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Bracketed comments following some scriptures assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of these verses

We acknowledge the additional works of the various Scholars and Bible Commentaries used in conjunction with the College material. This is not to say that we agree with all their theology, but we certainly value their contribution to the Body of Christ.

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***“FALL AND REDEMPTION
OF MAN ”***

Study 10

***Christian Foundation Studies
Series One***

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FALL AND REDEMPTION OF MAN

This study contains outlines of various important basic truths from the Word of God, many of which are foundational to our understanding of God's wonderful Plan of Redemption. As we study and come to understand these truths, we will be able to appreciate, much more fully, the depths of God's love, and the infinite care He has taken to restore mankind to Himself.

THE TRINITY

There is one true triune God, eternally co-existent in three persons Who constitute the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit. These three dwell together in perfect unity, forming one heavenly government called God, and each of the three Divine persons we recognize to be God. Each member of the Holy Trinity expresses the Divine Nature, and all are equally holy, just, righteous and loving.

In a family unit, there may be a husband, a wife and children, but they constitute one family unit. Similarly, the Holy Trinity consists of three persons Who constitute one family unit. These three persons in the Godhead agree together in all They do, and are therefore in total unity. So the government of God is not one person or one in number, but one in perfect unity. And each person in the Godhead can, on a separate basis, also be called God, i.e. God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit. Each is called God in His own right.

“. . .the government of God is not one person or one in number, but one in perfect unity. And each person in the Godhead can, on a separate basis, also be called God. . .”

God has three major attributes which distinguish Him from His creation. He is:

Omnipresent - present everywhere at the same time.

Omnipotent - all powerful - He is unlimited or infinite in power.

Omniscient - all knowing - He is unlimited in knowledge and knows all things, including that which will take place in the future.

Note: Satan is neither omnipresent, omnipotent nor omniscient.

THE DEITY OF JESUS

Background Reading: John 1:1-15

God had no beginning and will have no end. This is hard for the human mind to comprehend. Before anything else existed, He was. The early Old Testament name for God was simply *“I Am that I Am,”* which, in the Hebrew language, is *“Eheyeh asher Eheyeh”* (Exodus 3:14). This term means “the Eternal, the One Who has always been and always will be, the Ever-Present and Living One.” In other words, this Name expresses God’s never changing and eternal existence.

God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit agreed that God the Word would take on flesh, and dwell among mankind as a perfect, sinless human being. God the Word, the second member of the Trinity, as the perfect man Jesus, stripped Himself of all His privileges and rightful dignity as God the Word, and was born into this world through a virgin, perfect and sinless. Jesus was thus both fully God and fully man, the Word of God made flesh.

“While on earth, Christ performed some functions in the realm of His humanity (walked from place to place, John 4:3-6) and other functions in the realm of His Deity (He held the whole universe together, Colossians 1:17).” (Israel My Glory, Vol.56, No.2)

Emmanuel’s dual identity, being God the Word and Jesus the man at the same time, is certainly a hard concept for our finite human minds to grasp. But the scriptures show us that Christ was in God the Word from eternity past. He was not created but always was, for before Abraham was, He existed:

JOHN 8:58 Jesus said unto them, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”

Christ was and is in God the Word as one person with two identities. Then because God the Word, the second member of the Trinity, created all that is, Christ also did and so *“all things”* were *“created by Him.”*

COLOSSIANS 1:16 For by Him (Christ: Colossians 1:13-15) were **all things** created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible (seen and not seen), whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers (refers to the organization of both holy and fallen angels, the latter serving and being created for God before they fell): **all things were created by Him, and for Him**

“. . .“While on earth, Christ performed some functions in the realm of His humanity . . . and other functions in the realm of His Deity. . . Christ was and is in God the Word as one person with two identities. . .”

Where did Christ come from? He was not created but always was, as we have seen (John 8:58). At the Incarnation He stepped out of eternity and into time and space for us,

yet as God the Word He remained in eternity. Jesus came from heaven to earth to stand in our place as a sinless offering. He came into the world as One Who had lived elsewhere before His coming. Again our Saviour drew aside the veil of eternity and stepped into time and space.

*“Christ’s existence did not begin when He was conceived in Mary’s womb and born into the world several months later. As an eternal divine being, He had always existed without beginning and end throughout eternity past and Old Testament history. When, at a specific point in time, He was incarnated in human flesh, He added a complete human nature to His pre-existent, eternal, divine nature. The Word, who existed with God the Father before the beginning of creation, became flesh and dwelt among people on the earth for more than thirty years (John 1:1–3, 14).”*¹

Christ is eternal. He was present at creation and throughout all history. But there came a time when His eternal Presence would be *“made flesh.”* For the purpose of becoming a man, the second Adam, so He could stand in our place as our Kinsman Redeemer at Calvary, Christ had to forsake His heavenly rights as the Word of God. This included the expression of His glory and power.

