; then the Gentiles; after that Israel again; and, finally, a universal worldwide sway. "I will build again the tabernacle of David," points back to God's dealings in the past and forward to His taking up Israel again. In between is the Gentile dispensation, the Church, in which we find ourselves

today. God is taking out of the Gentiles a people for His Name. The next step is to be ushered in by the return of the Lord, for He says, "I will return and rebuild...." How can one point the arrow in that case? **UP** for the consummation of the Gentile age, yet **DOWN** for the time when Christ will return to reign as Israel's king. It is just one coming.

3) A similar passage is in 2Thess 1v7,8. Our rest will be when Christ comes for us, but Paul places it **WHEN** the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels. In flaming fire taking vengeance..." That is certainly at His coming to earth. Was Paul right in placing the saints rest at the time when Christ comes to earth? Of course the God-inspired epistle to the Thessalonians is without fault, even though it may not fit in with our theories. But this passage continues further in the same strain, for in 2Thess 1v9 and 10, Paul speaks of the punishment of the wicked with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, "**WHEN** He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe....in that day." **In other words His coming to punish the wicked and to be glorified in the saints IS THE SAME COMING.**

4) That brilliant and devout scholar S.P. Tregelles draws our attention to 1Cor 15v51-54, where the resurrection and translation of the saints is associated with a particular passage in Isaiah, "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Isaiah 27v7 and 8 shows it to be the time when the Lord shall reign in Mount Zion, **so there cannot be any lapse of time between His coming for the saints and His coming to reign. Rev 11v15-18, 22v12.**

For many years, though teaching in all its fullness the second coming of the Lord, I have hesitated to speak of the **TIME** of His coming. I have answered questions as to when He will come by Luke 21v27-31, the nations moving toward their final condition, as indicated in Daniel and Revelation, "when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." Or I have shown enquirers Mark 13v13v32, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man."

In order to support the teaching of two distinct comings, it is necessary to add "Of course, that is not His coming for His saints but His coming with them." But was it? These were the same disciples who were the foundation members of His Church and in Mark 13v37. Christ says, "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

Again, "For the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt 24v22. One had to add, "Of course, this does not refer to the Church, for she will have been taken up to heaven before that. This must refer to the tribulation saints." **But Jesus did not say that. He simply said, "The elect," and we are all part of that elect.**

In dealing with Matt 24v14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations: and then shall the end come;" it was added (by those who believe in the pre-tribulation rapture of the Church), "Of course, that is quite different from the gospel of God's grace." But is it? Jesus said, "**THIS GOSPEL.**" Paul said, "Though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let Him be accursed." Gal 1v8. Right up to the last sight we have of Paul, in the last verse of "The Acts of the Apostles," He was still expounding and testifying the kingdom of God. The Gospel of the kingdom is just the same sweet old Gospel by which we are saved and Jesus is our king too, "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of Lords." 1Tim 6v15.

To return to my own experience, I had to make a solid determination that at all costs, I would read no more into the Scriptures than was written. To add or detract would bring very serious results. Rev 22v18 and 19. Let me be sincere at all costs. His coming should be His coming: just that and no more. The elect should be the elect, and not this or that elect unless Jesus said so.

Considerable light came to me in looking up in Moulton and Milligan's Greek Lexicon the word "**apantesin,**" "to meet," used in 1Thess 4v17, "caught up **to meet** the Lord in the air." **It is an exact word implying an official welcome to a newly arrived dignitary. It is used in Acts 28v15, where "the brethren came to meet us." The Christians went out of Rome to meet Paul and to conduct Him into their city. Just so we shall be caught up to give the Lord Jesus an official welcome and to return with Him to the Mount of Olives.**

In Rev 20v4 and 5, those who refuse the worship and mark of the Beast, the man of sin, are included in the first resurrection, so they cannot partake in that resurrection before the man of sin has appeared. **Moreover, since it is the FIRST resurrection, there can have been no other before it. The usual explanation given is that the rapture is "the first part of the first resurrection." Is not that a quibble? Surely it is adding to the Word of God, and making it of none effect. Note that in 2Thess 2v8, the man of sin, the Anti-Christ, is to be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming ("epiphaneia tees parousias autou"), so that Christ's coming cannot occur before "that Wicked" has run his three year course. Rev 13v5.**

Another passage which teaches that there will be one coming and not two is Matt 13v24-30,37-43. v38. "The good seed are the children of the kingdom." The bad seed "are the children of the Wicked One." v30. "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares and bind

them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."... v41. "The Son of man shall send forth His angels and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend."... v43. "Then shall the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their Father." **Note particularly, "both grow together until the harvest," and the tares are dealt with FIRST.**

The second chapter of Second Thessalonians was for some time a puzzle to me. However, I note that nearly all the translations put for "huper," "as touching, concerning," and the whole passage becomes plain. **"CONCERNING THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST AND OUR GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM....THAT DAY SHALL NOT COME, EXCEPT THERE COME A FALLING AWAY FIRST, AND THE MAN OF SIN BE REVEALED."** **The rapture of the saints cannot occur before the great apostasy and the revelation of the Man of Sin:** the beast whose picture is seen in Rev 13 and 2Thess 2v1-10.

The Lord Jesus said that He would go away and come again. He told them that they should not see Him till they could say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt 23v39. No sort of discrimination: just that He would return. So the disciples asked, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the age?" Matt 24v3. In reply He told them of the intervening tribulation and of the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet. Then in Matt 24v29,30, He continued, **"IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TRIBULATION OF THOSE DAYS** shall the sun be darkened....and **THEN** shall appear the sign of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven: and **THEN** shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." **When shall He come? "IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TRIBULATION OF THOSE DAYS."** **It is THEN that the seventh and last trumpet will sound. 1Cor 15v52, Rev 11v15-19, Matt 24v31, 1Thess 4v16; when He will pour wrath upon the godless and give rewards to the saints. Rev 22v12.**

One of the surest ways of exposing an error is to note the weakness of the arguments advanced in its favour. The two texts so often used to prove the pre-tribulation rapture are Dan 12v1 and 1Thess 5v9. In Dan 12v1, after speaking of a time of unparalleled tribulation, Daniel says, "At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Now thank God we are among His people, and we are written in the book, so at that time we shall be delivered, but note that it does not say before the tribulation, or in the tribulation, or after the tribulation. Thus it is no proof either the one way or the other.

Of 1Thess 5v9, "God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." We all know that for us the wrath is passed and that when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, it is to take vengeance on those who know not God and who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Thess 1v8. Thus we have no fear as to that day of wrath, but **the passage says nothing about being delivered from tribulation.** How about the millions that have been put to awful deaths in China, Russia, Congo and Korea, for no other sin than that they were Christians. Thus neither text can be taken to prove that the saints will not go through the tribulation, and the weakness of the pre-tribulation teaching is evidenced in its having to quote such texts to support it.

The question arises: How can intervening events, before the return of the Lord, affect our looking for Him, waiting for Him, being ready for His coming? How can we live in eager anticipation if we know that the awful tribulation must come first? It is moving to notice in the last few chapters of John, Christ's eager looking forward to His return to the Father. There are fourteen mentions of His going away, going to the Father, etc. Even though the Lord Jesus knew that Calvary lay between, yet it did not dim His hope of seeing His Father again. Indeed, it was the joy that was set before Him which sustained Him in those awful hours of enduring the cross, descent into Hades and shame. Acts 2v27, Heb 12v2.

A woman, as she draws near to the time when she will take her newborn babe in her arms, naturally dreads the ordeal of the birth pangs, but that does not hinder her eagerness to welcome her little one. Similarly, though every one of us would prefer to think that we would escape the coming tribulation, yet in spite of it, we look forward to the glories that lie beyond. **Indeed, it is that blessed hope of His coming, which will sustain the saints in their hour of greatest trial.**

This is not a question of what we would like, but of what the Bible teaches. One naturally inclines to the attractive idea that the Church will escape the great tribulation, but by all means let us be loyal to THE WORD OF GOD. There is no Scripture to say that the Holy Spirit, or the Church is to be removed before the Great tribulation. The restrainer of 2Thess 2v7 is God, but it is **ONLY** God's restraint that is removed from the Devil and the powers of darkness, **NOT** God's Presence from the earth (for Acts 2v15-21 clearly teaches that God the Holy Spirit is working upon earth right up until the Christ's 2nd Coming)! The result of the removal of this restraint by God is that the "mystery of iniquity" works fully with the man of sin (Antichrist) being revealed (who sits in the Temple in Jerusalem claiming that he is God) and the ensuing of the Great Tribulation. Dan 12v1, Matt 24v15-21, 2Thess 2v3,4,8,9, Rev 7v14, 13 (all)

If the Spirit and the Church are to be removed from the earth dominated by Satan, how can the world have its greatest revival, with converts that no man can number? Rev 7v14. The saints will continue to be

massacred till the end, Rev 6v11, but they are promised preservation through and out of tribulation. Psalm 121v6, Isaiah 26v20, Jer 39v17,18, Zeph 2v3, Dan 12v1, Luke 21v36, John 17v15, 2Pet 2v9, Rev 3v10, (Exodus 9v6,8,26, 10v23)

It is amazing to note how persistently false teachers echo the error that the Church will be removed, and the Holy Spirit taken away, before that last great tribulation. One would almost think that by their constant reiteration they could make wrong right, and all because of 2Thess 2v7 where the Holy Spirit is not even mentioned. They tell us that Matthew 24 is "Jewish," yet it is spoken to some of the same disciples as John chapters 14 to 16. Are they also "Jewish?" These were the foundation members of the Christian Church.

Was ever so important a doctrine as the return of the Lord Jesus mishandled so sadly, without any solid foundation whatever. They virtually declare, "I have made up my mind, so please don't confuse me with facts." Brethren, may I plead for a sane return to the Word of God, and let us not read into it more than is written there.

WHEN WILL CHRIST COME? IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TRIBULATION. Matt 24v29,30.

Appendix IX: How Can I Be Filled With The Holy Spirit?

Introduction

1) It is a thing most wonderful, Almost too wonderful to be, That God's own Son should come from heaven, And die to save a child like me.

2) And yet I know that it is true; He chose a poor and humble lot, And wept, and toiled and mourned and died, For love of those who loved Him not.

(To these lovely words by William How, 1823 to 1897. I add the following verse.)

3) It is too wonderful for words, Almost too wonderful to be; That God should send the Holy Ghost, To comfort, help, and dwell in me.

In 2Cor 12v4, Paul says the words and things he experienced on a visit to heaven were indescribable and unspeakable, "anekdiegetos" (Strong's NT:411) too wonderful for words. In 1Pet 1v8, Peter tells us that our faith, and love for Jesus, causes us to "rejoice with joy unspeakable ("arrhetos" (Strong's NT:731) inexpressible) and full of glory." In 2Cor9v15, Paul thanks God for Jesus, His indescribable and unspeakable, "anekdiegetos" (Strong's NT:411) gift to us. God the Father gave the promise of the Holy Spirit, and sent Him to us, "another Helper" like Jesus, another unspeakable gift, too wonderful for words. The Holy Spirit comes to help us in worship, and enables us to express the inexpressible and unspeakable.

The baptism in the Spirit was the secret both of the worship and the power of the early Church. Unfortunately many today are like the Ephesians in Acts 19v1-6, we read in Acts 19v1,2, "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.." Many who say "I believe in the Holy Spirit" have not experienced His power or gifts, but they are there for us all, if we seek and claim them.

1) Why Our Heavenly Father Desires To Give Us The Baptism In The Holy Spirit

a) Our heavenly Father loves to give

God is love, He is perfectly unselfish and wholeheartedly generous. 1John 4v8-10. Our Father is the most bountiful giver, even to the ungrateful and selfish; He is full of mercy and kindness. Luke 6v35,36, Psalm 103 (all), 107v8,15,21,31,43. Our God of love even gave His own dear Son for our salvation, and with Him He freely gives us all things. John 3v16, Rom 8v31-39.

b) Our heavenly Father loves us so much

We are so very precious to God, and He makes us the objects of His wondrous love and affection. John 16v24,27. Our heavenly Father is much more loving and kind than the very best earthly father. Matt 7v7-11, Luke 11v9-13. It is an amazing fact that God loves us with the same tender love that He loves His only begotten Son, John 17v23,26, and Jesus loves us on this same incredible level of love. John 15v9. cf. 13v34. God's love is always a "much more" love, it "surpasses human understanding" and longs to do "immeasurably more than all our highest prayers or thoughts, or hopes

and dreams." Luke 11v13, Eph 3v14-21. Rejoice in His wonderful love, and claim and receive His "exceeding great and precious promises" to you. 2Pet 1v1-4.

c) Our heavenly Father desires us to know Himself and the Lord Jesus in a deeper way

The Holy Spirit has come to reveal Jesus and the Father to us. John 15v26, 16v12-15, Eph 1v15-23, 3v14-21. The disciples were full of joy and praise before Pentecost, because of a glorious fellowship with their risen Lord; however, Jesus promised, and they experienced, a new and greater revelation of their Lord and spiritual realities, at their baptism in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Beset as we are by the world, the flesh and the Devil, earthly armour fails us, we can only overcome by God's help, the baptism in the Spirit is His answer to our needs and the wickedness around us. The revelation of God to the inner depths of our souls, is the only thing that can bring spiritual victory and satisfy our deepest longings for God. 2Cor 3v12-18.

d) Our heavenly Father wants to manifest Himself to the Church and the World

Though the disciples had the Lord Jesus with them, and many of them had experienced His ministry through them to a remarkable degree, He told them plainly that the baptism in the Spirit would give them a more powerful ministry for Him. Acts 1v1-8. Paul said, in 1Cor 12v7, "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for the common good;" "manifestation" is "phanerosis" (Strong's NT:5321) which means "a making visible, a shining forth, an appearing, a making known in a definite and tangible manner." Mark 4v22, 16v14, 1Cor 2v9,10, 2Cor 4v2. The baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit are intended to bring an overwhelming sense of the presence of God. God does not intend us to apprehend spiritual things or the Holy Spirit's presence by blind faith alone, the healing of the sick, the release of Satan's captives, make it plain that God is in the midst of His people. 1Cor 14v23-25, Acts 8v5-14. Jesus said that people needed the evidence of signs and wonders to help them believe, He, therefore, did many signs and wonders, for the very purpose of creating faith and saving the souls of His hearers, and sent out many preachers with miraculous ministries to do the same. John 4v48, 5v19-25, 10v37,38, 11v15, Luke 9v1,2, 10v1-9, Mark 16v17,20, 1Cor 2v4, 2Cor 12v12, Rom 15v18,19. Even the greatest miracles will fail to win some people, Jesus said that many of Israel's religious leaders had seen and hated Himself and the Father, they rejected His gracious words and mighty acts. John 15v22-26, Matt 11v20-24. **Rejection of God when He is manifested in great signs and wonders, is the final act of spiritual suicide.** Mark 3v22-30. This was why Jesus refused to give a sensational sign to the sceptics of Matt 12v38-42; they did not need a sign, they already had a multitude of them, they needed to genuinely repent of their sins and accept Christ.

Spiritual decadence is due to a lack of a vision of God and His gifts and ministries. Judges 2v7-11, Prov 29v18. History shows that when we get away from God, we rely more and more upon what we can do, and are less able to trust God for the miraculous manifestations of His presence. When we do this, we shall find, as Israel did, that our enemies are always stronger than we are. God does not glorify unholy human endeavour, but He does delight to show His power to those who trust Him, particularly if the odds are stacked against us, and we are in great need; so He used Jonathan and his armour bearer, Gideon and his 300, to defeat great armies, and David the shepherd boy to defeat the giant Goliath, and Christ's despised apostolic band to lay the foundation of His Church. 1Cor 1v26-31, Eph 2v19,20.

2) The Scriptures Show That The Baptism In The Spirit Takes Place AFTER The New Birth

The apostles were born again years before their baptism in the Spirit

The apostles were converted before Pentecost; their names, like those of the 70, were "written in heaven," Luke 10v20; they were "clean," John 15v2,3; they were not of the world, and belonged to God, John 17v6,9-16,23; they had received Jesus and believed in Him, and He said they were His friends and brethren. John 1v12, 15v15, 17v8, Matt 12v48-50. At Pentecost these believers received the baptism in the Spirit that had been promised to them. Acts 2v1-4. We know from John 7v37-39, that the Holy Spirit was not given until Jesus was glorified, and that the baptism in the Holy Spirit was not available to the Church until the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The following records in Acts show that Christians received the baptism in the Spirit **AFTER** their conversion, not at conversion.

The Samaritans were baptised in the Spirit a considerable time after their conversion

At Samaria many accepted Philip's sign-attested ministry and became joyful believers in Jesus; it was several, even many days later, that Peter and John came to Samaria to lay hands on these born-again, and water-baptised converts, that they might receive 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. Joy, peace, sanctification, or love, cannot be looked upon as a claim for being baptised in the Spirit; these are the even more important "fruit of the Spirit," which are the result of abiding in Christ and being led of the Spirit. Gal 5v16-25. **To be a balanced Christian we need both gifts and fruit, both "great grace and great power."** Acts 4v33.

Paul experienced his baptism in the Spirit a few days after his conversion

Paul became a Christian when he met the Lord Jesus on the Damascus road. He owned Christ as Lord, saying, "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. Acts 9v6,9,17.

The remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his friends

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the house of Cornelius proves that Christians can receive the baptism in the Spirit a few seconds or minutes after believing in Jesus as Saviour, and without having previously been baptised in water, and without having the laying on of hands. Acts 10v34-48. God gave Cornelius and his devout friends the sign of the gift of tongues, to prove to bigoted Jews at Jerusalem, and elsewhere, that God desired to save and forgive the despised Gentiles, and had welcomed them into His Church. Acts 11v1-18.

The Ephesians received their baptism in the Spirit some time after their conversion

In Acts 19v2 Paul asks the question, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost **since** ye believed?" However, some have translated this as, "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit **when** ye believed?" The first translation states that the baptism of the Spirit takes place after conversion, the second states that the baptism of the Spirit is at conversion. Which translation is correct? The words translated "since ye believed" and "when ye believed," are the translation of the Greek word "pisteusantes," the aorist participle of "pisteuo" (Strong's NT4100) which means "to believe."