*“He was both hidden and manifested - hidden as to His Glory, manifested as to His Person.”*²

GALATIANS 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law

From the moment of conception, Christ took on a human body. He had a human mind, will and emotions, all that pertains to being human, while at the same time remaining unchanged in His Divine Nature. He became what He was not - human - while remaining what He was - the eternal, almighty, all-knowing Word of God. We can never speak of Jesus without at the same time speaking of the Eternal Word and Son of God. Jesus is the Eternal Word and Son of the Father. JESUS IS GOD. And on that our salvation depends.

“. . .At the Incarnation He stepped out of eternity and into time and space for us, yet as God the Word He remained in eternity. . .”

Christ pre-existed before His earthly, physical manifestation because God the Word is one Divine Spirit with two identities that have eternally existed. The expression of His second identity was manifest in human form to this world in the babe and then the man called Jesus Christ.

God the Word could never become diminished. Therefore when Christ was manifested in the flesh He became more - He was not only God but became Saviour.

Jesus the man, even though He was at the same time God and so called Emmanuel, set aside the expression of His Deity. Therefore Emmanuel did not empty Himself of His

Deity, rather only the outward expression of His Deity (His Glory), while becoming a servant and being made “*in the likeness of men.*” As God’s redemptive servant to mankind, He entered into a new state of being. This new identity, however, did not exclude His possession of Deity.

JOHN 1:1 *In the beginning (does not infer that Christ as God had a beginning, because as God He had no beginning, but rather refers to the time of Creation [Genesis 1:1]) was the Word (the Holy Spirit through John describes Jesus as “the Eternal Logos”), and the Word was with God (“was in relationship with God,” and expresses the idea of the Trinity), and the Word was God (meaning that He did not cease to be God during the Incarnation; He “was” and “is” God from eternity past to eternity future).* (E.S.B.)

JOHN 1:14 *And the Word was made flesh (refers to the Incarnation, “God becoming man”), and dwelt among us (refers to Jesus, although Perfect, not holding Himself aloft from all others, but rather lived as all men, even a peasant), (and we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father,) (speaks of His Deity, although hidden from the eyes of the merely curious; while Christ laid aside the expression of His Deity, He never lost the possession of His Deity) full of Grace and Truth (as “flesh,” proclaimed His Humanity, “Grace and Truth” His Deity).* (E.S.B.)

MATTHEW 1:23 *Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, ‘God with us’ (God the Word in the flesh).* (Isaiah 7:14)

God the Word took on flesh. He became a human being, a baby boy, so that later He could become our sacrifice by allowing His Blood to be shed on the Cross. Jesus Christ was both God and man, the Incarnation, or embodiment, of Deity.

“. . . Therefore Emmanuel did not empty Himself of His Deity, rather only the outward expression of His Deity (His Glory), while becoming a servant and being made “in the likeness of men” . . .”

The risen Lord Jesus expressed His Deity and identified Himself as the second member of the Trinity when He appeared to the Apostle John, as recorded in Revelation Ch.1:

REVELATION 1:8 *“I am Alpha and Omega (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet), the beginning and the ending,” says the Lord, “Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty (God the Word).”*

REVELATION 1:18 *I (Jesus) am He Who lives, and was dead (crucified - represents the Living One entering into death, into our death, in His human nature so that as the great High Priest He might finish the Sacrifice for sins, which He did: E.S.B.); and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen (He will never die again, and death is totally defeated: E.S.B.); and have the keys of hell and of death.*

This is our glorious Redeemer being both God the Word and Jesus - the Son of God and the Son of Man.

In addressing the question of who Jesus is, Kenneth Wuest writes:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, WHO IS HE?

“Paul in Colossians 1:15 speaks of Him as “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” We will study the words “image” and “firstborn.” The word “image” has the obvious idea of likeness. But the Greek word does not refer to an accidental likeness, as one egg is like another. It implies an original of which the image is a copy. But the image in this case is not the result of direct imitation as the head of a king on a coin, but is derived, like the features of the parent in the child. In John 3:16 our Lord is the only begotten Son of God. John 1:18 refers to Him as the only begotten God, the word “God” appearing in the best manuscripts. It is a tremendous thought. The word “only begotten” does not only mean that our Lord was the only Son of God, but that He as God the Son is alone of His kind, unique, begotten of God through eternal generation. He is the image of God in the sense that He is a derived representation of God the Father, co-existent eternally with Him, possessing the same essence, Deity Himself. Being the representative of God, He is also therefore the manifestation of God. He said to Philip, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9).

Our Lord is also the firstborn of every creature. The word “firstborn” is from a Greek word that had a certain technical use in the first century. It is difficult to bring out all its content of meaning in a translation. It implied priority to all creation. Our Lord was not the first created thing to be brought into existence. The word declares the absolute pre-existence of the Son. He existed before any created thing was brought into existence. Therefore He is not created, and being uncreated, He is eternal. Paul in the next verse says, “For by him were all things created.” Instead of being the first in order of created things, He is their Creator. That is what our Lord has reference to in Revelation 3:14 when He speaks of Himself as “the beginning of the creation of God.” The word “beginning” in the Greek has two meanings, “the first in a series,” and “the originator” of something. Our Lord was the originator of the created universe in that He was its Creator. Thus the Greek word translated “firstborn” implies here “priority to all creation.”

It speaks also of sovereignty over all creation. The first born is the natural ruler, the acknowledged head. He is also ruler by right of the fact that He is the Creator. The words “every creature” are more properly translated “all creation.” Jesus of Nazareth, the Galilean peasant, the carpenter, the friend of publicans and sinners, is the image of God, a derived copy by eternal generation of God the Father, the Creator of the universe and its sovereign Lord.

He is also the One who made peace through the blood of His Cross. That is, through His substitutionary death He satisfied completely all the claims which the law of God had against us. We as lost sinners violated that law. The justice of God demanded that the penalty, death, be paid. But God in His love desired to save those who would come to Him in faith to appropriate salvation. So He in the Person of His Son, Jesus of Nazareth, stepped down from His judgement throne to take upon Himself at Calvary your sin and mine, your penalty and mine. God’s law being satisfied, He is now free to righteously bestow mercy.”³ (underlines added)

THE TREE OF LIFE

Background Reading: Genesis 2:9,17; 3:1-24

In the Book of Genesis, we find the story of Adam and Eve and the Tree of Life. We will explore one view of this account in the following outline of the creation story.

In the beginning, in a dateless past, God created the heavens and the earth. Then at a further point in time, He established the earth as we know it now, and created man in His own image:

GENESIS 1:26 And God said, “**Let Us** (God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit) **make man** (mankind) **in Our image, after Our likeness** (*the creation of man was preceded by a Divine consultation; as well, the pronouns “Us” and “Our” proclaim the consultation held by the Three Persons of the Divine Trinity, Who were One in the creative work: E.S.B.*): **and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.**”

GENESIS 1:27 **So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.**

God then placed man in the Garden of Eden and told him that he could eat of all the trees in the garden except for “*the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*” God told him that if he ate (partook) of this tree, he would surely die.

GENESIS 2:16 And **the Lord God commanded the man**, saying, “**Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat:**

GENESIS 2:17 **But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat** (partake) **of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die** (this means spiritual death which is separation from God).”

When God said that man would die the day he ate (partook) of “*the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,*” God was referring not to physical death “*in the day that you shall eat,*” but to “spiritual death.” This meant that man would become separated from Him, and no longer linked to Him spiritually - for the relationship between God and man would be broken. As we shall see, physical death also resulted though not immediately, the ageing process being a consequence of the Fall.

“. . .When God said that man would die . . . This meant that man would become separated from Him, and no longer linked to Him spiritually - for the relationship between God and man would be broken. . .”

The Fall Of Mankind

Adam disobeyed God's command and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Immediately, Adam and Eve were introduced to the knowledge of sin, for their action brought shame, fear and guilt into their lives. More importantly, however, it caused Adam and Eve to become separated from God, which is another way of saying that they entered into a state of spiritual death. Likewise, Adam's descendants were, as a consequence of his action, all born into this state of spiritual death.

GENESIS 3:6 And when the woman (Eve) saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he (Adam) did eat.

ROMANS 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world (through his disobedience), and death (separation from God) by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (are born in a state of sin = death)

Note: *“Adam was permitted to eat of the fruit of every tree in the garden but one, which was called ‘the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,’ because it was the test of Adam’s obedience. By it Adam could know good and evil in the divine way through obedience; thus knowing good by experience in resisting temptation and forming a strong and holy character while he knew evil only by observation and inference. Or he could ‘know good and evil, in Satan’s way, by experiencing the evil and knowing good only by contrast. - Ed. The prohibition to taste the fruit of this tree was enforced by the menace of death.”⁴*

(underlines added)

“. . .Adam could know good and evil in the divine way through obedience; thus knowing good by experience in resisting temptation and forming a strong and holy character while he knew evil only by observation and inference. . .”

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve each had a human nature that was energized by God's Divine Nature. After the Fall, both lost access to the Divine Nature, and acquired in its place the sin nature. The ability to know right from wrong could then only come through their conscience.

Therefore after the Fall, man knew good but could not really experience the good he knew in a Divine way, only at a human level without the Divine Nature. His conscience bore witness to his knowledge of good in certain areas. Sometimes the conscience can be enhanced through receiving righteous input, or alternatively become seared (hardened) so that it is unable to function as it should, being unable to recognize good as good and evil as evil. Factors which influence the development of the conscience include culture, exposure to sin, education on righteous matters and maturity (growing up intellectually). Eve was

deceived (which was still no excuse), but Adam knowingly transgressed his conscience - and Adam, not Eve, was man's federal head.

Adam was created as a perfect man with no sin nature. Rather, he was a partaker of the Divine Nature. Adam was designed by God so that his human nature would be at one with the Divine Nature, giving him the power to both desire and then do as God willed. As a free-willed being, however, he still had to yield to this Nature. He was empowered to do this naturally, having no sin nature to wrestle with, and therefore not needing to exert willpower against it. Nevertheless His will was involved, as it is with us today, as the trigger by which we can live in the grace of God - to do right by God, so that our joy will be full. By Adam's will he could yield to the will of God or, as in the case of the tree, do as he desired which was to yield to sin.