Machen writes in his "New Testament Greek for Beginners," "The aorist participle denotes action prior to the action denoted by the leading verb, whether the action denoted by the verb is present, past, or future." The leading verb in Acts 19v2, is "elabete" (Strong's NT:2983) which is translated in the A.V. as "Have ye received," and in the R.V. as, "Did ye receive," R.V.. The literal translation of "pisteusantes," is having believed." Therefore, according to the Machan's rule, the literal translation of Acts 19v2, is, "Having believed, did ye receive the Holy Spirit." The aorist participle, "having believed" speaking of an action which took place **before** the action of the leading verb, "did ye receive?" So the believing took place before the receiving of the Spirit. **The Scriptures nowhere look upon salvation and the baptism of the Spirit as identical events, so the aorist participle of identical action cannot apply here, the more usual aorist participle of antecedent action applies here.**

F.F. Bruce states that the term "disciples" is a term that was commonly used for Christians, and that if these disciples had been disciples of John, Luke would have said so explicitly. It does not say that they were disciples of John, who Paul had to lead to Jesus, it says they only knew the baptism of John. The disciples at Ephesus were undoubtedly Christians whose knowledge of Christianity was in a similar faulty condition to the knowledge of the "fervent" Apollos; before he was more accurately instructed by Priscilla and Aquila. Acts 18v24-28. Apollos was a Christian who was "mighty in the Scriptures," "and was instructed in the way of the Lord;" and "spake and taught diligently the way of the Lord;" but he too only knew the baptism of John. It seems that these Christians were converted through the ministry of Apollos. This is confirmed by the fact that these two events are recorded together. Acts 18v24 to 19v6. It was, then, a considerable time after their conversion, that these Ephesian Christians received their baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Even if, as some say, these were disciples of John, who became Christians when Paul spoke to them, it still follows that they were baptised in the Spirit some time after their conversion; for some time must also have elapsed before and after their baptism in water, and the laying on of the apostle's hands for the baptism in the Spirit, even if it were only a matter of minutes or hours. Their baptism in the Spirit occurred, therefore, some time after their conversion, 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 "pisteusantes"), ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

3) The Gift Of Tongues And The Baptism In The Spirit

In Acts 2v4, 10v45,46, 11v17 and 19v6, when Christians received the baptism in the Spirit, they all spoke with tongues. With the exception of the outpouring at Ephesus, we do not read of any other manifestations of the gifts, and at Ephesus they prophesied in addition to speaking in tongues. From humble housewives to mighty apostles, the initial conclusive evidence of their baptism in the Spirit was speaking in tongues. The Holy Spirit did not give various gifts as the evidence of the baptism, He gave the gift of tongues to all. Peter did not say that the household of Cornelius had received the Holy Spirit because they had believed the Gospel, and had accepted Christ, or were filled with joy, or were living sanctified lives, desirable and essential as all these are. Peter said that they were unmistakably filled with the Holy Spirit, because they had spoken with tongues, like the 120 on the day of Pentecost. Acts 11v17,18.

There are two more instances in the book of Acts, where it states that Christians received the baptism in the Spirit. In the case of the Samaritans in Acts 8v14-20; even commentators who are not Pentecostal agree that what Simon saw was the Samaritans speaking in tongues. We read of Paul's baptism in the Spirit in Acts 9v17; we know from 1Cor.14v5,18., that Paul spoke in tongues, and esteemed the gift of tongues very highly in private prayer, for he thanked God that he spoke

in tongues even more than the Corinthians, and desired every Christian to speak in tongues. This must have been the will of God, or Paul would not have dared to say such a thing.

The baptism in the Spirit is an overwhelming experience to the prepared heart; indeed, the Holy Spirit's gift of tongues is the only thing that enables us to express what Charles Finney called the "unutterable gushings" of praise, adoration, and worship of God, that fill the soul when we receive a mighty baptism in the Spirit. The apostolic band did not quibble about the gift of tongues, or God's choice of it as the initial evidence of their baptism in the Spirit, they joyfully accepted it and rejoiced that the Holy Spirit had lifted them above the limitations of their own vocabulary and spiritual perception, and had given them the ability to pray and worship as they ought. Let us take these New Testament Christians as the pattern of our baptism in the Spirit, others, even the good and the best, may lead us far astray.

ALWAYS seek an encounter with God, more than His gifts

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 Jesus our baptising Lord, it is the effect of the baptism in the Spirit, not the cause.** We should not try to get Christians to speak in tongues at any cost, so that they can be told, "You have received your baptism." Our whole emphasis should be on an encounter with Jesus. In the New Testament the filling of the Spirit preceded the speaking with tongues. The baptism in the Spirit does not come through physical or soulish techniques, it comes through a living communion with Christ. We should not be satisfied by how many "tongue statistics" we can quote, but in how many Christians have received a new revelation of Christ, which has come with transforming power at their baptism in the Spirit. It does not satisfy the soul of the seeker, if they speak in tongues without feeling a fullness of the Spirit, and a heightened perception of the closeness and preciousness of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

If there is an absence of soul-searching, consecration, and a thirsting after God in His Word and in prayer, Christians may well have an experience that does not reach or satisfy the deep yearnings of the inner depths of the soul, even though they may have spoken with tongues. This can cause Christians to doubt their baptism and gifts, when Satan comes to attack their experience. We should not be satisfied until Christians have received a soul-satisfying baptism in the Spirit, that brings an overwhelming experience of the nearness and preciousness of our dear Lord Jesus and our heavenly Father.

God desires the baptism in the Spirit to be the gateway to the regular manifestations of His gifts; He wants us to be the channels of Christ's life, love, knowledge and power. It is only possible to convey this life, love and power to others, when we have a deep personal experience of God through the Holy Spirit's ministrations. Even our Lord, who was "full of grace and truth," did no public signs or miracles until He was empowered by the Holy Spirit at Jordan. John 1v14, 2v11, 3v34,35, 5v19,20, Luke 3v21,22, 4v1,14-23. God desires to give the baptism in the Spirit to all Christians; "the promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call;" and again, "how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Acts 2v39, Luke 11v13.

If we are seeking the baptism in the Spirit, and are finding difficulty in receiving it, we should remember that we are God's dear children, and that He loves us with a love that passeth knowledge. We must leave our anxiety, perplexity, struggles and disappointment, in our Father's tender care, and not allow ourselves to listen to the lies of Satan and get dejected and depressed. We are safe in the arms of Jesus, and in our heavenly Father's tender care; take heart struggling Christian, God tenderly loves you. The Father, Son and Spirit are wholly on your side. John 16v26,27, NB v12-15.

What Are The Conditions For Receiving The Baptism In The Holy Spirit?

Jesus said that the unconverted cannot receive the baptism in the Spirit, for He is "the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive." John 14v16,17. While it is true that Peter in Acts 2, used the promise of the Holy Spirit as part of his Gospel message; we must remember that the majority of his hearers were "devout men from every nation under heaven;" we have to be careful not to cast our heavenly pearls before those who cannot appreciate them. Matt 7v6, Acts 2v5,38,39. **Peter told these devout Jews, that repentance and faith in Jesus, were the pre-requisites for receiving the baptism in the Spirit.** These simple conditions make it possible for all true Christians to receive the baptism in the Spirit. However, we have to walk with God to **keep** a real fullness of the Spirit and a God-glorifying life. Psalm 24v1-6, 1Cor 9v24 to 10v15. The promises for retaining blessing in the Old Testament were always conditional. Gen 17v1-8 and Deut 28v1-68. The New Testament promises also carry a strong conditional "if." John 15v6,7,10,14, Acts 8v37, Rom 8v17, 1Cor 15v1,2, 2Tim 2v11,12, Heb 3v6,14, 4v1,7, 10v26,38. Repentance starts, and carries us along the path of spiritual safety and blessing. The careless, prayerless, and unconsecrated Christian is in grave spiritual danger. In the final reckoning, the attitudes of heart and mind that bring spiritual victory and safety, will also bring joy and blessing, for they are sustained by exactly the same means of grace. Though we can never earn or merit blessing from God, there are attitudes of mind and heart that will preserve us from spiritual danger, and will open our hearts and lives to God, so that He can bless us more freely.

We do not have to be perfect before we can experience the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit

In Psalm 68v18 and Eph 4v8, we are told that God gives gifts and ministries to rebellious imperfect people, so that we might be improved by them, and "that the Lord God might dwell among them." This is why even some very faulty Corinthians "came behind in no gift." 1Cor 1v7. No one would receive either baptism or gifts of the Holy Spirit, if we were to be perfect before we received them. However, if a church lacks Christian love, it can, like the Corinthian church, be anything but a happy place, or a good testimony for the Lord. 1Cor 13 (all). **We should always seek the fruit of the Spirit as well as the gifts of the Spirit, and the giver more than His gifts. The balanced Christian is one who manifests both fruit and gifts of the Spirit.**

How To Receive And Retain A Pentecostal Fullness

The following attitudes of heart and means of grace will help us to receive and retain a fullness of the Holy Spirit.

1) We Must Seek Out Jesus And The Father In Faith

When we seek the baptism in the Spirit and His gifts, we must "ask in faith with no doubting," we must believe that God is "a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." We have every reason to trust our unchangeable, good and gracious "Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change," from whom, "every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift" proceeds. The Trinity love us with a love that surpasses knowledge. James 1v5-7,16,17, Eph 3v19, Heb 11v6, 6v13-20.

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, Luke 24v25-29,44,45, John 20v1-31, 1Cor 15v3-8. We too can experience the strengthening grace of our Lord in our times of trial and "faith distress."

The Christian's fight of faith

All Christians experience some kind of "fight of faith," and 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 caused by the demanding pressures of life that we cannot avoid, such as financial and health problems, difficulties in our home and work circumstances, 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 Christians without the essential spiritual support they need, when they 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, Matt 11v27, 19v26, 21v22, 1Cor 3v21,22, Rev 21v5,7.

2) We Must Determine To Obey God And Live A Holy Life

Obedience, purity and holiness are essential companions of faith

Wilful sin will not only hinder faith, it can end in apostasy. 1Cor 10v1-13, Luke 8v13-15, Heb 3v6 to 4v16, 6v1-12, 10v26-29, 1Tim 1v19, 1Sam 15v22,23. Fellowship with God and other Christians is conditional upon us walking in love and purity; spiritual darkness envelops those who are sinful, disobedient and worldly. 1John 1v3-7, 2v3-17, 5v1-5,18,20. Careless worldly living fills our lives with injurious thorns and briars instead of the fruit of the Spirit, this injurious thorny ground is "nigh unto cursing." Heb 6v6-9. Those who live loosely without moral effort, love, and obedience to God, are walking down the broad way to destruction. Matt 7v12-29, Rom 6v1-23, 8v1-9, Luke 6v43-48. Jesus warned us that we must "dig deep," and have solid foundations, or our spiritual house will collapse in ruins, and we will "fall away" from grace. Luke 6v46-49, 8v13. However, as we yield to God, a glorious harvest will grow in our lives, that will bring blessing to all who meet us. Gal 5v22,23.

God will never despise a broken and contrite heart Psalm 51v17, Isaiah 66v2

A feeling of need, a brokenness of spirit and heart examination, will always precede and accompany a genuine revival; however, these Christian qualities should not be confused with a state of morbid introspection, unbelieving anxious

despair, or Satan inspired depression and dejection. We should remember, that though our need is great, God is immeasurably greater than our need, and He is wholly on our side. We should be honest with ourselves and God, about any deficiencies of character that we find in ourselves, but these should not drive us to despair, but to the throne of grace, where our great Saviour and High Priest has a plenitude of mercy and grace to meet our every need. Isaiah 66v2, Matt 5v2-4, Heb 4v12-16. True holiness is beautiful and attractive and must not be confused with a negative morbid introspection, or a "holier than thou" attitude, which God abhors. Isaiah 65v5. An affected devotion, or outward veneer of sanctity; is an empty and loathsome imitation of true holiness; which is a warm, tender and sacrificial quality of character.

Holiness does not merely mean, "to be free from sin or evil;" nor does it just mean purity, which means, "to love righteousness and hate evil;" for though purity of life is an essential constituent of true holiness, holiness goes even further than purity, it carries the thought of service and devotion to God, as well as separation from sin. The words "holiness" and "sanctification" are translations of the same noun "hagiasmos" (Strong's NT:38) which occurs ten times in the New Testament. Rom 6v19,22, 1Cor 1v30, 1Thess 4v3,4,7, 2Thess 2v13, Heb 12v14, 1Pet 1v2. The verb "hagiazō" (Strong's NT:37) "to sanctify," and the adjective "hagios" (Strong's NT:40) "holy," occur many times in the New Testament. "Hagiazō" is used twice, in John 10v36 and 17v9, of our Lord being sanctified; this does not mean that Jesus needed to be purified, for He had always lived a perfect life. In John 10v36, we read the Father dedicated Jesus and sent Him into the world to be our Saviour, regardless of the pain that this would bring to His Father's heart. In John 17v19, Jesus states that He sanctified Himself, so that we might be sanctified. He is speaking of His amazing sacrificial dedication to the task of being our Saviour and High Priest. For our salvation, His great love for us drove Him, to depths of physical, emotional and spiritual suffering that we cannot conceive. This is true holiness.

Before any angels or men were created, the Trinity counted the enormous cost of our creation and salvation and were willing to pay it out of pure love for us. They have always been totally dedicated to their creation. 2Cor 8v9, Titus 1v2, Rev 13v8. The Seraphim, "Burning Ones," in Isaiah 6v2,3, are the "Living Beings" of Rev 4v6-8; for both groups radiate Divine energy and life, have six wings, and sing the same words. For untold millenniums they have been ceaselessly crying "holy, holy, holy," they are astonished by God's dedicated love for His creation. They do not rest, "anapausin," from "anapauo" (Strong's NT:372) "to relax," as in Matt 11v29, from praising God. They express amazed ceaseless adoration at the totally selfless and sacrificial nature of God. Their continual, "holy, holy, holy," does not just state the fact of the purity of God, marvellous as this may be; but the even more amazing total sacrificial devotion of God to His creation. Isaiah 6v3, Rev 4v8.

Sanctification Starts At The Cross; And The Trinity Sanctifies Us

The Trinity work together for our sanctification. The Holy Spirit regenerates us and cleans us up at the new birth, and endeavours to sanctify us. Titus 3v5, 2Thess 2v13, 1Peter 1v2. All Christians are "called to be saints," that is, "holy ones. Rom 1v7, 15v25,26,31, 16v2,15,16, 6v1,2, 2Cor 1v1, Eph 1v1, 3v8,18, Rev 5v8, 8v3,4, 15v3, etc. They are saints in the respect that their faith in Christ has "set them apart" from the world, and this should result in a very practical and real holiness. Sanctification begins at the cross of Jesus, when we repent of our sin and believe in Him as our Saviour. Holiness develops and deepens as the believer grows in grace and is more and more drawn into the ways and service of God. Eph 4v15, 1Peter 1v2,14-25, 2v2, 2Peter 3v18.

In Mal 3v1-3, we see Christ likened to a refiner of silver, these refiners used to sit over a pot of molten silver and draw the scum off until their faces were clearly mirrored in the silver, Christ desires to clean us up until we reflect His beauty, love, and holiness to others. If we do not let the Lord Jesus refine and beautify us now with His sacred fire, then the fire will try and burn up our works at the judgement seat of Christ. 1Cor 3v12-17, 2Cor 5v8-11. Failure to yield our lives to the purifying presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit, can result in a painful chastening from our loving heavenly Father, the aim of which is to make us partakers of His holiness, and to save us from being ashamed at Christ's coming. Heb 12v10, 1Cor 11v27-34, 1John 2v28. Under the New Covenant there is a definite emphasis upon purity of life, and a heart cleansed by the fire of God, and devotion to God. Luke 3v8,16,17, John 1v33, Acts 2v3,4,38,39, 2Cor 3v18, 1Peter 1v13-18.

Jesus is our example, we see Him at Jordan "full of grace and truth," completely consecrated to ourselves and His Father, perfectly loving and pure. He not only received the Father's "well done," but an immeasurable fullness of the Spirit as well. When we compare Christ's matchless sinless beauty, love and dedication, with our own great need, we can only feel unworthy, pitiful and beggarly, and quite undeserving of receiving any blessing from Him. But what is this that I hear from His lips? He tells me that He so loved me, that He died for me, and that my feeling of great need is a vital condition for receiving His blessing. Jesus declares that because I recognise my complete spiritual poverty without Him, I can claim heaven's riches with Him, and that because I hunger and thirst after righteousness, I shall be filled. Matt 5v3,6. As I abide in Christ and seek Him in prayer, I imbibe His beauty and grace, He is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. 1Cor 1v30. We have the victory over sin, failure and circumstances, through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is full of love and grace towards us, He never condemns the penitent seeker, it is the proud "arrived Pharisee" that He knows afar off. Rom 8v31-39, 1Cor 15v57, Rev 3v20-22. We can be greatly encouraged by the truth expressed in the following hymn of Thomas Binney (1798-1874).

1) Oh, how shall I, whose native sphere
Is dark, whose mind is dim,
Before th' Ineffable appear,
And on my natural spirit bear
The uncreated beam?

2) There is a way for man to rise
To Thee, sublime Abode;
An Offering and a Sacrifice,
A Holy Spirit's energies,
An Advocate with God:

3) We Must Thirst After Jesus And Our Heavenly Father

a) Thirsting For God's Word. Psalm 119v97,103

The "exceeding great and precious promises" of God are the foundation of every true revival, they give us the faith to ask for and receive our Father's "good gifts." 2Pet1v4-11, Luke 11v13. The Word of God is the food of faith, and faith will increase as we read it and believe it. John 20v30,31, Acts 20v32, Rom 10v17, 1Peter 2v2, 2Tim 3v14-17. Meditation upon the promises of God will give us the faith to receive God's promises. **If we desire a revival, we must get our pattern from God's Word, for others, even "the good and best," may lead us far astray.** We should test our experience by the Scriptures, not correct or interpret the Scriptures in the light of our experience. Those who say, "Our practice is not found in the Scriptures, but we believe it is right because we experience it;" are supplanting God's Word with their tradition. We can limit both God and our experience of God, by making the standards of others our guide instead of the Scriptures. Matt 22v29.

The first sign of a cold heart and spiritual backsliding, is not a lack of prayer, important as this is, but a lack of love and respect for the Word of God, and a neglect of its study. If we desire to receive a real fullness of the Spirit we must cast off critical unbelieving attitudes to the Scriptures, and humbly and earnestly seek God in His Word. **If we do not believe what God has said regarding the miraculous and other vital Christian truths, how can we expect to receive anything from Him?** An evil heart of unbelief kept Israel out of Canaan, and it will keep us from experiencing God's power and gifts. Psalm 95v1-11, Heb 3v12,19, 4v1-13, John 5v46,47. Without faith we cannot please God, faith is our capacity for God. Heb 11v5,6, John 10v26,27, 8v46,47. Those who have experienced the miracle of the new birth, can believe the miracles in the Bible, it is the unconverted who look upon the things of God as "foolishness." 1Cor 1v18-25, 2v14. Failure to accept and believe the things that Jesus taught and believed, will mean that we have little or no spiritual progress. John 8v28-36, 17v8,13,14,17. Those who feed in faith on the Scriptures, will find that they receive an experience of God that is "exceedingly above all that we can ask or think."

b) Thirsting for God's presence in prayer

We should not say, "If the Lord wants to give me the baptism in the Spirit, He will do so, in His own good time; I am not going to seek this blessing, God will give it to me when I am ready for it;" for it is still true that, "ye have not, because ye ask not." James 4v2,3. Jesus told us to "ask, seek and knock," to receive our Father's good gifts and the Holy Spirit. Matt 7v7-11, Luke 11v5-13. The New Testament does not teach that there has to be a long period of waiting before we can expect to receive the baptism in the Spirit, but it does say that we have to thirst after Christ and the Father. Luke 11v9-13, John 7v37-39. From Acts 19v2, we see that Paul believed that a Christian should receive the baptism in the Spirit as soon as possible after their conversion. However, Christians who have been taught for years that spiritual gifts are "not for today," often have a lot to unlearn, and it may take some time to clear away the theological rubbish that they have been taught, before they can receive the baptism and gifts of the Spirit. We should never underestimate the satanic opposition that we will receive if we are seeking to be the channels of God's power and love. Satan will use every strategy to turn us away from the promise and purpose of God. Matt 4v1-12, Eph 6v10-20. **The initial Pentecostal outpouring had a background of fervent resolute prayer, and we shall have to imitate them if we are to defeat Satan's crafty and malicious attacks.** Acts 1v14.