“. . .After the Fall, man knew good but could not really experience the good he knew in a Divine way, only at a human level without the Divine Nature. . .”

The result of Adam's high treason was death to himself, both spiritual and physical, which he, as man's federal head, passed on to all his offspring through the bloodline. While spiritual death came instantly, the nature of death also entered into Adam and Eves' physical bodies. This meant that instead of living forever, as the perfect human beings they were created to be, Adam, Eve and all their descendants would age physically and eventually die. Such was the gravity of Adam's sin in terms of its consequences for both he and every person born after him. Indeed the whole human race would inherit Adam's polluted blood. Therefore all who have been born into the world have been born into this state of (spiritual) death.

ROMANS 3:23 For all have sinned (all are born in a state of sin, also called spiritual death, and are sinners by nature), and come short of the glory of God (are deprived of God's saving presence)

The Fall, its effects on man and the knowledge of it as vital to our understanding of God's saving work is addressed by D.R.W. Wood:

THE FALL

I. The biblical account

The story of the Fall of man, given in Genesis 3, describes how mankind's first parents, when tempted by the serpent, disobeyed God's express command by eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The essence of all sin is displayed in this first sin: having been tempted to doubt God's word ('Did God say. . .?'), man is led on to disbelieve it ('You will not die'), and then to disobey it (they 'ate'). Sin is man's rebellion against the authority of God, and pride in his own supposed self-adequacy ('You will be like God'). The consequences of sin are twofold: first, awareness of guilt and immediate separation from God (they 'hid themselves'), with whom hitherto there had been unimpaired daily fellowship; and secondly, the sentence of the curse, decreeing toil,

sorrow and death for man himself, and in addition inevitably involving the whole of the created order, of which man is the crown.

II. The effect on man

Man henceforth is a perverted creature. In revolting against the purpose of his being, which is to live and act entirely to the glory of his sovereign and beneficent Creator and to fulfil his will, he ceases to be truly man. His true manhood consists in conformity to the image of God in which he was created. This image of God is manifested in man's original capacity for communion with his Creator; in his enjoyment exclusively of what is good; in his rationality which makes it possible for him alone of all creatures to hear and respond to the Word of God; in his knowledge of the truth and in the freedom which that knowledge ensures; and in government, as the head of God's creation, in obedience to the mandate to have dominion over every living thing and to subdue the earth.

Yet, rebel as he will against the image of God with which he has been stamped, man cannot efface it, because it is part of his very constitution as man. It is evident, for example, in his pursuit of scientific knowledge, in his harnessing of the forces of nature and in his development of culture, art and civilization. But at the same time the efforts of fallen man are cursed with frustration. This frustration is itself a proof of the perversity of the human heart. Thus history shows that the very discoveries and advances which have promised most good to mankind have through misuse brought great evils in their train. The man who does not love God does not love his fellow men. He is driven by selfish motives. The image of Satan, the great hater of God and man, is superimposed upon him. The result of the Fall is that man now knows good and evil.

**“. . .Sin is man's rebellion against the authority of
God, and pride in his own supposed self-
adequacy. . .”**

The psychological and ethical effects of the Fall are nowhere more graphically described than by Paul in Romans 1:18ff. All men, however ungodly and unrighteous they may be, know the truth about God and themselves; but they wickedly suppress this truth (v. 18). It is, however, an inescapable truth, for the fact of the 'eternal power and Godhead' of the Creator is both manifested within them, by their very constitution as God's creatures made in his image, and also manifested all around them in the whole created order of the universe which bears eloquent testimony to its origin as God's handiwork (vv. 19f.; cf. Psalm 19:1ff.). Basically, therefore, man's state is not one of ignorance but of knowledge. His condemnation is that he loves darkness rather than light. His refusal to glorify God as God and his ingratitude lead him into intellectual vanity and futility. Arrogantly professing himself to be wise, he in fact becomes a fool (Romans 1:21f.). Having willfully cut himself adrift from the Creator in whom alone the meaning of his existence is to be found, he must seek that meaning elsewhere, for his creaturely finitude makes it impossible for him to cease from being a religious creature. And his search becomes ever more foolish and degrading. It carries him into the gross irrationality of superstition and idolatry, into vileness and unnatural vice, and into all those evils, social and international, which give

rise to the hatreds and miseries that disfigure our world. The Fall has, in brief, overthrown the true dignity of man (Romans 1:23ff.).

“. . . Man henceforth is a perverted creature. . . his true manhood consists in conformity to the image of God in which he was created. . . ”

III. The biblical doctrine

It will be seen that the scriptural doctrine of the Fall altogether contradicts the popular modern view of man as a being who, by a slow evolutionary development, has succeeded in rising from the primeval fear and groping ignorance of a humble origin to proud heights of religious sensitivity and insight. The Bible does not portray man as risen, but as fallen, and in the most desperate of situations. It is only against this background that God's saving action in Christ takes on its proper significance. Through the grateful appropriation by faith of Christ's atoning work, what was forfeited by the fall is restored to man: his true and intended dignity is recovered, the purpose of life recaptured, the image of God restored, and the way into the paradise of intimate communion with God reopened."⁵

(underlines added)

Expulsion From The Garden

Through his action of sin, Adam, by obeying the devil, disobeyed God. As a result, the devil became Adam's (and all his descendants') master and spiritual father.