It is a tragedy when Christians, who have received the baptism in the Spirit, stop seeking God, because they feel, or have been taught, that they have reached the goal of Christian experience. The baptism in the Spirit should not be looked upon as a goal, but rather as a gateway into the exciting possibilities of a Spirit-filled life, mighty experiences of the Holy Spirit's power and love, should follow the baptism in the Spirit. It is, in fact, essential to seek God even more after we have received the baptism in the Spirit, to keep and expand the experience that we have received, for Satan will try to rob us of the precious holy experience that God has given to us, just as he tried with the Lord Jesus. Matt 3v16, 4v1. Indeed, the greater manifestations of the gifts of power and revelation demand a close and humble walk with God, a very definite prayer life, and some Christian maturity. **It is a mistake to try and lead prayerless people and immature spiritual babes into the greater manifestations of the gifts of power and revelation, for it will only result in carnal impersonations.**

c) Thirsting for Christ and the Father in love and unity with other Christians

Lack of a prayerful, loving, Spirit-anointed fellowship is almost certainly the major reason why many Christians experience difficulty in receiving the baptism in the Spirit. Even our Lord Jesus needed and desired the help of others in prayer, the twelve were appointed "to be with Him," as well as to preach and heal the sick. Mark 3v14. In times of exceptional spiritual pressure, Peter, James and John, were asked by Christ to be His special close companions. Mark 5v35-43, 13v2-4, 14v32-42, Luke 5v5-11, 9v28-36,51. If Christ needed companions who were spiritually minded in times of spiritual conflict, we certainly do. A constant day-to-day fellowship with other like-minded, spiritual Christians, puts a protective spiritual umbrella over us. The Scripture states that co-operation of faith, in the will of God, can multiply our spiritual effectiveness tenfold. Deut 32v30. Christ believed in both private and public prayer, and the early Church followed His example. Luke 3v21, 5v16, 6v12, 9v18,28, 11v1, 22v39-46, Acts 1v14, 2v1,41,42, 3v1, 4v23-33. etc. **The early Church sought God with one accord, for long periods of time, and this is the reason for their spiritual effectiveness; we will not experience a revival unless we imitate them.**

Before the Pentecostal outpouring, the disciples "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication;" and after it, "the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul, -- they had all things in common." Acts 1v14, 4v32. God richly blesses those who "dwell together in unity." Psalm 133v1-3. Churches that lack this unity and love can be discouraging places, and the faith and spiritual progress of the Christians in them certainly suffers. 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 love and unity of the early Church at Jerusalem puts denominational pride, bigotry, and competition in its true light.**

A New Testament church consisted of all the Christians in an area or locality, there was no external visible organisation in the form of buildings, this was forbidden by the Roman State until Constantine's "Edict of Toleration," in 313 AD. Christians gathered for fellowship at any place or hour that was suitable, there was liberty as to when and where they could worship, as long as they were under mature godly guidance. Matt 18v20, John 4v19-24, 1Tim 3v1-7, Titus 1v5-16. Compare v6 and 10.

True religion is love in action, anything less is a mere pretence

We read in 1John 2v7-11 and 3v10-19, that if we do not positively and practically manifest a genuine love to our brothers and sisters in Christ, we are deceiving ourselves. James 2v1-26. We must recognise that feelings of superior spirituality or superior doctrinal enlightenment, are manifestations of a loathsome spiritual pride. Isaiah 65v5. If we are not careful we can strenuously affirm that we are defending the truth while we are viciously attacking our fellow Christians. Bad temper and bigotry are often called by the names of "righteous indignation" and "zeal for the truth;" when they are really excuses for party spirit and loveless prejudices and bigotry. True Christianity does not consist only of a correct doctrinal outline, for we can have knowledge of all sacred secrets, and without love be nothing. 1Cor 13v1-3. **Fellowship between Christians of different traditions demands love and forbearance. In Eph 4v13, Paul makes it clear that the unity of faith takes time to achieve; but he also tells us that until we reach it, we are to keep a unity of the Spirit.** Eph 4v3, 1Cor 1v10 to 3v23. We greatly rejoice that God is burning up the barriers that have existed between Christians in different denominations, and is bringing a true oneness in Christ. Col 3v11, Eph 2v11-22. No Christian group has a monopoly of God, and the fellowship that I have enjoyed with Christians from various traditions has been a veritable foretaste of Heaven, because Christ's love has reigned in our hearts.

Christ's love withheld truth from His disciples that they could not bear. John 16v12

Christ's love forgave His faithless disciples, and patiently sustained them when they were slow to understand the truths of the New Covenant, and held on to the Old Covenant and their false man-made traditions. Luke 24v1-53, Acts 18v18, 21v23-27, 1Cor 9v19-23, Gal 2v11-21. Christ did not "shoot down" His doctrinally lacking disciples, His love and grace sustained them until they could receive and bear the truth. John 1v14, 16v12. Jesus veiled some of the implications of the New Covenant from His apostles, even after His forty days resurrection ministry, because they were so bound by the tradition of a restored Israel. Acts 1v6-8. It took Jesus many years to get the Church to realise that it was separate from Judaism, and this was probably the biggest internal problem that the early Church faced. Acts 15v1-31, 21v23-27, 2Cor 11v1-15, Gal 5v1-12. etc.

How we love to cling to false, but cherished traditions! We should imitate Jesus and exercise patience and kindness towards Christians whose traditions and practices are strange to us, just as they need to manifest patience and kindness towards us. Long patience and kindness are the first essential qualities of love that Paul mentions in 1Cor 13v4-7. **We should never sacrifice our personal convictions for the sake of a superficial unity, but we should be big enough in God, to recognise and have fellowship with Christians whose background and traditions are different from our own.** Love is the basis of fellowship, and it is only as the world sees genuine love and unity between Christians, that it will know that we are Christ's disciples and believe the Gospel message. John 13v34,35, 15v10-14, 17v23. Jesus said that if we hold bitter unforgiveness in our hearts, God will not listen to our prayers. Mark 11v26.

Some Practical Advice On Private Prayer

1) Use your Bible, hymnbook, and recorded sacred music in your times of prayer. 2) Like Paul use the gift of tongues. 1Cor 14v18. 3) Don't be tied to one posture, or one time of prayer. 4) Follow the attitudes of heart, and priorities that Jesus gave us in, "The Lord's prayer." They will bring a knowledge of God, a fullness of the Spirit and answered prayer. Luke 11v1-13.

4) We Must Come To God With Praising Hearts And praising Lips. 2Chron 5v13,14

A Pentecostal fullness is sustained by praise and worship

Heartfelt praise to God has a very important place in receiving and keeping a Pentecostal fullness. Praise and victory are very closely linked in the Scriptures, indeed, praise is a vital part of victorious praying. Psalm 61v8, 69v30,31, 40v3, 34v1-3, Phil 4v6,7. Before Pentecost the disciples "were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God," Luke 24v53, after Pentecost the Church excelled in praise. Acts 2v47, 1Thess 5v18, John 4v23,24. We too should follow the advice and command of Heb 13v15, "Through Christ, then, let us offer a continual sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks and praise to His name." This "sacrifice of praise" is said to be an essential companion to paid vows, honouring God, and spiritual victory in Psalm 50v14,23; this praise is said to be more acceptable to God than any sacrifice. Psalm 69v30,31, Hosea 14v2. Jesus told us that the Father is seeking for those who will worship Him "in spirit and in truth." John 4v23,24. It is very sad that many devout children of God have been taught that it is wrong to express emotion and praise in Christian worship, the "sacrifice of praise," is an essential partner of contemplative worship, prayer and waiting upon God. Acts 13v1-3

Praise and worship bring us into our heavenly Canaan.

We read in Heb 3v7-19 and 4v1-11, that our hearts can be hardened, and we can fail to enter our heavenly Canaan if we fail to listen to God's voice. The quotation is from Psalm 95, which says that joyful praise and worship is the way to enter Canaan. The failure to express with our lips, the love that we feel in our hearts for God, is a real cause of spiritual bondage, and why many Christians experience difficulty in receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. **Our reserve may guard us from the dangers of fanaticism, exhibitionism, and emotionalism; but it can also cause us to quench genuine moves of the Holy Spirit.** We need to break free from the traditions and reserves that hinder the free workings of the Holy Spirit, and take heed to David, who said in Psalm 103v1, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and **ALL** that is within me, bless His holy name." Joyful praise is a necessary prerequisite to receiving the baptism in the Spirit, however, this must not be confused with excessive noise and emotionalism. Loud praise is often best expressed in heartfelt congregational singing. Psalm 95v1-7, 23v2, 46v10, Luke 19v37-40. We should endeavour to edify others, and act decently and in order. 1Cor 14v12,19,39,40. Let us also learn to hear Gods voice of gentle stillness. 1Kings 19v11-13.

The beauty and value of holy emotion in praise and worship

It is inspiring to see the devotion of loving hearts being poured out to God in praise and worship. The best things in the natural world bring emotion, and the best things in God's kingdom bring a holy emotion to the soul. Indeed, an experience of God that does not touch our emotions, cannot satisfy our longings for God, or affect us very much. The apostles did not spend the fifty days before Pentecost in introspection and mourning, because they had failed Jesus in His hour of need, and had not believed in His resurrection. Their repentance was real and deep, but it was not drawn-out, or despairing; they rejoiced in a loving, forgiving, and risen Christ. Matt 28v9, Mark 16v11-14, Luke 24v25-53, John 20v1-31. This gracious, forgiving Jesus is our friend and Saviour, He is with us to strengthen and sustain us, and to lift us up when we have fallen. Meditation on the great and tender mercies of God, should continually fill our hearts with joy and praise.

5) We Must Have Wise Spiritual Leadership

a) We need Christian leaders who are anointed by God

Even great truth can fail to inspire us if the anointing of the Holy Spirit is lacking. God makes us able ministers of the New Covenant, not oratory, rhetoric, or eloquence. 2Cor 3v5,6. There is too much "word only" preaching today; we need to preach "with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven." 1Thess 1v5, Eph 3v7, 1Peter 1v12. **Prevailing prayer is needed to bring and keep God's presence in our Churches.** 1Sam 12v23. A true ministry does not scramble for position and power; it is satisfied with a ministry of Christ's love, power and truth. God condemns the leaders who do not properly care for His flocks, and fail to lead them into His green pastures. Jer 23v1-6, Ezek 34v1-31, Matt 23v1-39, James 3v1. To avoid spiritual declension, we need leaders who have a real experience of God's power and majesty, and can inspire others to seek and receive the same experience. Exodus 24v9-11,18, Judges 2v7-17, Eph 4v7-13.

Church congregations should not expect their leaders to have all the answers to their problems, for no one has a complete ministry, we are part of the body of Christ, and we all need the help of other ministries in the body of Christ. We read in 2Cor 2v12,13, that even the apostle Paul "had no rest in his spirit," and could not accomplish the work that God desired

him to do at Troas, because Titus was not with him. The elders at Joppa knew that raising Dorcas from the dead was beyond their ministries, so they sent for Peter. Acts 9v36-43.

b) We need leaders who are examples, not Lords

Ecclesiastical tyranny and denominational prejudice should have no place in Christ's Church. Matt 23v8-12, Luke 22v24-27. Jesus warned His apostles that they must not dominate their charges, they had the authority to exhort Christians to observe Scripture truths, but no authority to act as lords over God's heritage. 2Cor 1v24, 1Peter 5v3, Matt 20v20-28. Paul appealed in love rather than commanded 2Thess 3v4,6,11,12, 1Tim 4v11, 1Cor 13 (all), 14v34, Rom 12v1, Gal 4v12, etc. It is the constraint of love that unites Christians together, not the pressure of authority. **When Jesus is truly Lord, Christians from different churches can experience a true unity and fellowship of the Spirit. The only thing that can hinder a sweet fellowship between truly converted Christians, is a denominational and doctrinal bigotry and pride.** If we only use the Scriptures to shoot people down, we have become "as sounding brass and clashing cymbal." 1Cor 13v1.

NB: What we must do if we are members of a spiritually cold church

Earnest Christians should not leave a cold church unless God tells them to, or forced to leave through circumstances; they should try to create a praying group within the church. Love, patience, humility, wisdom and prayer will produce a sweet fellowship, which can change the spiritual atmosphere of a church and attract other hungry hearts. The best antidote for spiritual coldness in a church is found in informal house meetings, as long as they are under mature Christian leadership. In these meetings, time is given to worship, prayer, testimony and Bible study, and problems are talked about and prayed over, all on an informal level. 1Cor 13v1. Churches of all denominations have been transformed by the radiant witness of truly Spirit-filled Christians, and have become centres of evangelism, revival, healing, and blessing.

6) We Must Come To God With Humility Of Mind And Sincerity Of Heart

a) Pride in past achievement is the enemy of further progress

We should not let pride in past achievement and past blessing from God, make us think that there is nothing more to receive from God. A feeling of arrival and attainment is the most deadly foe of spiritual progress. The unsearchable riches of Christ were hidden from many of those who Jesus preached to, because of their false feeling of spiritual attainment, and their determination not to embrace anything outside of their tradition or experience. Matt 13v15,16, Luke 19v42, John 9v39-41, Eph 3v8. Arrogant self-sufficiency, not only brings blindness to further revelation, it often means the death of the things that we have attained. **We shall never, not even during the endless ages in heaven, come to the end of what God is, or what He has for us.** There will always be a sense of amazement, overwhelming gratitude and love, as we continually and eternally learn of the greatness of our God of love, and His wonderful plans for us. When we consider the everlasting riches of our almighty unlimited Lord, we can never say that we have reached the limits of our Christian experience.

b) Pride in our religious traditions can cause us to resist God. Acts 7v51-53

It is a fact that pride in our traditional beliefs and habits of worship die very hard, we can be bound by our traditions, and they can keep us from receiving what God has for us. It took a vision of Jesus to persuade Paul that a superior New Covenant had replaced his traditional worship. Let us learn, therefore, to not only treasure the precious truths and experiences that God-inspired revivals of the past have given us; but we must also be willing to be led by God into what may be new ways to us, but which are in reality, rediscoveries of neglected truth. It is a great tragedy when devout souls miss the answer to their prayers for revival, through preconceived ideas as to how God should work. We all need to watch that we do not limit God. Psalm 78v41. It takes a genuine humility of mind for a Christian of long standing, to admit that they have been without some vital part of God's armoury and provision for His children. Jesus said that it is only the penniless beggar, who receives the riches of heaven, those who feel that they have "arrived," miss His blessing. Matt 5v3.

NB: Opposition is inevitable when revival comes

Many people love their formal church services, and like things to remain as they are, so the formation of earnest praying groups in their churches disturbs and convicts them, and can produce problems. The usual excuses for criticism of these praying groups, are "The Church is the place to pray;" "These meetings cause division;" "These Christians think that they are better than us;" or even "They are heretical." The experience of Spirit-filled Christians is sometimes resented and rejected, no matter how humbly, sincerely and graciously it is presented. In such circumstances let us remember that love is still kind after it has suffered long; and let us rejoice in those churches, which do not resent, but rather encourage, the earnest seeking of God, and the spiritual progress of fellow Christians.

c) Seeking honour from men, is a great spiritual danger. John 5v44

Seeking honour from men stops many people from seeking God for His gifts; Jesus said, "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" John 5v44, Prov 29v25.

Compromising truth in order to seek honour from men, destroys faith and spiritual experience. We can sell our soul to the denomination we serve, as well as to "the company store." A fear of being thought unorthodox, eccentric, fanatical, or heretical, can deter God's dear children from seeking God's gifts, or from testifying of what God has done for them. Many today still "love the praise of men, more than the praise of God." John 2v23-25, 5v41, 12v42,43, Acts 5v29,32. We should obey God rather than men, we should say like Paul, "what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them all to be mere rubbish, that I may win Christ." Phil 3v7,8,9-14. We thank God for Christians of all persuasions and denominations, who have stood true to, and even died for, their convictions about Christian truth and experience.

d) The danger of an evil heart of unbelief over spiritual gifts. Heb 3v12,19

7) The Distinguishing Features Of Christ's Church At Jerusalem

The church at Jerusalem manifested the essential characteristics and distinguishing features that God desires in His Church.

a) They have a vital encounter with their risen Saviour

b) They are of one accord, of one heart and mind, and manifest God's character and love in their lives

In Acts 2v1, the Majority Text reads, "homothumadon" (Strong's NT:3661), "one accord, or one mind" not "homou," together. " **Thayer says** that "homothumadon" is a compound of two words meaning to "rush along" and "in unison." He writes, "The image is almost musical; a number of notes are sounded which, while different, harmonise in pitch and tone. As the instruments of a great concert under the direction of a concert master, so the Holy Spirit blends together the lives of members of the "ekklesia" of Christ."

"**Homothumadon,**" occurs in Acts 1v14, 2v1,46, 4v24, 5v12, 15v25 and Rom 15v6, to describe the Church being of one accord, in Acts 8v6, how people responded to the ministry of Philip, and in Acts 7v57, 18v12 and 19v29 of the one accord opposition of the enemies of the Church, and in Acts 12v20, how people gave heed to Herod, before God executed him.

c) They earnestly seek God in prayer, and with fervent praise

Seek bread for others, knock and keep on knocking. Luke 11v5-13.

d) They believe Christ's teaching and doctrine

e) They have an evangelistic fervour

They were prepared to suffer for their Saviour, and their faith.

f) They answer Satan's lying wonders with God's miracles. Rev 11v3-6

g) They act as a body under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus

In Eph 5v18, Paul writes, "Be not drunken with wine," "me methuskesthe oinoi," the present passive imperative of "methusko," to intoxicate. "But be filled with (lit. "in") the Spirit," "alla plerousthe en pneumati," the present passive imperative of "pleroo," to fill. The present passive speaks of a habitual continuing action, always being filled with, and under the control of, the Holy Spirit.

The Value And use Of The Gift Of Tongues

1) Diligently Used The Gift Of Tongues Transforms our Ability To Worship

Speaking in tongues brings into play the highest faculty of the Christian, the spirit that God has given to each child of God. Our born-again spirit is the means of communion with God, and when we speak in tongues we give to God the worship that He desires. Speaking with tongues enables us to have direct communion with God, and to give Him acceptable worship. Christ said that we must worship God with our spirit if we are to worship Him acceptably, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." John 4v23,24. The most elaborate and highly organised worship is only a dead form if this spiritual worship that Christ spoke of is missing. However, when the Holy

Spirit enables us to speak with tongues, we worship God on the very highest level, it is truly acceptable worship if we let love for God and others direct our lives.

When the Holy Spirit enables us to magnify and bless God, and give Him the worship and love of our hearts through the gift of speaking with tongues, He enables us to perform the greatest act a Christian can do, for worship of God is the greatest act of the creature. Acts 10v46, Matt 22v35-40, Mark 12v28-34. The use of the gift of tongues lifts the Christian into a new realm of worship, it enables us to worship God to the limit of our capacity, and beyond our capacity, by the help of the Holy Spirit. Eph 4v18, Rom 8v26,27. The Holy Spirit can inspire us to pray with our spirit, "If I pray in an unknown tongue my spirit prays." 1Cor 14v14. He can cause us to sing with the spirit, "I will sing with the spirit". 1Cor 14v15. He can enable us to bless with the spirit, "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit". 1Cor 14v16. The gift of tongues enables the Christian to reach the highest levels of spiritual worship, it enables us to worship God in spirit and truth, the most important act of the Christian life; how, then, can some despise it and call it, "The least of the gifts?" John 4v23,24.

In 1Cor 13v1, Paul implies that the Holy Spirit may cause us to speak in the tongues of angels. If an angelic tongue can express the praise of a great angelic being living in the eternal and uncreated glory and splendour of Gods majestic presence, it can surely express the praise of the redeemed children of God living in this dark and sinful world. How wonderful it is to be freed from the limits of our own small vocabulary and limited eloquence, into the excellence and eloquence of earthly and even heavenly languages, by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The gift of tongues does for us what no other gift can do, it enables us to exalt, worship and praise God, in a way that we cannot without it, this is one reason why the apostle Paul used it so much. 1Cor 14v18. It is one of God's great and precious gifts.

2) Diligently Used The Gift Of Tongues Transforms Our Ability To Pray

The gift of tongues brings into the personal prayer life, the ability of the Holy Spirit. When you speak in tongues you are not limited by your own ability, God the Holy Spirit takes our needs, prayer, praise and desires, and the needs of other people and brings them to God the Father. The gift of tongues enables Christians to utter and fully express the otherwise indescribable longings of their soul and their great and unspeakable feelings of love for God. It gives the Christian the ability to pray to God and worship Him as we ought, it frees us from the limits of human speech and knowledge, for the Holy Spirit Himself gives us the vocabulary and blessing to fully express the needs, feelings and desires of the soul. The gift of tongues enables the Christian to pray on a new level of prayer, for it is God praying through us to perform things exceeding more abundantly than we can ask or think. Eph 3v18-20. In Rom 8v26,27, Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit is always available to takes hold with us against our limitations and problems; he uses "sunantilambanetai," the present indicative middle of "sunantilambanomai" (Strong's NT:4878) "to lend a hand together with, at the same time with one;" only here and in Luke 10v40, of Martha's request for help. **When we pray in tongues we release the power gifts, and pray for the saints according to the will of God.**

A diligent use of the gift of tongues in the private prayer life will result in a very blessed and fluent use of this gift. On occasions a completely new language will be given by the Holy Spirit, which possesses all the phonetics and rhythm of a perfect and complete language. However, whether the Holy Spirit gives us many or few words to express our praise or prayer, the exercise of the gift of tongues will bring great blessing and mighty power in prayer. When we use the gift of tongues in our devotional life, we pray or praise as the Holy Spirit directs and in the way that He thinks best; whereas in our own tongue we can pray selfishly, ignorantly, incorrectly, and even with unsanctified ambition and denominational pride. When a Christian prays in tongues, it is prayer and worship on the very highest level, it is God directing the devotional life. **The balanced prayer life demands praying and singing in tongues, as well as prayer and singing in one's own language; this was Paul's practice, and we would do well to follow his example!** 1Cor 14v15

3) Diligently Used The Gift Of Tongues Transforms Our Character

The gift of tongues is given to build faith and love in the soul, and edify, bless and transform the personality, character and life of the believer, as Paul writes in 1Cor 14v4, the Christian who speaks in tongues "edifies himself." **It has the same effect in the prayer life and devotional life, that prophecy has in the Church.** It can also have the most beneficial effect on the body, and can calm conscious and subconscious worries. It can relax and refresh a tired body and mind as well as bless the soul. Isaiah 28v11,12 with 1Cor 14v21 and Rom 8v11. The gift of tongues gives us a defence against spiritual foes, and gives us the victory over them, for through this gift the Holy Spirit Himself operates in power against the powers of darkness. **A gift that edifies the soul in love and makes it strong should never be described as "little," "least," or be despised and neglected.**

4) Diligently Used The Gift Of Tongues Sustains And Transforms Our Spiritual Ministry

The Holy Spirit's ministrations through this gift in the secret place of prayer will result in a blessing upon one's public ministry. Matt 6v5,6 with 1Cor 14v2,4,18. and 2Cor 12v12. Prayer and praise in tongues build up the spiritual life of the Christian to the place where they are able to manifest the other gifts of the Holy Spirit. **The greater a Christian's**

ministry is, the more they need to speak in other tongues. One evangelist found that miracles were ceasing in his services because he had been neglecting speaking in tongues. Another said he did not expect much to happen in his services unless he prayed for several hours in tongues before them. **Diligently used the gift of tongues can greatly increase our spiritual power, and our effectiveness for God.**

5) An Utterance In Tongues Can Transform A Christian Meeting

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. An interpretation of tongues can bring great comfort, solace and needful instruction. God has set the gift of tongues in the church as a valuable means of public as well as private edification, and when it is interpreted it can carry the same ability to bless and edify as prophecy. 1Cor 12v28, 14v5.

6) Diligently Used The Gift Of Tongues Transforms Our Experience Of God

The diligent use of the gift of tongues brings a new revelation of God and His Word, the Bible becomes a new book and living food for the soul. Those who use the gift of tongues diligently in the secret place can testify that it really brings one very close to our heavenly Father and Lord Jesus, and it really deepens our love for them. What a precious gift this is! If we gave no other reason for desiring to speak in tongues, this alone would be reason enough for desiring this gift. John 16v13-15. A gift that makes God our Father and the Lord Jesus more real and precious to the Christian, should never be disparaged or belittled. The baptism in the Spirit brings a new insight into the meaning of the Scriptures, indeed, it is only the spirit-filled Christian, who can really understand much of the experience of the early Church.

7) The Gift Of Tongues Can Extend A Mature Christian's Experience

The mature believer, as well as the young convert, can build themselves up spiritually through diligent use of the gift of tongues, God's gave this gift to develop love, spiritual sensitivity, and spiritual capacity. The diligent use of the gift of tongues enlarges even a mature Christian's experience. Some say that the gift of tongues is "infant prattling," and not for mature Christians. This is nonsense, for the Paul said that he spoke in tongues more than the verbose Corinthians. When Paul said this in 1Cor 14v18, he had been a Christian for about 24 years, he could certainly not be called "an immature infant prattler." In 1Cor 13v11,12, Paul speaks of our present limited intellectual knowledge of the future heavenly "mysteries" as "infant prattling," but he never refers to speaking in tongues in this way. Indeed Paul tells us in 1Cor 14v2, that when we speak in tongues we speak "mysteries," that is, God's deep counsels and secrets, which were once hidden, but are now revealed in the Gospel to the children of God. Our minds may not comprehend these mighty spiritual realities, but through the Holy Spirit's ministrations our spirits can enjoy and glory in God's mysteries. Matt 13v11, Luke 8v10, Rom 11v25, 16v25, 1Cor 2v1,7, 4v1, 14v2, 15v51, Eph 1v9, 3v3,4,9, 5v32, 6v19, Col 1v26,27, 4v3, 2Thess 2v7, 1Tim 3v9, Rev 10v7, Psalm 25v14.

When Christians speak in tongues, they speak Divine truths, it is an exalted sphere of utterance, not "infant prattling." The hearers on the day of Pentecost certainly did not call speaking in tongues "infant prattlings;" those who understood the languages said they spoke of "the wonderful works of God;" and they were so awed and moved by the sublime words that they heard, that they became Christians. In Rom 8v26,27, Paul said that even after being a Christian for over 25 years he did not know how to pray for the saints as was necessary, but said that Holy Spirit directed praying through the gift of tongues enabled him to pray for the saints according to the will of God. **It is an insult to the Holy Spirit to describe His Divine intercessions through us with His gift of tongues with the belittling term of "infant prattlings."**

Our minds are limited in their ability to absorb and appreciate spiritual realities, our spirit is not limited in the same way, indeed, it is given to us for the express purpose of enabling us to communicate with God and spiritual realities. Our souls and spirits feed and grow on the anointing and spiritual truths and Divine "mysteries," that come into our being through speaking with tongues. The gift of tongues bypasses and rests the mind; so that even when we are too tired to think upon truth with the mind, our spirits can be nourished and refreshed through this gift. However, we do need truth for the mind, for Peter exhorts us, "As new-born babes, for the pure milk that is for the mind eagerly crave, that thereby ye may grow unto salvation." 1Peter 2v2. Rotheram.

NB: Some Remarkable Instances Of Divine Mysteries Being Spoken In Tongues

We will now give some instances where languages spoken in tongues have been understood.

H. Horton writes on page 160 of his fine book, "The Gifts of the Spirit," what a missionary in the Congo heard when he was present at the baptism in the Spirit of a young coloured man. The missionary was amazed to hear the young man repeating Old Testament instances of creation and history in perfect English. The young man did not know a word of English and what is more, nothing of the accounts of Scripture that he was repeating. The missionary left the hut to

search for his wife so that she could witness this remarkable manifestation of the Spirit. When he returned with his wife the young man was still speaking in English, of the second coming of Christ.

On pages 30, 31 of his book, "Signs Following," W F P Burton tells of an inspiring incident that occurred at Mwanza in the Congo. When churches were getting spiritually cold it was their practice to gather the believers together for several days of prayer, ministry of the Word, and waiting on God. On one such occasion Mr. Burton was keeping "a quiet eye" on the meeting to make sure that there was no "undue" excitement or extravagance, when he was struck by the earnest expression of a young man named Ziba, who was obviously being deeply affected by the power of the Holy Spirit, which was moving upon the men gathered there. Mr. Burton quietly moved around to where Ziba sat and was surprised and moved to hear him speaking in absolutely perfect English of Christ's second coming to earth to reign and the glories of His millennial kingdom. Ziba was a simple village lad without any knowledge of the English language, but he was speaking in English without any ungrammatical expressions or any trace of foreign accent, and what he said was absolutely true to the Scriptures.

8) Speaking In Tongues Is A Sign When People Understand The Language

Though 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. It can convict and convert the sinner, and be a great encouragement to the believer. 1Cor 14v22, Acts 2v4-12, Mark 16v17-20. The disciples on the day of Pentecost spoke in tongues that were unknown to them, but many listeners were amazed and captivated at hearing the rapturous praise of God and His wonderful works in their own languages and dialects. They knew that these disciples did not know their languages, and so when Peter explained what had happened, they were instantly willing to accept the Gospel. **The gift of tongues prepared the people for the preaching of Peter, it is not intended to replace the preaching of the Gospel.** We will now give some modern instances where God has used the gift of tongues as a sign to convert unbelievers, and encourage believers.

W F P Burton tells on page 28 and 29 of "Signs Following" and elsewhere, how during an open-air service on a Sunday evening beside Lytham lifeboat house, a dear uneducated Christian woman named Mrs. Whitehouse began to speak in tongues, and Mr. Burton interpreted it, the interpretation was about Christ and His death upon the cross. A man, a prominent tailor, who had lost almost everything through drink, fell on his knees and implored God to save his soul; he was more often than not under the influence of drink, but on this occasion he was quite sober, he told how both the message in tongues and the interpretation had gone straight to his heart. In the crowd was a young Japanese man, who was studying shipbuilding in Lytham's shipbuilding yard. When he went to his lodging place, he asked his landlady who the people in the open-air service were, she replied that they were fanatical, religious enthusiasts, who some said were religion mad. The young man replied, "well, they may be mad, but I heard a most remarkable thing. One spoke in perfect Japanese, while the other gave the exact equivalent in English". The tongue and interpretation acted as a sign to the one who understood the language, and to those who did not, the result was a soul won for Christ, and the Christians were greatly encouraged in their God.

Mr. Burton goes on to tell on page 29 and 30 of his book, of a highly respected Methodist minister who heard the Pentecostal Christians speaking in praise and adoration to God in seven languages which he knew, they were speaking about the death, resurrection and second coming of Christ, and extolling Christ's blood and His risen power. This so moved the minister that on his way home in the train he longed for the same experience, so he threw his pipe and tobacco out of the train window, and earnestly sought and received the baptism in the Spirit, and spoke with tongues before the train reached his station.

In his book "Grace Gifts," I Rosser tells on pages 105 and 106, how the Holy Spirit brought about the conversion of a Frenchman in 1934 through the use of the gift of tongues. While he was at his sister's house, a French onion seller came to the door, and Mr. Rosser felt led of God to speak to him in tongues. The Frenchman was amazed that a person who had never been to France and never learned French, could speak French so fluently. They asked the Frenchman what Mr. Rosser had said, he said in broken English that Mr. Rosser was a good man and a minister of Jesus Christ, and that Mr. Rosser had been telling him that Christ is to return and set up His kingdom on earth; but before He returns, things on earth will get worse, and that repentance is the only way back to God and forgiveness. The Frenchman was broken by this remarkable manifestation of the Holy Spirit and accepted Christ as Saviour.

A minister of the Gospel, who the writer knows personally, testifies that he heard a comparatively uneducated person speaking perfect Latin in other tongues; He had no knowledge of Latin, and yet he was speaking Latin even more perfectly than the minister, who had an Oxford degree, and had spent years studying and teaching Latin. The theme of the utterance was the power of the blood of Jesus.

On page 60 of Dennis and Rita Bennet's book, "The Holy Spirit and You." Bennet records how deaf-mute Christians, who had never heard or spoken a word, spoke fluently in tongues under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

There are many other instances, which could be quoted to show the use of the gift of tongues as a sign, but I feel the instances I have given are quite sufficient to prove this fact to the sincere heart and mind.

9) Speaking With Tongues Is The Proof Of The Baptism In The Holy Spirit

At the outpouring of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Acts 2v4, 10v45,46, 11v17 and 19v6, when the Christians received the baptism in the Spirit, they spoke with tongues. The common evidence that they had been baptised in the Spirit, was speaking with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. With the exception of the outpouring at Ephesus, we do not read of any other manifestations of the gifts, and there they not only spoke in tongues, but prophesied as well. **From humble housewives to mighty apostles, the initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit was speaking in tongues.** At the baptism in the Spirit of these believers, the Holy Spirit did not give various gifts as the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit, He gave the gift of tongues to all.

I am not trying to be contentious when I say that the gift of tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit. I desire Christians to receive the blessing that their heavenly Father has for them. Dennis Bennet tells on page 61 of his book, "The Holy Spirit and You," tells how a neuro-surgeon friend of his said that he understood why God used speaking in tongues; he said that as the speech centres dominate the brain, he did not see how God could do much about the physical brain, unless he got hold of these speech centres. When God takes over the body's most unruly member, the tongue, James 3v2-12, and controls it and infuses it to speak in praise and worship in other tongues, it is a truly wonderful miracle, and the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit.

I would not be so concerned if people who do not agree that speaking with tongues is the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit, taught that Christians need and should earnestly seek God for the gift of tongues for their prayer life; however, unfortunately, they usually deride, despise and neglect this lovely gift of God. God has given the gift of tongues to His Church, because He considers it to be absolutely indispensable and necessary for the spiritual welfare of His Church, it is one of God's good, valuable and perfect gifts and will be vital for the Christian to come through the Great Tribulation victoriously. None of God's spiritual gifts are mean or paltry; they are all priceless, magnificent, good, beautiful and precious, and we should bow the knee to His wisdom, love and authority. Who are we to criticise the "good and perfect" gifts that our heavenly Father has given to us? He is the Lord, let us recognise the value and importance of what He has given. How dare Christians criticise His gifts, or neglect to seek them, when He has commanded us not only to pursue after love, but earnestly seek spiritual gifts as well? 1Cor 14v1. **The gift of tongues is one of HIS gifts, let us recognise its value and use.**

Appendix X: How Can I Resist Evil?

Introduction

Temptation to evil comes from the world, the flesh and the Devil

In 1John 2v14-17, the apostle John writes, "I have written unto you, fathers, because ye know him who is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the Evil One. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

The world structure that John refers to here includes the religious system that crucified Jesus. Peter tells us that the precious blood of Jesus has redeemed us from all the false worldly and religious traditions by which Satan binds mankind. We read, in 1Peter 1v18,19, "For you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from the fruitless and futile way of living inherited by tradition from your fathers, ("patroparadotos", Strong's NT: 3970), But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

In Gal.5v24, Paul writes, "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

In James 1v12-17, James writes, "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lusts and enticed. Then, when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." "Lust" is "epithumia" (Strong's NT:1939) which means, desire, lust, or craving, and is derived from "epithumeo," to have a desire for, and it is used for both good desire, Phil 1v23, or evil desire, as here in James 1v14 and Rom 7v7. "Enticed," is "deleazomenos," the present passive participle of "deleazo" (Strong's NT:1185) which is derived from "delear," bait; and

so the thought is of being enticed to sin like a fish drawn out from his retreat by bait, or an animal caught by a snare. James is speaking of any desire or pleasure that entices the soul. "Deleazo," only occurs here in James 1v14, and in 2Peter 2v14,18.

When James the son of Mary (Mark 6v3), writes in James 3v2, "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body," he is obviously awed by the memory of the sinless life of Jesus, and His perfect control of His temper and speech, that he saw in their home at Nazareth, and compares it with his own sinful life and unbelief. James and Jude lived with Jesus for over 20 years, and revered the glory of His perfect life, they called Him, "The Lord Jesus Christ," they did not feel worthy to call Him brother. James1v1, Jude v1.

The Devil

Unbelievers and modern theologians may say that there is no Devil, but his existence is personally witnessed to by our Lord Jesus Christ, and many Scriptures. Any person who walks with God will soon find that Satan exists.