ROMANS 6:16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey - whether you are slaves to sin (the devil's way), which leads to death, or to obedience (God's way), which leads to righteousness? (N.I.V.)

God then sent man out of the garden as an act of mercy and judgement.

GENESIS 3:22 And the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil (the Lord knew evil, not by personal experience, but rather through Omniscience; man now knows evil by becoming evil, which is the fountainhead of all sorrow in the world; the pronoun "Us" signifies the Godhead, "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit": E.S.B.): **and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever** (the Godhead decided the man must not be allowed to do this):

GENESIS 3:23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth (expelled him) from the Garden of Eden, to till (work) the ground from whence he was (had been) taken.

GENESIS 3:24 So He (God) drove out the man (and the woman); and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way (in every direction), to keep (guard) the way of (to) the tree of life. (Revelation 2:7; 22:14)

Now the Lord thought it immensely important that Adam and Eve should not now take of the Tree of Life and live forever. Knowing that the Lord is good, merciful and holy we can conclude that this meant forever in this state of sin. God sent them out of the Garden of Eden and blocked their return with cherubim and a flaming sword, the purpose of which was to bar their way to the Tree of Life, and also to signify that the way to the Tree of Life was no longer open to man. It stands to reason that if Adam and Eve had eaten of the Tree of Life in their fallen state, they would have remained forever in that state, forever separated from God.

So what was the Tree of Life? Notice that before Adam and Eve sinned, God had not told them not to eat of the Tree of Life (Genesis 2:17). This only became an issue of great importance after they sinned, for it was the combination of sin and eating of the Tree of Life which would bring eternal separation from God.

“. . .It stands to reason that if Adam and Eve had eaten of the Tree of Life in their fallen state, they would have remained forever in that state. . .”

We can find the answer to our question by doing a little “spiritual maths.” In the Book of Exodus, we find God talking to Moses:

EXODUS 33:20 And He (the Lord) said, “You can not see My face: for there shall no man (who remains in a state of sin) see Me, and live (forever with Me).”

Moses asked to see God’s glory, but the Lord hid him in the cleft of a rock and covered Moses with His hand while He passed by. Moses was able to see God’s back, but not His face, not His glory.

Thus it is apparent from this account that no man (and man is inherently sinful) can look upon God’s face and live - for God’s glory (at this level or intensity) cannot be looked upon by the sinner. If this were to happen, the person concerned would be immediately judged and would die. Even Moses who was one of God’s servants would have died physically. And those who are in a state of spiritual death and who come face to face with God after physical death, will be judged in this state and remain forever in it. If people in a state of sin look upon God’s glory with sin in their hearts, there is no longer any way of salvation and they will continue in this state of separation eternally.

“. . .If people in a state of sin look upon God’s glory with sin in their hearts, there is no longer any way of salvation and they will continue in this state of separation eternally. . .”

Now as we turn our attention back to the creation story, we can see that the consequence of eating of the Tree of Life with sin in one’s spirit and looking upon the glory

of God with sin in one's spirit will be the same - eternal and irrevocable separation from God. It is thus possible to equate eating of the Tree of Life with looking upon God's glory.

So the particular view of the Genesis story presented in this study is that if man had eaten of the Tree of Life (looked upon God's glory) in his fallen state, man would not only have died physically, he would have remained forever in a state of spiritual death. So God, in His love and mercy, sent man out of the Garden of Eden, for no one with sin reigning in their spirit can look upon the glory of God Almighty and live. And as we have learned, even those who are saved, because they have the nature of death still present in their physical bodies, cannot look upon God's glory. They would die as a result, not spiritually of course, only physically.

The Glorified Body

When a person dies, their spirit-man (the real person), can only live in God's presence in heaven if their spirit has been washed clean of sin. This is only possible if that person has made Jesus their Lord and Saviour (Romans 10:9-10).

However while we are physically alive, even though our spirit is regenerated, because the nature of death is still present in our mortal (physical) bodies, we could not physically stand before God, face to face, and remain alive physically. God's Word tells us concerning our Creator:

1 TIMOTHY 6:16 Who only has immortality (God is the source of all immortality), dwelling in the Light which no (mortal) man can approach unto; Whom no (mortal) man has seen, nor can see: to Whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

Therefore:

1 JOHN 4:12 No (mortal) man has seen God at any time . . .

If we are alive when Christ returns to collect His Church at the Rapture, we will be given a new body that has no nature of death in it. We will then be able to stand in God's presence forever. Our spirits have already been washed clean of sin, but our bodies will also be changed at this time. The sin nature and the last enemy which is death will be removed, and our mortal bodies will become immortal, glorified, free from all the effects of sin. Our minds will also function perfectly at this time, in the light of God's presence. Each of us will then have a glorified body, just as Jesus has (Philippians 3:20-21).