Who Is The Devil?

a) In Isaiah 14v12, the Devil is called Lucifer

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!" "Lucifer" is "heylel" (Strong's NT:1966), and means, "brightness, light-bringer," the KJV and NKJV translate it "Lucifer," others think that it means "bright-star, like the NAS and NIV, which translate it as, "star of the morning," and the ASV as "day-star." This passage in Isaiah 14v12-20, tells how a great angel, who was once the "Light-bearer" of truth to the world, became the great dark corrupting force behind the rulers of the nations. Here the fallen angel Lucifer is looked upon as the evil power behind the throne of Babylon. We see the unrepentant pride and corrupt ambition of Satan, when he five times states, "I will," and finishes in Isaiah 14v14, with the ultimate in arrogant ambition, "I will be like the Most High." This passage reveals how this once great angel, was cast out of Heaven for bringing sin, distress, disunity and conflict into Heaven. Luke 10v18. Like many politicians, Satan fell through pride, ambition, and love of position, praise, power and authority.

b) In Ezek 28v14, the Devil is called "the anointed cherub who covers." See Ezek 28v12-19

Ezek 28v14, states, "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones." Satan was the evil power behind the king of Tyre mentioned in Ezek 28v12.

These two passages reveal that the rulers of Tyre, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria, are under the invisible personal domination of Satan, the head of this present evil world-system. These two passages start long before human history, and reveal the fall of Satan and the corruption of his character, power and glory, and the beginning of sin in the creation. They also reveal how Satan brings his plans to fruition through earthly kings and rulers. Many worldly rulers have taken upon themselves divine titles and honours, and even though they have not realised it, have brought to pass the plans and aims of Satan. We see in Dan 10 and Eph 6v12-22, the contest between the invisible good and evil angelic powers, the superhuman agencies in world governments in the satanic world system.

c) In Rev 12v9, Satan is called by several names, which reveal his evil disposition. "The Great Red Dragon."

Satan is pictured as, "the great ("megas") red dragon," in Rev 12v9, this indicates Satan's malevolent and ferocious disposition, and his desire to cause suffering, death and destruction. The seven heads are seven kingdoms under his control, he has used six of them in the past to oppress, persecute and dominate the Israelites. These were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria, and the sixth, Rome, oppressed Israel in John's time. The seventh head, the kingdom of Antichrist, is still to come, and the ten horns are ten kings under Antichrist. The tail of the dragon casts a third of the stars of heaven to the earth, these are without doubt the angels that fell with Satan.

The Ancient Serpent

He is an ancient opponent of mankind. We read in Rev 12v9-12 and 20v2, that the Evil One is called, "the great ("megas") dragon," "that original ancient serpent," "archaios," from "arche," beginning, the original great deceiver of mankind. see Gen 3v1ff. In Matt 24v24, Jesus said, that some of the false prophets of the closing years of this age, will do such great signs and wonders, that they will almost "deceive and lead astray" the very elect of God. The Evil One also tries to get us to deceive ourselves. 1John 1v8. He is also called the Devil, "diabolos," the "slanderer," and "Satan," "Satanas," our adversary, and "the accuser of the brethren." See Rev 20v2. Jesus said Satan was a liar and murderer from the beginning. John 8v44. His wickedness goes back to the angelic ages; He has always been the enemy of man,

and as in Eden, he still tries to corrupt and destroy mankind.

The Devil, the Slanderer

The Devil, "ho Diabolos," means "the Slanderer." "Diabolos," (Strong's NT:1228), is derived from, "diaballo," (Strong's NT:1225), to accuse, to malign, to vilify, and is derived from the primary verb, "ballo," (Strong's NT:906), which means, to throw. So a slanderer is a person who throws words, with various levels of violence and intensity. ("Daimon," is often wrongly translated as "devil," it should be translated as "demon.") Paul uses "diabolos," when he warns women that they must not to slander anyone, or indulge in gossip. 1Tim 3v11, Titus 2v3. Satan's slander and accusations are thrown at multitudes of people, in all situations, and with maximum intensity and malignity, he vilifies God to men, and men to God. Gen 3v1-5, Job 1v6-11, 2v1-5, Rev 12v9-12. **The Devil's efforts to seduce mankind to evil have been successful with all but Jesus.** Jesus came to destroy the evil works of the Devil. 1John 3v8, Acts 10v38. See Eph 2v1-3, 4v27, 6v11, 1Tim 3v6,7, 1Peter 5v7,8, Jude v9. **Satan lays snares for people. 2Tim 2v26. However, if we arm ourselves with God's power and gifts we can resist Satan, and he will flee from us. James 4v5-7.**

God prepared the lake of fire for the Devil and his angels, and this is where they will go, because of their evil lives and impenitence. Matt 25v41, Rev 20v10. The Devil's children manifest their father's love of false accusation and slander, and will share his fate. 2Tim 3v3. Jesus said that Judas had turned against Him in his heart, and was slandering Him; "devil" in John 6v70, is "diabolos," "a slanderer." We read in John 6v66, From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed Jesus. Jesus had refused to be made King, and spoke of a spiritual kingdom, and a vital living relationship with Himself, and this was the final straw that destroyed the faith of Judas and these other former disciples. John 6v15,28-71.

Satan is called, "the accuser of the brethren"

In Rev 12v10, "accuser," in the Majority Text, is, "kategoros," "one who brings a legal charge against another," it also occurs in Jn.8v10. Acts.23v30,35. 25v16,18. In Rev.12v10., "accuses," is "kategoron," the present active participle of "kategoroo" (Strong's NT:2723) to bring a legal charge and accusation. The present participle again shows the evil persistence, continual action, and habitual character of Satan's accusations. This is the devil's constant malicious occupation. We read here that he accuses believers in Jesus continually before God their heavenly Father, both by day and night, "hemeras kai nuktos." Job 1v6,7, 2v1,2. **We see Satan's appalling malice and hatred, and the amazing patience of God. Satan is the slanderer who tries to take away a person's reputation and character, he goes into the presence of God to slander Christians on the basis that he is there to expose those who have broken God's Law.** The Devil, the greatest lawbreaker of all, claims the right to appear before God in Heaven, on the grounds of the Law of God, to make a legal accusation against the children of God. Envy will see a spot in a bright sky and dwell on it, failing to see the beauty and brightness in a life that love delights to dwell on. When a disciple gives the Devil grounds for accusation, the whole of Heaven knows about it, and when he sees, or thinks he sees, a weakness in one of Christ's brethren, he demands an opportunity to sift them, just as he did in the case of Peter. Luke 22v31,32, 1Peter 5v8,9.

Satan

"Satanas," means adversary, opponent and enemy, from the verb "Satan," "to lie in wait as an enemy or adversary." When Jesus called Peter Satan, He was either informing Peter, that he was acting as an adversary, and not as a friend who wanted to save Him from death, or that the inspiration for Peter's words came from the Evil One, who was again trying to turn Jesus from His attempt to redeem mankind. Matt 16v21-23, Mark 8v33. Another word for adversary is "antidokos," (Strong's NT:476), which is used to speak of an opponent in legal matters in Matt 5v25, Luke 12v58, and 18v3, in 1Peter 5v8, "antidokos describes Satan's adversarial attack as a roaring lion, which could end in martyrdom.

The Great Deceiver

He "deceiveth the whole world." He is the Father of lies and falsehood. The word that is used for "deceiveth," is "planon," the present active participle of "planoo" (Strong's NT:4105) to lead astray, to deceive; the present participle shows the evil persistence, continual action and habitual character of Satan's attempts to deceive. John 8v44. It is a terrible tragedy that this once beautiful, wise and great angel has had his character and disposition destroyed by sin until he can only find pleasure in deceiving people and causing suffering. **Sin is no respecter of persons, it destroys the personalities of angels as well as the souls of men.** Isaiah 14v12-19, Ezek 28v11-19, Luke 10v17-19, Luke 11v17-26, John 12v31-33, 16v8-11, Rev 20v1-3,10. Heaven is sick at heart over the misery that Satan and his angels inflict on God's Creation.

In Luke 10v18, we read that the Evil One was cast out of Heaven before the creation of man. In John 12v31, Jesus said that at His death, the prince of this world "shall be cast out," "ekblethesetai exo," the future passive of "ekballo" (Strong's NT:1544) and "exo," shows that he is thrown, "clean out." Satan is called "the prince of this world," in John 12v31, 14v30 and 16v11. In Rev 12v9, we read that Satan is cast down, ("eblethe," the aorist passive indicative of "ballo"), out of the heavenly places at the start of the Great Tribulation. God warns us that Satan's great anger and activities will bring woe

to the earth, Satan is the cause of the Great Tribulation. Truth will protect us from Satan's attempts to deceive.

The good angels are continually having painful conflicts with the powers of darkness when they come to minister to the children of God on earth. Heb 1v13,14, Dan 10v12,13,19-21. The whole of Heaven will rejoice with great joy when Michael and his angels cast Satan and his angels out of the heavenly places. Rev 12v12. The cleansing of the heavenlies will be followed 3½ years later by the cleansing of the earth. Rev 11v15-19. Michael means, "Who is like God," and shows his deep love for God and his real humility of mind, there is a complete absence of the self-exaltation and pride that brought about the fall of Satan, who said "I will be like the Most High." Isaiah 14v13-15.

There is a vast difference between the union that Michael has with his angels, and that which Satan has with his angels. Michael and his angels are banded together by the sweetest and most tender love for one another and God, whereas Satan and his angels are banded together only by a common hatred of good and God. There exists in Satan's ranks the most dreadful hatred, variance and strife, and one angel rules another only by means of a greater ferocity and power; it is a kingdom of darkness. Thanks be to God who has delivered us from the power and end of these evil angels, and translated us into His kingdom of love and light. Col 1v12,13.

The forbidden occult: Lev 19v1,20-31, 20v6,27, Deut 18v10-22, Isaiah 8v18-20, Rev 21v8, 22v15. However, there is forgiveness for those who repent.

3) How Does Satan Attack Us?

People's minds are deceived and blinded by Satan, and are kept captive by his lies. 2Cor 4v4, 10v1-5, 1Tim 4v1-3. Paul states that we can be deceived by Satan, he writes in 2Cor 11v3., "But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, so your minds may be seduced and corrupted from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ." See Gen 3v4. Here Paul's concern was over false teachers in the Church, the Judaizers, who were trying to bring the Church back under the Law.

In 2Cor 2v11, Paul warns us that Satan can get an advantage over us if we don't forgive people who have repented, he states, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." "Devices," is "noema" (Strong's NT:3540), which means the thoughts, plans, and purposes, here with a sinister evil intent. Satan gives considerable thought to how he can trap us, but God is our defence.

In Eph 6v11, Paul says, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." "Wiles," is "methodia" (Strong's NT:3180), and denotes- "methodical scheming, craftiness and deceit," it is from "meta," "after," and "hodos," "a way." In Eph 4v14, Paul uses it to warn of the methodical deceit of some false teachers, who threaten the Church. Truth will protect us from Satan's attempts to deceive; "It is written," gave Jesus victory over the deceiver, and it will give us victory too, if we love God's Word like our Saviour.. Matt 4v1-11, Eph 6v14,17.

A) Satan's method of attack on Adam and Eve

a) Satan questions God's restriction. "Hath God said?" Gen 2v16,17, 1Tim 6v17

Satan states that something valuable is being kept from them. God gives us all things richly to enjoy.

b) Satan arrogantly affirms that there is no penalty for sin. "You will not surely die." Gen 3v4

Satan persuades them that there is no shame or guilt connected with sin, and that fellowship with God will not be broken.

c) Satan states that there is hidden wisdom to be obtained

Satan uses this theme to deceive the occultist, and it was common in Paul's day in the mystery religions. Paul preaches against this in Col 2, and John in 1John 4v1-6. These Docetic and Cerinthian Gnostics, said "We know," and prided themselves on special knowledge.

d) The result of listening to Satan

Shame, guilt, broken fellowship with God, and separation from Eden and God's promises.

B) Satan's attack on Peter

a) Satan's attack on Peter's standing in God, and Christ's call to him. Luke 5v1-11

Satan had so accused Peter over his past failures and sin, that Peter felt worthless in the eyes of God, when Peter saw the

miracle of the fish, he fell on his knees before Jesus, and brokenly cried, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Satan had rattled all the skeletons in Peter's cupboard and had persuaded him that he was no good, and of no use in God's work. Jesus felt and was moved with compassion over Peter's fears and self condemnation, and was determined to remove them. He warmly and gently assures Peter, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." Luke 5v10. Divine grace will always reassure us when Satan attacks us.

b) Peter's rebuke of Jesus

In Matt 16v16-23, we read, "Peter took Jesus by the arm, and took him to one side to speak to Him privately, and started to rebuke Him saying; "May mercy be shown to you Lord. This shall positively never happen to you." But He turned around and said to Peter, Get behind me, out of my sight, and keep on going, Satan. You are a stumbling block and hindrance to me, because these thoughts of yours are man's, not God's." Satan attacked Jesus through the false traditions that Peter had learned from men's theology. The Scriptures reveal that God's dearest children have, like Peter, given way to these attacks from evil spirits; but there is no thought, or record, that they were demon possessed. Peter was corrupted by the theology, traditions and beliefs of his time, and he refused to reject them when Jesus told him they were wrong. Peter felt that our Lord needed a lesson in theology and rebuked Him for having such wrong ideas about the promised Messiah. The strength of Peter's rebuke of our Lord can be seen from the use of the word "epitimaō" in Mark 8v32.

Through the centuries the Church has been corrupted by false tradition, and as a result is greatly hindered from doing God's will. Jesus warned that Satan would plant his children, the tares, in the Church, and that false doctrinal leaven would permeate the Church structure. Matt 13v24-43, 2Peter 2v1-22, Jude v3-25. Paul warned us of Satan's attack on the Church through false teaching in 1Tim 4v1-4, and said that in the last days perilous times would come as a result of doctrines of demons. **The further the river of truth has flowed from its pure source in the early Church, the more polluted it has become with false traditions and human ideas. The prophecies of Christ and Paul have been fulfilled, and they warn us that even worse is to follow. Unscriptural structures and traditions are one of the biggest hindrances to the Holy Spirit's ministries.** 1Cor 12v11-31, Eph 4v9-15.

Peter tells us that redemption through the blood of Jesus sets us free from the vain way of life and traditions that have been handed down to us from our fathers. 1Peter 1v18,19. "Handed down from your fathers," is "patroparadotos," and it speaks of a parent-child learning relationship; **we can be led astray, as well as led into truth by our spiritual fathers. Respect for spiritual leaders does not mean that we have to accept all they teach without question. We must test and prove all that is taught us.** 1Thess 5v19,20, Acts 17v11,12.

c) Peter's denial of Jesus in the courtyard of the High Priest

We read in Matt 26v69-73, that when Peter was challenged by a serving maid in the courtyard of the High Priest, Peter first denied that he knew Jesus, then professed ignorance of what they were talking about. Later, when another maid accused him of being a companion of Jesus, Peter denied it with an oath, "mete horkou." ("Horkos" occurs ten times in the New Testament; in Luke 1v73, Acts 2v30 and Heb 6v16,17 of God's oath of confirmation. See Matt 5v33, 14v7,9, 26v72, Mark 6v26, James 5v12.)

After a little while a group of bystanders accused Peter of being a disciple of Jesus, saying his accent and dialect betrayed him. At this Peter began to invoke curses upon himself, asking God to curse him if he lied when he said that he was not a follower of Jesus: he also began to swear with sacred oaths that he did not know Jesus. "Then he began to curse and swear," is "tote erxato katathematizein kai omnuein." "Katathematizein," means, "to wish oneself accursed if he lies," (it only occurs here in Matt 26v74,) it shows that Peter put the most terrible imprecations and curses upon himself in his denial of Jesus, and followed this with the most sacred oaths, that he did not know Jesus. The word "omnuein," is the present active infinitive of "omnuo;" which is used of God swearing by an oath in Luke 1v73, 2v30, 7v17, Heb 3v11,18, 4v3, 6v13,16 and 7v21, and of an angel swearing by God in Rev 10v6,7. Our Lord and James warn against the easy use of oaths in Matt 5v34 and James 5v12. The present tense shows that Peter made the most vehement denials with the strongest oaths that he did not know Jesus. Our Lord said that Peter needed to repent and turn from this failure. Luke 22v31-34. There was no suggestion of Peter being demon possessed, or of him needing exorcism. **The Scriptures teach that bad failure in Christians is not due to demon possession; it is due rather to unbelief, the filthiness of the works of the flesh, and sins of the spirit such as pride.** 2Cor 7v1, Heb 3v12-4v2.

God never allowed the curses that Peter put upon himself to come to pass. This shows how completely wrong the current doctrine is, that we can, by careless talk, put curses upon ourselves, or others, even without realizing it. Balaam was one of the world's leading occultists, and he said that children of God could not be cursed, "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!" Num 23v23. "Enchantment" is "naw-khash," to whisper a magic spell, to practice sorcery or enchantment. "Divination," is "keh-sem," another kind of sorcery. **No one can curse, or work enchantment against a child of God, the blood of Jesus has broken Satan's power over us, and has redeemed us from the curse of the**

Law and every curse. Gal 3v13,14.

NB: Our Lord's wonderful look of grace and love, and Peter's restoration. Luke 22v60

Jesus gave Peter a special look of love immediately after Peter had denied him with oaths and curses, and after the second cockcrow.

1) Jesus turned and specially looked at Peter: John was there, openly declaring that he was a disciple of Jesus, but it is not recorded that Jesus turned to look at John. **The pull of Peter's need turned Jesus round, He specially looked to meet Peter's need. He is still the same, He comes to lift us out of our failures.**

2) Jesus only looked at Peter: Jesus did not tell Peter off, He would not expose Peter before these unbelievers. Peter, though fallen, was still beloved, and the deep spiritual wounds in Peter needed, Christ's love, not a shouting at. "He makes the wounded spirit whole, He calms the troubled breast."

3) Jesus tenderly looked upon Peter: Jesus had looked in anger upon the hypocritical Pharisees, but this was a forgiving look, a welcoming look, a gentle look, and a restoring look, in one look of Divine compassion. Christ's eyes, and every feature, proclaimed to Peter, "I love you, I want you, you are my beloved Peter."

4) Jesus looked at Peter through His sufferings for Peter: The face of Jesus was already bruised, and His eyes blackened by the heavy punches in the face that He had received, when the soldiers blindfolded Him and mockingly asked him to prophesy who had hit Him. He suffered this cruelty for Peter, and ourselves, He came to suffer and die for us, to save that which was lost. There was no way in which He was going to reprove Peter, He was bursting with love for Peter, and you and me. Betrayed and arrested, insulted and vilified, beaten and bruised, He conveys in one wonderful look of divine love, to Peter, and ourselves, "This is for you, for your salvation, this is how much I love you." No wonder Paul rejoices and says that the only one worthy to condemn us is praying for us, before, in, and after our failures, just as He did for Peter. Luke 22v31-34, Rom 8v31-39. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. When Jesus told Peter of his failure, he also told him that he was going to get into the kingdom, and told all the apostle not to be troubled; His mighty intercessions bring us through. John 13v38 to 14v3.

5) Christ's healing spiritual ministries were communicated to Peter in His look of Divine love: A floodtide of Divine power and love, accompanied that look, and delivered Peter from the fear and lies that the Devil had bound him with, and blew away the smirk of success on Satan's face and sent him packing, and set Peter free from Satan's power and deception.

6) Christ's look immediately awakened a flood of memories in Peter's mind: In spite of Christ's specific warning only a few hours earlier, Peter had failed badly. Satan's fiery darts had sent Peter's spiritual life up in flames. In Luke 22v31,32, we read, "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." There was healing love in Christ's look, and Peter's memory was stirred from satanic slumber, and he remembered the word of the Lord, and went out and wept bitterly. Luke 22v60-62. But Christ's grace restored and encouraged Peter, and he will do the same for us.

7) Jesus looked at Peter through His eternal purposes for Peter: He saw Peter baptised in the Spirit, and Peter's great victories of faith and ministry for Him. Peter's victorious martyr's death. Peter's abundant entrance into the kingdom, and Peter's conformity to His own image. Rom 8v28,29. Jesus knew that Peter's "phileo" love was going to be transformed into "agape" love. Jesus will not be content until we are all safely home in Heaven. Heb 10v13.

4) Satan's Test Of Our Character And Spiritual Gifts. Matt 4v1-11

Manifesting powerful spiritual gifts and great authority does not remove us from spiritual conflict

When Jesus received the authority to manifest the gifts of power, Satan made a violent attack upon Him. Matt 4v1-11. While the power gifts operate, we can be full of faith through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, but as soon as this anointing has gone we can have great spiritual conflict. The supernatural extension of faith that comes with the power gifts is usually of a temporary nature, and Christians are not immune from fear, failure or doubt, after even the greatest manifestations of God's power, as the stories of Elijah and Peter demonstrate. 1Kings 18v37-46, 19v1-18. **We always need God's grace, and the fellowship of other Christians.** Acts 28v14,15, 1Cor 12v12-25.

Like our Lord we will find that temptation and spiritual conflict are inevitable after the baptism in the Spirit and the reception of spiritual gifts. God will allow Satan to test and try our experience, character and use of spiritual gifts. Luke 4v1, Heb 2v14-18, 4v14-5v2, 2Cor 1v3-7, 1Pet 1v6,7, James 1v12. Let us consider how Jesus defeated Satan, and how we can defeat him too.

1) Satan tried to rob Jesus of the power of God by an attack upon His faith

a) Satan will try to cast doubt upon our 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. John 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." Matt 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 will try to cast doubt upon 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 will try to cast doubt on our love and devotion to God

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. Matt 7v7-11, Luke 11v9-13, John 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 will try to attack our adoption and position as children of God. NB: Rom 8v14-17, 1John 3v1,2

Jesus created Satan, and Satan knew it, yet he tried, by lies and insinuations, to attack Christ's Deity and Sonship, he will certainly attack our sonship. Resist Satan's attack on your position in Christ. James 4v5-7. Don't give place to him for an instant, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." 1John 3v1,2, we are joint heirs with Jesus, God's own beloved children. Rom 8v17.

e) Satan will try to attack our faith in God's provision for us

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, 1Peter 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 will try to cast doubts on the reality of our spiritual gifts

Satan taunted Christ, "You have not had one miracle. What, you God's Son? What an imagination you have. If you are God's Son, and have been filled with the Spirit, where are the miracles? If you have received the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts, why are you having such a bad time?" Jesus knew that God's power and gifts are manifested under the guidance of God's wisdom and in God's time and will. **We cannot demand great manifestations of God's power at our will, it is "severally as He will."** 1Cor 12v11. **The lack of great spiritual gifts after our baptism in the Spirit can be a major temptation, however, great gifts of revelation and demonstration, are given to mature Christians, and in particular to the leading ministries of Christ's Church.** John 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 He is always with us in our 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.** Let us

answer Satan with, "It is written," God's truth stands forever sure, our God will never fail us.

2) Satan tried to get Jesus to use His gifts in the wrong way. Matt 4v5-7

Satan again attacked the faith of Christ and His sonship, but we will not dwell on this, as we have already covered this point.

a) The temptation to self-will, presumption and fanaticism

When Satan quoted Psalm 91v11,12, he omitted some important words, as can be seen by a comparison with Luke 4v10,11 and Matt 4v6. Satan omits the words "in all thy ways," that is, the ways of Christ directed by God. Doubtless Psalm 91 was one of Christ's favourite Scriptures, Satan misquotes it, and suggests that He had a Scriptural authority for a daring act of faith.

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

Satan will try to incite us to start us upon presumptuous and fanatical enterprises, and try to get us to misuse spiritual gifts, he still comes to us "with a Bible under his arm, and a text in his mouth." Satan attacks every revival with misinterpretations and perversions of the Scriptures, we have to make sure that our manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are according to the Scriptural pattern. **If we want to pervert or dodge the truth, Satan will certainly find us a Scripture to back us up, but this will involve wresting a text out of its context, and wilfully ignoring other Scriptures upon the subject.** The perils of pride, self-will, presumption and fanaticism are very great and lead to "great transgression." Let us follow the example of Jesus and resist Satan's attacks upon us and dependence upon God. Psalm 19v13.

b) The temptation to love the spectacular, and the praise of people

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

c) The temptation to seek position and prestige in men's religious power structures

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

Father. These religious leaders opposed Christ, and in the end murdered Him. He threatened their power structure and they could not tolerate this. **The test of the spiritual greatness of any Christian leader, is their willingness to step down from position and humbly serve others.** John 13v1-17, Matt 20v20-28, Phil 2v1-11. **Christ humbled the religious leaders of His day by choosing the prayerful, spiritual, consecrated, and sincere ordinary working men, as leaders in His work; He can and does do the same today, when religious leaders lack spirituality and sincerity.**

3) Satan tempted Jesus to exchange God's blessing for earthly glory

a) Satan will tempt us to seek worldly wealth, prestige, and glory

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

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

b) Satan will tempt us to supplement the power of God with the glory of the world

Christ refused to use the glory of the world to supplement or replace the power of God; He chose people who had no worldly power or influence to be the leaders of His Church. 1Cor 1v26-31. **The further we get away from God, the more we rely upon human resources.** However, universities, culture, music, art and literature, good as these can be, cannot replace dependence upon God and His power. We are in real spiritual danger when we rely upon what we can do, and feel that we can manage on our own. We praise God for Christian scholars, and we would be lost without them, but our first need is for men with truly apostolic ministry. Matt 9v35-38. Paul was an outstanding scholar, but he gloried in his limitations, not his abilities, so that the power of Christ would rest upon him. In 2Cor 12v9, "rest," is "episkenose," the aorist subjunctive of "episkenoo," "to dwell, to abide, to take up residence, to pitch upon him like a tent," like the Shechinah over the Tabernacle. 1Cor 2v1-8, 2Cor 12v9-12, Acts 17v15-34, 18v1-18. NB: v10.

Evangelism can be based on human oratory, and this can be looked upon as a substitute for the power and miracles of the early Church. Churches that allow worldly glory and human ability to replace God's power, become empty husks that disillusion those who are broken in heart, weary, sick and sinful, who are seeking and longing for a loving fellowship, where they can find God and His healing, peace and blessing. Jesus knew that only God could meet the needs of the world, and that human endeavour and worldly glory would always fail. 2Tim 3v5

c) Satan will tempt us to build a worldly or religious empire around ourselves

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

Jesus has left us the perfect example of financial integrity and sincerity, His attitude to money was beyond reproach. His enemies mocked His preaching against love of money and worldly-mindedness, and His total lack of any desire for money. Luke 16v10-15. Jesus was called many things by His enemies, but He was never called a "money-grabber." Christ's simple needs were met by grateful people, mainly women, who had been greatly helped through His ministry; and others gave

food and shelter for Himself and His disciples. Luke 8v1-3, 19v5. etc. However, Jesus often had no shelter and had to "sleep rough," out in the open air; He knows what it is to be homeless. Matt 8v19,20, Luke 9v57,58. Christ never tried to squeeze finances out of the people that He was preaching to; no one was to be charged for Divine healing, **"Freely ye have received, freely give."** Matt 10v7,8. There were to be no demands for money, indeed, as they were able, the apostolic band gave money to the poor and needy. John 12v5-8. Jesus did not financially put upon those who sympathised with Him and helped Him in His work, He did not sleep at the best hotels, He had nowhere to lay His head on many occasions. Luke 9v57-62.

Jesus did what the Father told Him to do, not what He felt was good or necessary. It is a striking fact that the Father never told Jesus to do things that are looked upon as essential today by most Christians. Christ built no buildings, He had no means of transport other than His own feet, He did not even get Scribes to write down and distribute His sermons. Jesus just made Himself a channel of His Father's will, love and power. John 5v18,19,30. It is not just enough to see a need and try to meet it, we have to make quite sure that we meet the priorities that the Father lays down. Jesus kept His financial needs down to a minimum, His base was a simple home in Capernaum, and we will do well to follow His example. Matt 4v13, Mark 2v1, 9v33. **Christ's one aim was to glorify His Father and do His will, and if we want to defeat the attacks of Satan, our aims and purposes in ministry will have to be the same.**

In Revelation Jesus reveals the people and means by which Satan attacks the churches

A) False Religion: This, rather than atheism, is Satan's objective, for false religion is able to deceive more than atheism, and usually ends in demon and Satan worship. False religion is seen in the following ways in some of 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.

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, 2Thess 2v7,8, Rev 13

False Doctrine: John 8v44. Satan had infiltrated several of the seven churches with deadly false doctrines that included immorality and idolatry. Immoral teaching like 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." 1Peter 1v15,16, Rev 3v7, 4v8, 15v4, 6v10, 22v11.

B) Persecution and Martyrdom: Rev 2v10. What Satan cannot win by seduction he tries to destroy by persecution and murder, he has often used those who have unscriptural traditions and practice false religion, or have political power, to persecute and murder God's dear children. Untold tens of millions of Christians have been murdered by evil, godless and fanatical governments throughout Church history, and in recent years, solely because of their faith in the Lord Jesus.

C) Worldly Attitudes and Interests: Satan once offered Christ 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 others who resist Satan in other ways often fall prey to prosperity. The church at Smyrna was penniless but rich in God. We are urged to keep ourselves from the idols of the world and all worldliness. 1Tim 6v17-19, 1John 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, 1Thess 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, Titus 1v5-16.

D) An attack on their personal communion with God and their love for God: Jesus told the Church at Ephesus that it had lost its first love, this can only be kept alive through communion with God. **If a church is lacking in prayer and communion with God, it is totally defeated. If Satan can defeat us here, he has defeated us everywhere.** A church can have a reputation for evangelism and spirituality, that is quite false, its inner communion with God can be almost non-existent, like Sardis it can be said of it, "thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." We need to earnestly seek God to preserve our spiritual glow.

E) Satan's Throne: Satan follows God's pattern and puts angels in charge of the nations. Dan 10v13,20,21. It could be that Satan made himself personally responsible for Pergamos, but it could be referring to the fact that Caesar worship was practised at Pergamos, certainly Satan was the power behind Caesar's throne. Rev 12v3,9 and 17v10.

5) There is a precious promise to those who are overcomers

The Great Tribulation Overcomer

In Rev 2v7,11,17,26, 3v5,12,21 and 21v7, Jesus uses the present active participle of “nikao,” to be a victor, to be victorious, to gain a victory, to speak of the overcomers. The present tense indicates continuous victory. This verb occurs 16 times in Revelation, see Rev 5v5, 6v2, 11v7, 12v11, 13v7, 15v2 and 17v14 as well. Jesus gives these precious incentives to us, to inspire us to live victoriously, and He tells us to repent if we are living in defeat, or we will not experience a full reward. 1Cor 9v27, 2Tim 4v7,8, 2John v8. “Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Rev 3v11. The grace of God can enable us to overcome. Rev 12v10,11, John 16v33, Rom 8v28-39, Phil 4v19, 2Cor 12v9, 1John 5v4,5. We have to fight to keep our garments clean, from defilement by the world, the flesh and the Devil, the believer who is living in sin has dirty garments. Zech 3v1-7, 2Cor 5v3, 7v1, 1John 2v14-17, Rev 3v4,5,17,18, 19v8. **Some have said that the overcomers are a select group among Christians, others, like myself, believe that it includes all Christians, who keep their faith, and get the victory over the trials and temptations of life, and endure to the end. Those who do not overcome are those who apostatise from the faith.**

To Ephesus: “To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” Rev 2v7. All who are saved will eat the fruit of the tree of life, so overcomers cannot be a select group of Christians.

To Smyrna: “He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.” Rev 2v11. It is unbelievers who are cast into the lake of fire, not Christians. This again goes against the view that overcomers are a select group of Christians.

To Pergamos: “To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows except he who receives it.” Rev.2v17. God gives soul satisfying manna, and public acclaim, which is signified by a white stone, and a secret name of precious significance, to every Christian overcomer.

To Thyatira: “He that overcometh, and keepeth my works to the end, to him I will give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I have received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. Rev 2v26-28. Power over the nations in the Millennium is promised to overcomers, a similar promise is given in Rev 3v21.

To Sardis: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and the Holy angels.” Rev 3v5. Overcomers do not have their names blotted out of the book of life, but apostates, who lose their faith, do have their names blotted out of the book of life.

To Philadelphia: “He that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down from Heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” Rev 3v12. All believers in Jesus have this heavenly calling, and are “fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” Heb 3v1, Eph 1v18, 2v19-22, 1Cor 12v12,13.

To Laodicea: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” Rev 3v21. A similar promise to that is given to the church at Thyatira in Rev 2v26-28; If we suffer for Christ's sake, we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us. 2Tim 2v12.

To All: “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” Rev.21v7. All genuine Christians are heirs of God and joints heirs with Christ, if we suffer with Him. Rom 8v17. In Gal 3v1-5 and 4v4-7, God makes us sons and heirs by redemption grace, and not by attainment through works of the Law. **Our inheritance is received entirely by grace, through faith in Jesus.** 1Peter 1v3-7,17-19, Col 1v12. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things.” Rom 8v32. All things are freely given to us in Jesus. Overcomers receive their inheritance purely through the blood of Christ.

In 1Cor 3v21-23, Paul said to the wayward Corinthians, “All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.” However, in 1Cor 3v10-17, Paul warns both them and ourselves, that the fire will try our works to test its quality, and that if our works are not acceptable, they will be burnt up, but we shall be saved, “yet so as by fire.” In this same passage, Paul, also states the destruction of those who defile the temple of their bodies and souls with evil. 1Cor 3v17. **Persevering faith and love is the mark of the overcomer.**

The saints are exhorted to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit

In spite of importance of the Messenger and His message, Christians can, and often do, refuse to hear “Him that speaketh from Heaven.” Heb 12v25. **God is looking for people who will tremble at His Word and obey it, whether it comes through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or His written Word, but, alas, this is rare.** Psalm 2v11, Ezra 10v3, 9v4,

Isaiah 66v2,5, Phil 2v12. There is a trembling of fear at the Word of God by people who know that it is true, but will not accept it, apply it to themselves, and obey it.. Joshua 2v9-11, 5v1, 9v9,24, 1Kings 22v14-35, Acts 24v24-27. Here are some examples of those who heard God's Word and obeyed. Noah; Heb 11v7, Abraham; Heb 11v17-19, Rehoboam; 2Chron 11v4. "Howbeit," see 12v14, Pekah; 2Chron 28v9, Ahab; 1Kings 21v7. Even Ahab gained a respite by trembling at God's Word. Amaziah; 2Chron 25v7, What a good man Josiah was! 2Chron 34v18-33. Paul; Acts 16v19.

Here are some examples of people who heard God's Word and rebelled

Noah's contemporaries. 1Peter 3v20, 2Peter 3v5. Lot's son in law. Gen 19v1,12-15,24,28. The generation, which had not seen the mighty acts of God's power in action in Canaan. Judges 2v1,2,10-19. This is a solemn warning to any movement that is brought into being by the power and grace of God, but which later loses that power. Balaam and Balak; Num 22v1-12, 24v1-9, 31v8-16, Rev 2v14. Saul; 1Sam 18v12-29, 13v8-14, 15v3,9,15,26, 1Chron 10v13,14. What a warning! We need to give heed to prophecies. Asa, a godly man rebels at God's Word through a prophet. 2Chron 16v7-10. Jeroboam; 1Kings 13v33. Israel; 2Kings 17v13,14,18, Neh 9v26,27. Judah; 2Chron 24v19-22; 36v15,16. The religious leaders of Israel in Christ's day. Matt 21v32, Luke 7v29,30, Matt 23v1-39. etc. God's people often rejected the Word of God, and the leaders that God appointed. Moses; Acts 7v25,35-39. Samuel; 1Sam 8v1-8. Jeremiah; Jer 42v1-6, 43v1-4. Paul; 2Cor 10v10, 11v4,12,13,20-22, Gal 1v6-9.

Christians, who had once loved Paul, turned away from him in favour of false prophets. 2Tim 1v15. The motives of such false prophets are usually quite clear, they seek popularity, finances, position, prestige, or a following of worshippers or disciples. Jer 5v31, 2Chron 18v12, 1Kings 18v19, Neh 6v12-14, Luke 6v24-26, 3John v9-11. False prophets condone the practice of the sins that people love. 2Peter 2v1-22, Acts 20v29,30, Jude v3,4. The Scripture warns us that there will be a great deal of false prophecy in the last days by the Devil's disciples. 1Tim.4v1-3, Matt 24v24, Rev 13 (all). 1John 4v1-3. False prophecy comes out of a bad heart, but if the people of God are walking with God, they will recognise the true prophet of God even when they are surrounded by many false prophets who are all saying the same thing. Matt 7v15-23, 2Chron 18v4-27, Jer 20v1-18, 37v19. **There is a difference, however, between false prophecy arising from a bad heart and wrong prophecy arising from ignorance and stupidity, for example, when Christians are told to prophecy in faith when they have nothing from God.** You only have the authority to prophesy when the Spirit of God has come upon you and given you a message to speak. The honest heart that fears the Lord never need fear, but the Lord will severely punish the wilful false prophet. Jer 28v17, 29v21-32, Acts 13v11, Rev 2v20-23, 19v20. **It is very wrong to make a false claim to speak for God.**

The Holy Spirit is Lord, He has come to do His will, not ours, and we should obey Him. We should not make our plans and then ask His blessing, we should seek His plans and then His blessing will automatically follow. This shows the importance of genuine prophecy, for prophets are the mouthpieces of God to the churches. Ezek 3v1-11, Jer 1v9. Prophets, however, differ a great deal in the importance of the things that they say, and the people to whom they speak. One may speak only words of comfort to the local church, another may speak words of wisdom and knowledge to the church universal. **There are many that prophesy, but there are few set in the Church universal as prophets.** Compare the importance of Isaiah's prophecies with those of the old prophet of 1Kings 13v20-22, 1Cor 12v28, Eph 4v11.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit were operating in all of these seven churches, for they had been led into these experiences by the apostles, and about a hundred years later they were still in operation as far afield as Lyons in France in the church of Irenaeus, and continued throughout Church history. It could be that no one was willing to give the messages of rebuke that were necessary for some of the churches, or that the prophecies that were given were ignored and rejected. It is necessary to not only admire, but obey the voice of God through the gifts. We must also take care that we are not stumbled by the kind of person that God uses to speak through, for God has chosen some strange people, at least by the worlds standards, to speak for Him. 2Kings 1v8, Amos 1v1, Matt 3v4, Isaiah 28v11-13.