“ . . . The sin nature and the last enemy which is death will be removed, and our mortal bodies will become immortal, glorified, free from all the effects of sin. . . ”

We will be given a new body in place of our old, for the Word tells us in Corinthians that *“this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality”* (1 Corinthians 15:53). Our future body will have no contamination of death in it at all. It

will be a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39), but have no blood - as Jesus' body had no blood after His Resurrection. In the physical bodies we now possess, the life principle is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11). Our future glorified bodies will have a different life principle. If we are already in heaven at the time of the Rapture, we too will receive this new glorified body when Jesus gathers His people from all the ages (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

Wuest comments on Jesus appearing to His Disciples with His glorified body, as recorded in Luke 24:36-43:

“Our present body is made of flesh, blood, and bones. Its life principle is in the blood. Moses knew this latter fact and stated it over 3000 years before medical science discovered it. He said in Leviticus 17:11, “The life of the flesh is in the blood.” In our future physical body there will be a different life principle. The body will be devoid of blood, a body of flesh and bones. Paul in Philippians 3:21 speaks of the Lord Jesus “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself” (A.V.) An expanded translation here would give us the following: “Who shall change our humiliated body (that is, humiliated by the presence of sin and death), conforming it as to its outward expression to the body of His glory, according to the energy whereby He is able to marshall all things under Himself.” Our future body will be like that which our Lord possesses now. He tells something about His present physical body in His words in Luke 24:39. He said, “Behold my hands and my feet, that I am I myself. Handle me with a view to investigation and see; because a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you with critical, understanding sight see that I have.”

Those words tell us some interesting things about our Lord's body. There were the marks of the nails of the crucifixion still in His hands and feet, left there, even though His resurrection body was perfect, for purposes of identification. The body our Lord had after His resurrection, was the same body He had previous to the Cross, and in which He died. We will possess the same body in the future life which we have now, except changed. Since that is true, we will have the same facial expression, however, with all the sin-wrinkles ironed out. Since that is true, we will know each other in the future life.

“. . .In our future physical body there will be a different life principle. The body will be devoid of blood, a body of flesh and bones. . .”

Second, our Lord's body was a solid, physical body. The disciples handled His body with their hands, depending upon what their sense of touch would tell them as to its reality and composition. John says in his first epistle, “That which we handled with a view to investigation” (1:1). He uses the same Greek word Luke uses to report our Lord's words. It was therefore a body that would respond to the sense of touch, a body made of solid material. Our bodies will be like that.

Third, it was a body made up of flesh and bones, but changed in composition. Our future bodies will be made of flesh and bones, the same flesh and bones we have now, but changed as to composition.

Fourth, it was a body without blood. If our Lord's resurrection body had had blood, He would have mentioned that fact when He spoke of flesh and bones. His precious blood paid the penalty for your sins and mine. Peter tells us we Christians were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. Since our Lord's resurrection body did not have any blood in it, it must have had a new life principle animating it. Our future bodies will have a new life principle in them.

Fifth, our Lord in His physical body of flesh and bones went through the stone wall of the building in which the disciples were meeting. The doors of the room were closed. We will be capable of the same thing also. He had new powers of locomotion. He could make Himself visible or invisible at will. He was here one minute and in another place, the next. So will it be with us in the future life.

*Finally, our Lord's resurrection body needed no clothing for a covering, but had a covering which was produced from within. Our Lord's body after the resurrection was not covered with clothing. The only clothes He had at the time of His death, were taken away from Him. His grave clothes He left in the sepulchre of Joseph. He emerged through the stone walls of the resurrection tomb clad in a new covering for His body that was produced from within. All this is given us in the Greek word Paul uses in the above scripture, translated "fashioned." It is the word *morphē* (μορφή), which refers to an outward expression which is not put on from without, but one that comes from within and which is a true representative of one's inner nature. This, in the case of our Lord, was a glory covering, an enswathement of glory which covered His resurrection body. On the Mount of Transfiguration, our Lord's face and clothing shone with a radiance that came from within. A radiance similar to this, was the covering of His body after the resurrection." ⁶*

(underlines added)

“. . .Our Lord's resurrection body needed no clothing for a covering, but had a covering which was produced from within. . .an enswathement of glory which covered His resurrection body. . .”

Satan's Separation From God

Background Reading: Isaiah 14:12-15

Satan's eternal separation from God can also be viewed in terms of the particular interpretation of the Tree of Life found in the college syllabus. It is able to provide one answer as to why Satan and the fallen angels, unlike man, do not appear to have been given a "second chance." (The Word of God tells us that their destiny is the Lake of Fire and Brimstone: Matthew 25:41.)

Satan, or Lucifer as he was then known, and the third of the angels who followed him in his rebellion, were defeated by the heavenly host and cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-9,4). This would have happened after they had entered the presence of God with sin in their hearts. Isaiah 14:13-14 tells us that Lucifer, the anointed cherub, had desired to overthrow the throne of God, and set himself up in God's place. Possessing spiritual

knowledge, Lucifer did this without a tempter and so had his eyes wide open. In this action of supreme arrogance and rebellion, Satan and his angels would have entered heaven with sin in their hearts (having died spiritually) and eaten of the Tree of Life (looked on the face of God). As a result they would have condemned themselves to live in this state of separation from God eternally.