NB: The gift of faith operates God's unlimited power against the powers of darkness

We read in 2Kings 13v14-19, that Elisha, while on his death bed, subdued the powers of darkness that aided the Syrians for several years, by a remarkable single operation of the gift of faith, when king Joash shot, at Elisha's command, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance." **Just as Elisha, with God, took hold of the bow of Joash, so the Holy Spirit takes hold with us against, not only our limitations, but also against the powers of darkness, and as we humble ourselves under God, and take His armoury, and resist the Devil with God's power and gifts, Satan flees from us.** Rom 8v26,27, James 4v5-7. The faith and power gifts of Moses took away the evil spiritual defences of the Canaanites, as faithful Caleb said, "they are bread for us, their defence is departed from them." Numb 14v9. **This is why the unseen prayer warrior is usually the real cause of revival.** The major attack of the powers of darkness is upon the minds of Christians, but all these attacks can all be dealt with by the fruit and gift of faith, and the Word of God. Christians who have the gift of faith can fight for others, who are too weak to fight for themselves against Satan's lies and power. 2Cor 10v1-5. **Let us all earnestly desire this greatest of the gifts of power.**

The Christian's Warfare And Armour. Eph 6v10-20, 1Peter 5v6,7, James 4v5-7

The Christian's enemy is not fleshly only but spiritual. The world is under the dominion of Satan and his angels, who are put in charge of nations etc. e.g. Luke 4v5-9, Dan 10v13,20,21. Their aim is to keep man in a state of ignorance and unbelief about God. These evil angels oppose us because we bring light to disperse the darkness. The essence of Satan's attacks is that they are wily, 2Cor 11v3, and to defeat them we require the wisdom and power of God. This comes through putting on the whole armour of God, which is seven fold.

- 1) A true understanding of the Word of God. The girdle, or belt of truth**
- 2) A life of practical holiness. The breastplate of righteousness**
- 3) An evangelical zeal and readiness to preach the Gospel. Feet shod with the Gospel of peace**
- 4) An unwavering faith. The shield of faith.**
- 5) Assurance of deliverance at all times, and hope of a glorious future. The helmet of salvation. 1Thess 5v8**
- 6) Ability to use God's Word against opponents, seen and unseen. The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God**
- 7) Intelligent, vigilant, persevering prayer, for all saints and ministers of God's Word**

Paul states his obligation to preach the Gospel, and the difficulty of doing this now he is a chained prisoner. He asks the Ephesians to pray that God may enable him to freely and fearlessly preach the Gospel as he should.

- 8) Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Eph 6v10**
 - a) The intercession of Jesus, our Great High Priest. Heb 2v17,18, 4v14-16, 7v25**
 - b) The intercession and aid of the Holy Spirit. Rom 8v26**

Blown along by the gale of the Spirit to maturity. Heb 6v1. "Phero"

- c) Calling on and invoking the name of the Lord. Prov 18v10, Num 6v22-27, John 17v6,12,26, Acts 2v21, 9v14, 1Cor 1v2, Rom 10v12-14**
- d) Abide in the love of Jesus and God our Father**

Let love constrain and guide you in your relationships with other Christians. John 15v9-17, 1John 4v1-21. NB: v8,16. "The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love...We have come to know and have believed the love, which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." (NAU) We read in Gal 5v6. For when we are in union with Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor the lack of it makes any difference at all; what matters is faith that works (is energised) through ("dia") love." (TEV)

- 9) Fellowship with the body of Christ, under the headship and guidance of Christ. Eccles 4v9-12**

We are told in Heb 10v24-26, that the antidote to backsliding and apostasy in the last days is drawing near to God in fellowship with other Christians. God commands us in Heb 3v13., "But **encourage one another (not disappoint and discourage one another)** day after day, as long as it is {still} called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." (NAS) Churches that fail to encourage and up build Christians are a disaster and disgrace, and they will have to answer to God for it.

Appendix XI: Mark 16v9-20 Proved

It is only since the appearance of Griesbach's second edition [1796-1806] that critics of the New Testament have permitted themselves to handle the last twelve verses of St Mark's Gospel with disrespect.

Previous critical editions of the New Testament are free from this reproach. "There is no reason for doubting the genuineness of this portion of Scripture," wrote Mill in 1707, after a review of the evidence (as far as he was acquainted with it) for and against. Twenty-seven years later, appeared Bengel's edition of the New Testament (1734); and Wetstein, at the end of another seventeen years (1751-2), followed in the same field. Both editors, after rehearsing the adverse testimony in extenso, left the passage in undisputed possession of its place. Alter in 1786-7, and Birch in 1788, 7 (suspicious as the latter evidently

was of its genuineness,) followed their predecessors' example. But Matthaei, (who also brought his labours to a close in the year 1788,) was not content to give a silent suffrage. He had been for upwards of fourteen years a laborious collator of Greek MSS. of the New Testament, and was so convinced of the insufficiency of the arguments which had been brought against these twelve verses of S. Mark, that with no ordinary warmth, no common acuteness, he insisted on their genuineness.

It is well known that for determining the Text of the New Testament, we are dependent on three chief sources of information: viz. (1) on Manuscripts — (2) on Versions, — (3) on Fathers. And it is even self-evident that the most ancient MSS., — the earliest Versions, — the oldest of the Fathers, will probably be in every instance the most trustworthy witnesses.

Manuscripts:

Mark 16v9-20 is contained in every MS in the world except two, the Codex in the Vatican Library in Rome known as "Codex B" (Vaticanus), and the Codex which Tischendorf brought from Mount Sinai in 1859, and which he designates by the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet (א) "Alef" (Sinaiticus). These two manuscripts are probably not of equal antiquity. An interval of fifty years at least seems to be required to account for the marked difference between them. If the first belongs to the beginning, the second may be referred to the middle or latter part of the 4th century. But the two Manuscripts agree in this, that they are without the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel. In both, (ver. 8), comes the subscription: in Cod. B, — KATA MAPKON; in Cod. (א) — EYAITAION KATA MAPKON.

Versions:

- 1) In the 2nd century by the Old Latin and Syraic versions.
- 2) In the 3rd century by the Coptic and Sahidic versions.
- 3) In the 4th century by Cureton's Syr. and Gothic versions.
- 4) In the 5th century by Armenian versions.
- 5) In the 6th and 7th centuries the Georgian and Ethiopic versions.

Early Church Fathers:

- 1) Papias refers to Mark 16v18 when he records a marvellous tradition concerning "Justus surnamed Barsabas," "how that after drinking noxious poison, through the Lord's grace he experienced no evil consequence." He does not give the words of the Evangelist. It is even surprising how completely he passes them by; and yet the allusion to the place just cited is manifest. Now, Papias is a writer who lived so near the time of the Apostles that he made it his delight to collect their traditional sayings. His date (according to Clinton) is 100 AD.
- 2) Justin Martyr, the date of whose first Apology is 151 AD, is observed to say (paraphrased) concerning the Apostles that, after our Lord's Ascension, "And they went forth, and preached everywhere..." which is nothing else but a quotation from the last verse of Mark's Gospel. Thus it is found that the conclusion of Mark's Gospel was familiarly known within fifty years of the death of the last of the Evangelists.
- 3) Irenaeus, in his third Book against Heresies, deliberately quotes and remarks upon the 19th verse of the last chapter of Mark's Gospel, we are put in possession of the certain fact that the entire passage was extant in a copy of the Gospels which was used by the Bishop of the Church of Lyons sometime about the year 180 AD, and which therefore cannot possibly have been written much more than a hundred years after the date of the Evangelist himself.
- 4) Hippolytus, Bishop of Portus near Borne, a contemporary of Irenaeus, quotes the 17th and 18th verses in his "Refutation of All Heresies."
- 5) At the Seventh Council of Carthage held under Cyprian, 256 AD (on the baptizing of Heretics,) Vincentius, Bishop of Thibari, (a place not far from Carthage,) in the presence of the eighty-seven assembled African bishops, quoted two of the verses under consideration; and Augustine, about a century and a half later, in his reply, recited the words afresh.
- 6) Eusebius, the Ecclesiastical Historian, was profoundly well acquainted with these verses. He discusses them largely, and was by no means disposed to question their genuineness. His Church History was published 325 AD.

7) Marinus also, a contemporary of Eusebius, inasmuch as he is introduced to our notice by Eusebius himself as asking a question concerning the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel without a trace of misgiving as to the genuineness of that about which he inquires, is a competent witness in their favour.

8) Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan (A.D. 374-397) freely quotes this portion of the Gospel, citing ver. 15 four times: verses 16, 17 and 18, each three times: ver. 20, once.

9) Chrysostom (400 AD) in part of a Homily claimed for him by his Benedictine Editors, he points out that Luke alone of the Evangelists describes the Ascension: Matthew and John not speaking of it, Mark recording the event only. Then he quotes verses 19, 20. "This" (he adds) "is the end of the Gospel. Mark makes no extended mention of the Ascension." Elsewhere he has an unmistakable reference to Mark 16v9.

10) Jerome, on a point like this, is entitled to more attention than any other Father of the Church. Living at a very early period, (for he was born in 331 AD and died in 420 AD,) endowed with extraordinary Biblical learning, a man of excellent judgment, and a professed Editor of the New Testament, for the execution of which task he enjoyed extraordinary facilities, his testimony is most weighty. It ought to be enough to point out that we should not have met with these last twelve verses in the Vulgate, had Jerome held them to be spurious. He familiarly quotes the 9th verse in one place of his writings; in another place he makes the extraordinary statement that in certain of the copies, (especially the Greek,) was found after ver. 14 the reply of the eleven Apostles, when our Saviour "upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen."

11) Augustine would quote these verses. He brings them forward again and again, discusses them as the work of Mark, remarks that "in diebus Paschalibus," Mark's narrative of the Resurrection was publicly read in the Church. Augustine flourished 395-430 AD.

12) Another very important testimony to the genuineness of the concluding part of Mark's Gospel is furnished by the unhesitating manner in which Nestorius, the heresiarch, quotes v 20; and Cyril of Alexandria accepts his quotation, adding a few words of his own. Let it be borne in mind that this is tantamount to the discovery of two dated codices containing the last twelve verses of Mark, and that date anterior (it is impossible to say by how many years) to 430 AD.

13) Victor of Antioch, flourished about 425 AD, the critical testimony which he bears to the genuineness of these verses is more emphatic than is to be met with in the pages of any other ancient Father. It may be characterized as the most conclusive testimony which it was in his power to render.

14) Hesychius of Jerusalem, towards the close of his "Homily on the Resurrection," (published in the works of Gregory of Nyssa, and erroneously ascribed to that Father,) Hesychius appeals to the 19th verse, and quotes it as Mark's at length. The date of Hesychius is uncertain; but he may, I suppose, be considered to belong to the 6th century.

15) The Synopsis Scripturae Sacrae, an ancient work ascribed to Athanasius, but probably not the production of that Father. It is at all events of much older date than any of the later uncials; and it rehearses in detail the contents of Mark 16v9-20.

16) Gregentius in the 6th century, and to Gregory the Great, and Modestus, patriarch of Constantinople in the 7th century; to Ven. Bede and John Damascene in the 8th. Ambrose, quotes five of these verses no less than fourteen times.

Manuscripts, Fathers, and Versions alike, are only not unanimous in bearing consistent testimony. But the consentient witness of the MSS. is even extraordinary. With the exception of the two uncial MSS. which have just been named (Codex B and Codex (x)), there is not one Codex in existence, uncial or cursive, (and we are acquainted with, at least, eighteen other uncials, and about six hundred cursive Copies of this Gospel,) which leaves out the last twelve verses of Mark!

Appendix XII: Daniel's 70 Weeks Prophecy (Dan 9v24-27)

In Dan 9v20-27 we read that God's dealings with Jerusalem were to cover seventy times seven years, a period of 490 years. "Week," "shabuwa," (Strong's OT:7620) literally means "seven," either days, or as here, years. These 490 years divide up in the following way.

49 years from the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem, to Jerusalem being built

The following decrees were given to restore either the Temple or Jerusalem.

By Cyrus, in 538 to 536 BC: Ezra 1v1-3, 5v13-17, 2Chron 36v22,23

By Darius the 1st Hystapes: Ezra.6v3-8. The Temple was rebuilt from about 520 to 516 BC.

By Artaxerxes Longimanus, in his 7th year 467 BC: Ezra 7v7,11-26. (There are about fifty years between Ezra 6 and 7.) It appears from Ezra 9v9, that permission was given to Ezra to rebuild Jerusalem's wall and city.

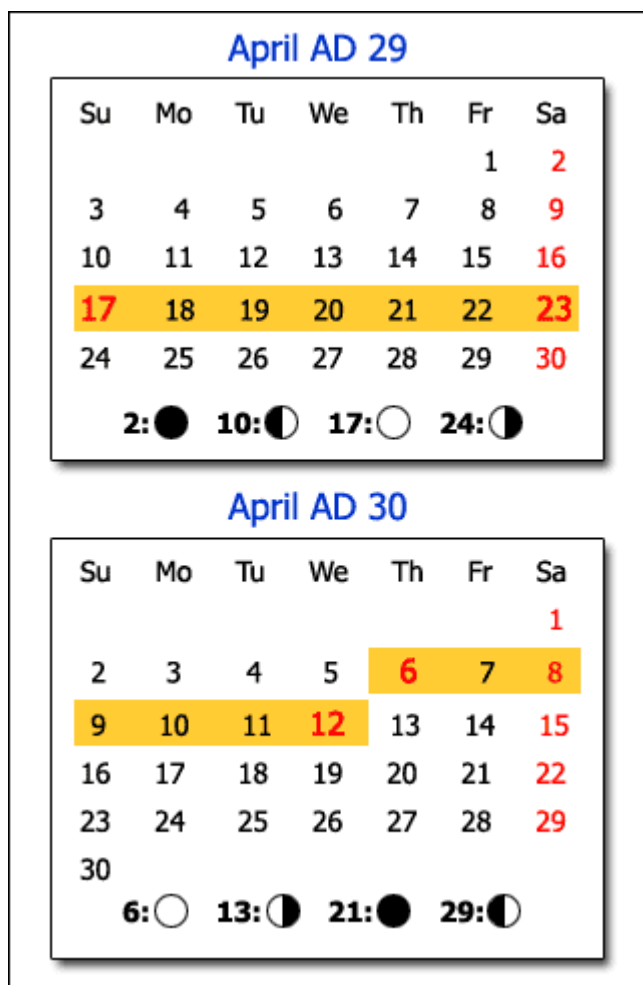
By Artaxerxes Longimanus, in his 20th Year 454 BC:

It was not until 13 years after Ezra set out for Jerusalem, that the actual rebuilding took place, when Artaxerxes Longimanus in his 20th. year, 454 BC **(Please see Appendix 1)**, commanded Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem and its walls. Neh 2v1-8. The wall itself was quickly rebuilt in 52 days, Neh 6v15, but it was doubtless made more secure over the years, for the prophecy of Dan 9v25, suggests that it took 49 years for all the rebuilding of the city and wall to be finished. Usher, after 37 years of study, dates the accession of Artaxerxes as the year 474 BC, and the date of 454 BC, for the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem in Neh 2v1-8.

434 years from the completion of the street and wall of Jerusalem to the death of Jesus. Dan 9v24-26

Christ was "cut off, but not for Himself," His death was "to make reconciliation for iniquity," Christ was to die to bring in the New Covenant and make salvation available for all who would receive Him. Heb 7v22-28, 9v11 to 10v39, 1John 2v1,2, 5v9-13. God showed Daniel that the coming of the Messiah was over 500 years away. It was this prophecy of Daniel that made godly Simeon, praying Anna, and many others expect the coming of the Messiah in their day. Luke 2v25-38.

S. P. Tregelles and Ussher say that Jesus died in 29 AD. However, the following Jewish calendars give considerable force to the viewpoint that the Lord Jesus was crucified in 30 AD. In 30 AD the first day of Passover Feast was on Thursday April 6th, Nisan 15th, and the last day of the Passover Feast was on Wednesday April 12th, Nisan 21. Whereas, according to the calendar of 29 AD, the first day of the Passover Feast was on Saturday April 17th, Nisan 15th, and the last day of the Passover Feast was on Sunday April 23rd, Nisan 21st. The crucifixion was most certainly in 30 AD, on Thursday, April 6th., Nisan 15th, not on Friday, for **according to Matt 12v40 Jesus was raised from the dead "after three days and three nights."** See "the third day," "after three days," etc., in Matt 16v4,21, 17v23, 20v19, 27v40,63,64, Mark 8v31, 10v34, John 2v19, 19v42, 1Cor 15v4, Eph 4v9,10. Jesus was raised from the dead in the night of the third day. **Christ's enemies, sadly, unlike Christ's disciples, remembered well that Jesus promised that He would be raised from the dead on the third day.**



So we can see that there was a quite remarkable literal fulfilment of the first part of the prophecy of Dan 9v20-27; and in Matt 24v15-31 the Lord Jesus tells us that there will be a literal fulfilment of the prophecy of Dan 9v27, and that this will be clearly seen by all. Matt 24v32,33. Paul reminds the Thessalonian Christians of this fact in 2Thess 2v1-5. The desecration of the holy of holies at Jerusalem by Antichrist will inform us that the second coming of Christ and the millennial kingdom is only 3½ years away. Christ said that the day and hour of His coming was only known by the Father, but He definitely tells us that we shall know the week of His coming by Daniel's prophecy, and that when the signs He gave come to pass, His coming will be "near, even at the doors." Matt 24v33,36. The Jews should have known by the prophecy of Daniel the year that Christ was to die, and as soon as the treaty is signed we shall know the year of Christ's second coming. **Oswald J Smith** writes about this, "we shall be able to say, "Thank God the hour has struck. Within seven years at the longest Jesus will return to reign."