“. . .In this action of supreme arrogance and rebellion, Satan and his angels would have entered heaven with sin in their hearts (having died spiritually) and eaten of the Tree of Life (looked on the face of God). . .”

After Adam and Eve sinned, they could have been in the same position of eternal spiritual death if God had allowed them to stay in the garden to eat of the Tree of Life.

GENESIS 3:22 And the Lord God said, “The man has now become like one of Us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the Tree of Life and eat, and live forever (separated from God).” (N.I.V.)

Notice, as we have said, that God did not tell Adam not to eat of the Tree of Life in Genesis 2:16-17. This was because, at that time, Adam was still perfect and sinless, so it would not have affected him in any way. It would not have hurt him or caused him any loss to eat of the Tree of Life while he was still a perfect, sinless human being. After the Fall, however, if Adam had eaten of the Tree of Life, he would have become like Satan and his angels, eternally and irrevocably separated from God. The other consequence would have been that Adam and Eve would have died physically, and so ended the human race.

It is interesting to note that after the Fall, man, unlike Satan, was not in total darkness. This was due to the fact that there was still some moral light within man’s conscience which could in some way guide him, at least, to the knowledge of right and wrong. Satan, on the other hand, had no conscience and therefore no moral light to guide him. He was and is in total darkness. With the moral light contained in his conscience, man can come to acknowledge that there is a God Who created all that he sees.

JUDGEMENT AND THE FREE WILL OF MAN

The Wages Of Sin

Background Reading: Romans 6:20-23

Adam rebelled against his Creator by disobeying God’s commandment, and he became spiritually polluted as a result.

We (all mankind) have inherited this same pollution of death (sin) and this same spiritual position. We remain in this state until we receive Christ’s righteousness through spiritual regeneration by the power of God (Romans 10:9-10).

ROMANS 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

JOHN 3:16 For God so loved the world (with the God type of love i.e. “agape”), that He gave (for the purpose of mankind’s redemption) **His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes** (and trusts: James 2:19) **in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**

JOHN 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world (*means that the object of Christ’s Mission was to save, but the issue to those who reject Him must and can only be condemnation: E.S.B.*); **but that the world through Him might be saved** (all who would receive Him).

JOHN 3:18 He who believes on Him is not condemned: but he who believes not is condemned (to be eternally lost, cast into the Lake of Fire: Revelation 20:12-15) **already, because he has not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.**

JOHN 3:19 And this is the condemnation (verdict), that Light (“*I am the Light of the world*”: John 8:12) is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil (*proclaims the fact that the great penalty of sin is sinful desire; the love of darkness is the consequence of man’s wicked ways; the rejection of Jesus Christ is not the occasion of man’s lostness, but rather the result of it: E.S.B.*).

JOHN 3:20 For every one who does evil hates the Light (this is automatic - the Spirit and the flesh are diametrically opposed: Galatians 5:17), **neither comes to the Light, lest his deeds should be reproved** (*to truly come to Jesus means the Revelation and condemnation of every evil way . . . the “Light” automatically reveals what is hidden by the darkness: E.S.B.*).

JOHN 3:21 But he who does truth (practises and lives by truth according to the Word of God) comes to the Light, that his deeds may be made manifest (plainly revealed), **that they are wrought in God** (led and empowered by the Lord).

As we have said, if we hold to the particular view being presented, anyone who, after physical death, looks upon the Tree of Life with sin in their heart (spirit), will remain forever in that position of being separated from God. They will remain in total darkness with no light, for while alive they would have rejected and even hated the Light of Truth, as described in John 3:20. If we die with this attitude or in this state because we have not bothered to seek the Light of Truth, the darkness that we loved on earth will be with us after death, in fact for all eternity. There is no “second chance” (Hebrews 9:27), and no “soul sleep” (2 Corinthians 5:8) to lessen the pain of separation, darkness and torment.

To the natural intellect of man, sin in a person’s life may seem unreal - but sin is as real as this physical world is real. In fact it is often said that the spiritual world is actually more real, more constant, than the physical world we see around us. So when speaking about sin, remember that it is a real spiritual substance of filth which causes man to be in darkness that separates him from the love of God. If you are in Christ, however, you enter into a Blood Covenant of protection and provision with a guaranteed promise of eternal life with God. Sin was dealt with at the Cross, and we receive the ensuing benefit of having our sins forgiven and washed away by the Blood (Hebrews 9:22). In this our spirits are

washed and regenerated by the Light of God's presence, which brings to us positionally, the power of the Divine Nature.

“ . . . Sin is a real spiritual substance of filth which causes man to be in darkness that separates him from the love of God. . . ”

Following on from this particular interpretation of the Tree of Life, where a person spends eternity will be determined by the state (condition) of his heart (spirit) at the time he eats of the Tree of Life (looks upon God's glory). He will then either live with God forever in perfect peace, or be separated from God forever, to spend eternity in everlasting torment in the Lake of Fire, from which there is no escape.