Jesus tells us that when Antichrist breaks the treaty with the Jews, all Christians in Judea are to flee to the mountains for safety, just as they did in 70 AD (when they fled to Pella), when this prophecy received a partial fulfilment. The Scriptures call the period of 3½ years after the desecration of the Temple "the Great Tribulation." **(Please see Appendix XIII: The Mystery Of God And The Mystery Of Iniquity)**

Daniel, Paul and our Lord state that immediately after this period of great tribulation the Lord will return and set up His kingdom. Rev 7v14, Dan 12v1, Matt 24v21,29-31, Mark 13v19. The Great Tribulation ends with the destruction of the armies of Antichrist around a devastated Jerusalem. Luke 17v37, Rev 17v16-18, 18v1 to 19v21, 2Thess 2v8.

Jesus said that the overall picture of the conditions in the world just prior to His coming will be as bad as they were in the days of Noah and Lot. Luke 17v26-31. The expulsion of evil angels from the heavenly places into the earth results in a great increase in wickedness, and a wilful ignorance of the promised judgement of God. Gen 6v1-13, 1Peter 3v19,20, Rev 12v7-12. The wicked despise the riches of God's goodness, forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God is trying to lead them to repentance and salvation. Rom 2v1-4,9, 2Peter 3v3-9, Jude v14-16. Many signs are now being fulfilled, they are a great warning to the Church that it is time to put on the armour of God, for no lukewarm Christian will stand in this evil day. Rom 13v11-14, Eph 6v10-20.

The final period of seven years which brings in the end of the age

Jesus referred to the final seven years of Daniel's prophecy concerning "thy people," the Jews, and "thy holy city," Jerusalem, as the period that would precede His return, and God's kingdom being set up on earth. Immediately after these seven years Jesus will return and "bring in everlasting righteousness and seal up the vision and prophecy." When we consider this verse in connection with Rev 10v7,11 and 11v15,18, we see that the seventh trumpet will sound on the last day of these seven years and God will take over the rule of the earth and destroy the wicked. **Since most of Israel are blind to grace and are broken off, the Church now has the leading part in God's prophetic purposes, until the last seven years of this age, when both the Church and Israel have a part to play in prophecy.** Rom 11v7-26.

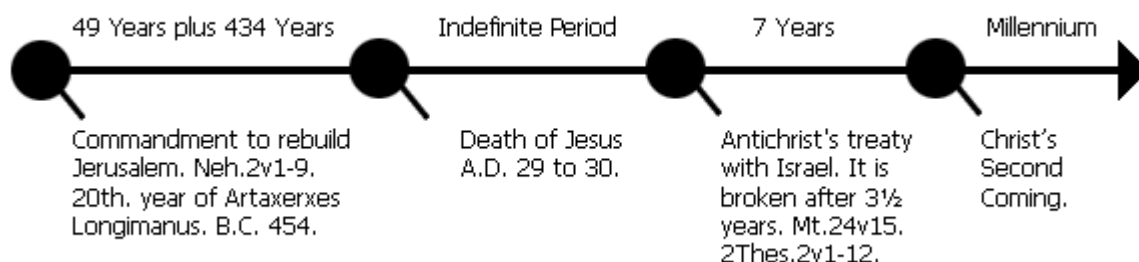
Only Babylon, and the nations that have ruled over Jerusalem during these 483 years in the past, and the seven years of Antichrist's kingdom in the future, are shown as part of the Beast. This 490 year period of Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy is referred to as "The times of the Gentiles" in Luke 21v20-24.

Other nations, such as the Turks, are not included in the Beast, even though they have reigned over Jerusalem. We know, from Rev 17v10, that at the time of John, the sixth kingdom was ruling Jerusalem, this was Rome; the seventh kingdom, the kingdom of Antichrist, has yet to come.

NB: The exact fulfilment of the first part of Dan 9v24-27, assures the fulfilment of the second part

There was a remarkable fulfilment of the first part of the prophecy of Dan 9v20-27, and in Matt 24v15-33, Jesus tells us that there will be an equally striking fulfilment of the last part of this prophecy. In 2Thess 2v1-12, Paul reminds the Thessalonians that the desecration of the Sanctuary of the Temple at Jerusalem by Antichrist, will inform us that the second coming of Christ, and the Millennial kingdom, is only 3½ years away. Jesus said that no one knew the day or the hour of His coming, but He tells us that we shall know the year, month and week of His coming by Daniel's prophecy, and that when the signs that He gave us come to pass, that His coming will be "nigh, even at the door." Matt 24v32-36.

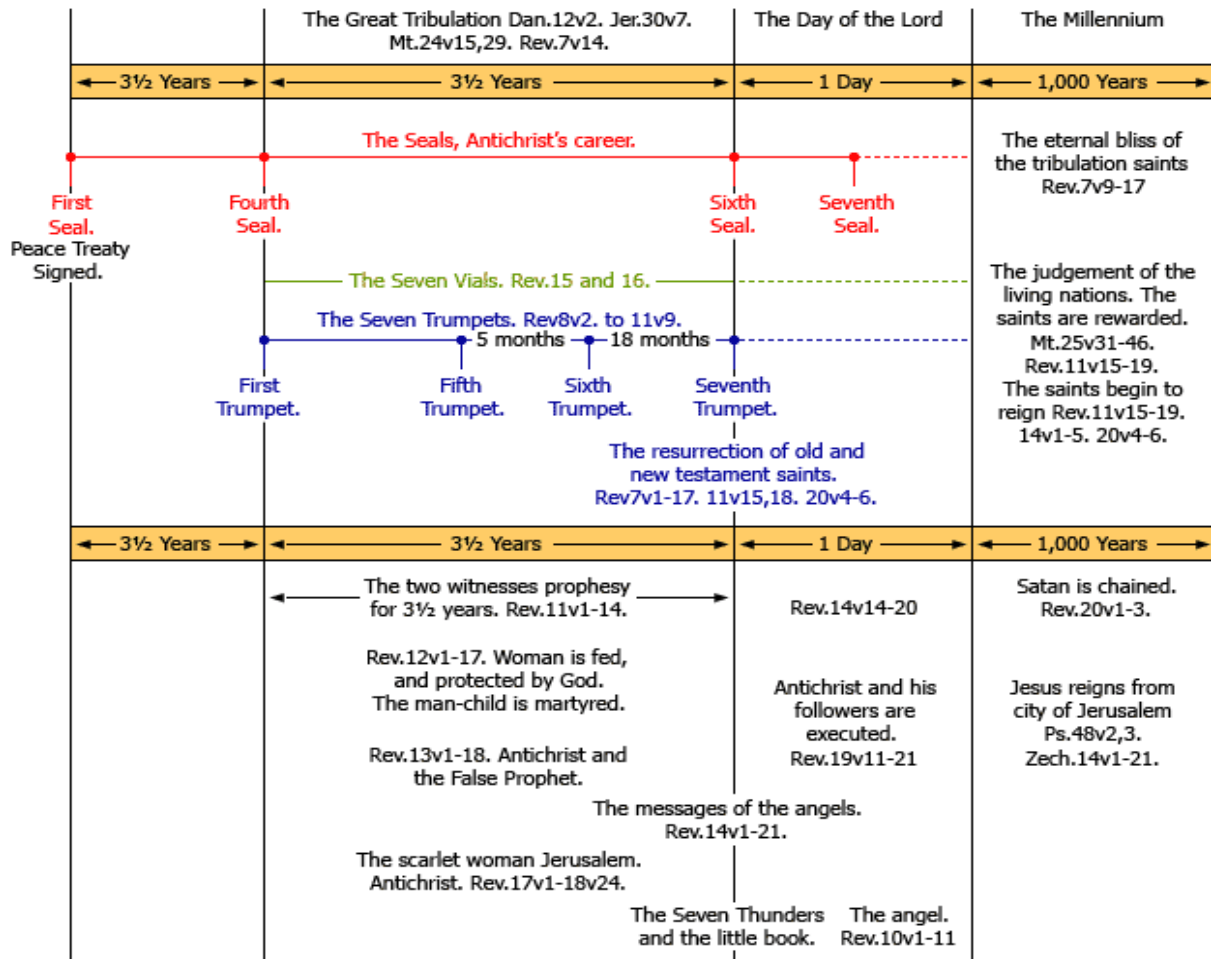
Chart Of Daniel's 70 Weeks Of Years Dan 9v20-27



The first six heads of the Beast of Rev 17v3,8-11, are six kingdoms that have conquered, ruled and tyrannised Israel and Jerusalem, during the 483 years of the prophecy of Dan 9v20-27. The first six kingdoms were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria, and the sixth one was Rome; the 7th head, the kingdom of Antichrist, is still to come.

THE LAST SEVEN YEARS OF THE PROPHECY OF Dan.9v20-27.

This chart looks at the 7 years of Daniel's prophecy from the information given in the book of Revelation.



Appendix XIII: The Mystery Of God And The Mystery Of Iniquity

The following is a synopsis of C L Parker's excellent commentary on the two mysteries mentioned in 2Thess 2v1-2 and Rev 10v7.

"There is something which is called '**The mystery of God**', which is only ended when the Lord returns at the seventh trumpet. Rev 10v7, Eph 3v9,10, 3v9-11, Rom 16v25,26. There is also a reference to '**the mystery of iniquity**' which was already working in Paul's day, but was hindered from completion by God until He was ready to allow it. The word 'mystery' does not mean mysterious, but simply a secret hidden from the outsider but revealed to the initiated, e.g. the secret teaching of Freemasons, which is only known to them. Thus both God and Satan have plans which are hidden from the man in the street, but are revealed to their own children. The Christian, of course, knows the truth, but the ordinary Spiritist is deceived by his master. Only a few know the deep things of Satan. Luke 10v24, 1Peter 1v10-12, John 15v14,15, Rev 1v1, 2v24, 2Thess 2v7.

The Mystery of God

The world does not credit God with any plan at all. To them it all seems a meaningless jumble without any particular purpose. Indeed, the world conceives of God as a fool who can't see His own kingdom. As a matter of fact, however, the intention of God is to put both Heaven and Earth under the rule of His Son Jesus and His bride (i.e. the Church), and to fulfil upon the earth the promise made to Abraham and his seed, Israel, that they should inherit the earth. The inhabited earth to come is not again to be put under angels, but under Christ and His brethren who overcame. Heb 2v5-13, Rom 8v12-39, Luke 19v11-27, Rev 21v7. There must therefore be begotten, educated and tested, a sufficiently large number of overcoming Sons to take the place of the present world rulers, i.e. Satan's angels, now in the first heaven but later to be cast out upon the earth, and finally into Hell. Dan 10v13-21, Rev 12v7-9, Matt 25v41, 1Cor 9v24-27, 12v31, Eph 6v12, 2Tim 4v8, James 1v12, 1Peter 5v1-4.

Now this depends not upon God but upon His children. If the Church was faithful, then the time would have been shortened, but unfortunately there have been centuries where the Gospel has hardly ever been preached at all, so hardly any overcomers have arisen as kings and priests. Therefore, the length of this period, though known to God, was not revealed to His sons lest they should be tempted to grow slack and say, 'the time is not yet,' or forget that the length of the interval depended on their exertions, and that they would hasten or retard the day of Christ or lose a crown through carelessness. 2Peter 3v12, Rev 3v11. When, however, the Lord knows that the requisite numbers of overcomers is to hand, then He will stand aside and allow Satan to proceed with His plan. 2Thess 2v6-12.

The Mystery of Satan, 2Thess 2v7, Rev 2v24

Satan and his angels are already doomed to Hell for the ages of ages (because of their impenitence and wickedness) and therefore have no hope of success, or of establishing any successful kingdom upon earth. However, being filled with a murderous hatred of God and man, they desire to damage them as much as possible before their own final ruin. Therefore, during the last seven years of this age they will stage a kind of mock kingdom of Heaven upon earth, a Devilish parody of God's Millennial kingdom, even using God's city and Temple for this purpose. God will allow Satan to do this fearful thing for the following reasons amongst others.

- a) To show mankind the madness of preferring Satan to Jesus, and thus bring them to repentance and a willingness to accept Jesus as Lord. This folly has wrecked the human race since Eden, but this fearful experience will bring to an end to Satan's power of deception during the Millennium, his mask will be torn off and he will be seen for what he is, the enemy of man. Gen 2 all, Acts 3v14, Rev 13v7,10,15, John 8v44.
- b) To show the Jews the madness of rejecting their Messiah, and so bring them to a willingness to accept Jesus as Lord.
- c) To break the pride of the Gentiles by giving them an opportunity one by one, and finally all combined, to govern the world according to their own ideas so that any hope of happiness apart from God may be finally shattered by their own failure. This will make them willing to accept God's plan of learning about Him from the despised Jews. Zech 8v23. Following Antichrist will result in the complete collapse of society and bring the earth to the brink of destruction, from which Christ will deliver them at the last moment, so that the few remaining Jews and Gentiles will enter into the Millennium broken and shocked by the judgement of God. Zech 12 all, Isaiah 13v9-16. As were Noah and his family when they saw the ruin caused by the flood and obliged, and at any rate happy, to submit to the iron rule of Christ and His Brethren. Psalm 2 all, Rev 12v5, 2v27, 19v15.

Thus God will use this last plan of Satan to break the pride of man, and when this is accomplished will imprison Him until He has again need of him to test the inhabitants of the Millennial earth. The human race as a whole will have had an experience similar to that of the prodigal son, and will return to God only after the terrible experience of trusting the Devil, having learned to obey God by the things they have suffered. It is of first importance to remember that against God Satan has absolutely no power. No evil being, demon or man can do anything other than what God permits. 2Chron 18v18-22, Job 1v12, Matt 8v31, Psalm 76v10. Satan is wholly a tool in the hands of God to punish the wicked, to correct the righteous, 1Tim 1v20, 1Cor 5v5, to bring glory to the Sons of God, Eph 6v10-20, Job 1 and 2, James 1v12, to test the true character of everyone. Rev 20v7,10, Matt 4v1. Against us Satan only has the power that is given to him by God. Job 1 all. Against God he is helpless. Rev 20v1-3. God alone knows the length of this period of waiting, Matt 24v36, Mark 13v32, Acts 1v7, but God's children will know when the last seven years, and the Great Tribulation begins. Matt 24v15-22, Dan 9v27, 2Thess 2v1-12." **End of C L Parker's synopsis.**

God restrains Satan until the last 3½ years of this age, the time known as, "The Great Tribulation," when "the mystery of iniquity" will work. Even those days are shortened by God to protect mankind from Satan's plan to destroy mankind. Matt 24v21,22, 2Thess 2v7, Rev 12v12, Dan 8v24, 12v1-7. This explosion of evil and destruction is allowed, in order to show what Satan and his angels, and the effects of evil are like; and also show the justice and necessity of their eternal judgement, and confinement in everlasting chains of darkness, after the destruction of their bodies in the lake of fire. 2Peter 2v4,17, Jude v13, Matt 25v41,46, Rev 19v20, 20v10. Every mouth will be stopped by the awesome justice of God. Rom 3v19. The horrific carnage on earth produced by this awful manifestation of evil, produces a stunned and shocked silence in all the inhabitants of the heavenly kingdom. Rev 8v1. The happiness of the eternal "ages of ages" in the kingdom of God; depends on everyone in that kingdom, not only loving righteousness, but also hating evil with all their being. This manifestation of evil produces an eternal hatred of evil in the children of God; and permanently banishes evil from the kingdom of God.

Appendix XIV: God's Answers For The Last Days

1) Charismatic Gifts: There will be an emphasis upon deliverance and use of spiritual gifts (ie. gifts of deliverance, healing and mercy). The critical thing of the last days will be the ministry of prayer exercised by women. The following is a prophecy from praying monks in Russia who prayed for the deliverance of Mother Barbara's father and family in 1911

(who subsequently got out of Russia), one of the monks was given a prophecy, part of which stated that "Britain...will be saved by praying women." (taken from Battle For Israel by Lance Lambert, pages 63-64).

Women have more time around the home or can in the home pray more easily, they are the answer and God's primary critical answer to the difficulties of the last days, in praying things through on the Church. It is necessary to get the women to pray and say, "God, take us through the stages of your empowerment for the last days, take us through those levels.

2) Charismatic Gifts Extended In discipline And Judgement: At this present time we operate in mercy, but when Satan is thrown out of the Heavens (Dan 12v1, Rev 12v7-17) and the wicked and the vast armies of Antichrist and his allies link up with Satan, there has got to be the extension in the Church of the gifts of the Spirit in discipline and judgement. God will not leave us, the Church, to face the wicked with no teeth, **HE WILL NOT LEAVE US DEFENSELESS!** The Two Witnesses for three and a half years **CANNOT** be killed, 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 and call fire down from Heaven. Dan 11v32, Rev 11v3-6. For the whole of three and a half years **ALL** the might of Antichrist and his armies **CANNOT** kill them.

WOMEN: GET PRAYING TO RAISE UP LAST DAY ELIJAH MINISTRIES IN THE CHURCH!

3) Charismatic Gifts Extended To A New Level Of Continuous Use: Not just the manifestation of one gift here and one there, **BUT** Christians living in the Spirit who will experience continuous revelation **ALL** day, especially in those parts of the world (like the Middle East) where there is **GREAT EVIL!** An increase in the level of God's answer to the revelation of the activity of the powers of darkness.

4) Spiritual Gifts And Ministeries Extended To The Level Of Transportation And Angelic Ministry (Matt 24v16, Rev 12v6,14): God will take groups and individual Christians and transport them by supernatural transportation (like experienced by Elijah and Philip), plus provision of food and divine protection in safe places. God will be with Christians in the Great Tribulation like He was with Stephen, thus purifying them and making them white. Dan 11v35.

GOD HAS HIS ANSWERS IN THE POWER GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT!

5) God's Personal Acts Of Power And Judgement: The Seven Trumpets And Seven Vials are God's direct judgement upon the wicked again and again, and the wicked **KNOW ITS GOD**, but they don't repent but blaspheme and curse God. These judgements only harden further the wicked, even as it did Pharaoh! They take on the evil nature of the evil spirits that they serve. Rev 8v2-9v21, 11v15-19, chapters 15 & 16.

6) The Final Stage Of Judgement At Christ's Second Coming: The wrath of The Lamb, as He appears in great power and glory, the wicked **DON'T** repent, **BUT** turn and fight him. Psalm 2, Rev 19v19. But before the Second Coming three angels preach the Everlasting Gospel to **ALL** the earth. Rev 14. Antichrist and his armies are consumed by the breath of His mouth. Zech 14, 2Thess 2v1-12.

There is then silence in Heaven for half an hour (7th Seal), as the redeemed and the angels look down upon a completely shattered earth. **THE PLAN OF EVIL HAS BEEN MANIFESTED TO THE FULL**, but this is part of God's Plan, that is that **ALL** have a full manifestation of sin and evil and its end burn't into their (our) being! It is **THIS** that will be the basis of the happiness of Heaven in the Millennium and the Ages of Ages. **We must not only LOVE righteousness BUT HATE EVIL!** Eph 3v9-11, 2Thess 2v1-12, Heb 1v9, Rev 10v7.

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