We regard this particular view of the Tree of Life as a fair and plausible explanation which is corroborated by both scriptures and scriptural principles. However, whether or not you hold to this particular view does not really matter in the broad scheme of things. The most important principle we should grasp concerning this aspect of the creation story is that God in His grace and mercy gave mankind a second chance to be united with Him and to live forever with Him in perfect peace. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is therefore all about the restoration of lost souls - being brought back to life from death. This is the real fundamental truth - the revelation and demonstration of God's wonderful mercy and grace. Hallelujah! On the other side, because our God is righteous, there must be a penalty for sin. It cannot be simply excused or ignored, for sin is so serious that the Creator had to come and die for His creation in order to satisfy the requirements of perfect justice. For those who do not or will not accept the redemption payment, their sin remains, and they must pay the price for their own transgressions. Scripture speaks of the “*wrath of God*” remaining on such people. Thus we see that judgement must exist in order that perfect justice be satisfied. The proper balance of mercy and justice brings order out of chaos.

“ . . . For those who do not or will not accept the redemption payment, their sin remains, and they must pay the price for their own transgressions. . . ”

The Wrath Of God

The wrath of God is a much misunderstood subject. It is a function of God's holy character and expresses itself through judgement.

EPHESIANS 5:5 For this you know, that no whoremonger (the sexually immoral), nor unclean (impure) person, nor covetous (greedy) man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. (Paul is speaking here to Believers, thus showing that Believers can forfeit their salvation through sin bringing them to a position of unbelief - and there is therefore no such thing as unconditional eternal security.)

EPHESIANS 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

One subject within scripture which is often neglected today is “*the wrath of God.*” This phrase generally refers to the punishment of God - God’s righteous judgement upon sinners. As we know, God is not only a God of great mercy, He is also a God of justice, and He will always fulfill His Word. Therefore those who engage in sin, remaining in a state of sin, will fall under God’s judgement, His righteous wrath. God’s wrath is defined by Jack Hayford as follows:

*“**WRATH** - the personal manifestation of God’s holy, moral character in exacting just judgement against sin. Wrath is neither an impersonal process nor is it irrational and fitful like anger. It is in no way vindictive or malicious. It is holy indignation - God’s anger directed against sin because of its destructive power and the havoc it wreaks in ruining His benevolent intent for man.”*

God’s wrath is an expression of His holy love. If God were incapable of wrath, His love would be no more than a frail, maudlin sentimentality; the concept of mercy would be meaningless; and the Cross would have been a cruel and unnecessary expense exacted of His Son.

The Bible reveals that all humankind is “by nature children of wrath” (Ephesians 2:3) and that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18). Thus, all people - either by nature or calculated enterprise - have earned judgement for sin. But there is promise, since Christ died. We can be “justified by His blood (and) be saved from wrath through Him” (Romans 5:9). The magnitude of God’s love is manifested in the Cross, where God’s only Son experienced the wrath of God on sin by bearing it on our behalf.

Ultimately, “The day of the Lord’s wrath” (Zephaniah 1:18), identical with “the great day of the Lord” (Zephaniah 1:14), will come upon this world. “The wrath of the Lamb” (Revelation 6:16) will be manifest through Jesus Christ, as it will fall on the ungodly at His Second Coming (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).” ⁷ (underlines added)

**“ . . . WRATH - the personal manifestation of God’s
holy, moral character in exacting just
judgement against sin. . . ”**

The wrath of God, or judgement according to His Word, remains upon all who have rejected or not bothered to seek His Word of deliverance, all who have rejected His Son, either knowingly or unknowingly. John 3:36 bears this out.

JOHN 3:36 He who believes on the Son (His finished work at the Cross) has everlasting life: and he who believes not the Son (has not bothered to seek or accept Jesus as Saviour and Lord) shall not see life (for there is only one means of salvation); but the wrath of God (which constitutes His opposition to sin) abides on him.

The Book of Romans also states:

ROMANS 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (God always opposes sin), who hold the truth in unrighteousness (refuse to recognize God for Who He is)

A.W. Tozer says “*God’s wrath is His utter intolerance for whatever degrades and destroys. Wherever the holiness of God confronts unholiness there is a conflict. God’s attitude and action in the conflict are His anger. To preserve His creation, God must destroy whatever would destroy it. Every wrathful judgement of God in the history of the world has been a holy act of preservation. In His love and mercy He tells us ‘to flee the wrath to come.’*”⁸

(underlines added)

The “*wrath of God*” will be poured out not only in the Tribulation and at the Battle of Armageddon, but will descend upon all unrighteousness and those associated with it. Unless the Blood of Jesus washes our evil heart, we will face God’s wrath.

Men are born separated from God and so already lost. In deep darkness, many hear the Gospel and reject it because they want to continue in the darkness in which they were born, practising their evil deeds. Others don’t bother to seek their Creator and never hear the Gospel, being content and comfortable in their present darkness. They love sin more than God’s grace, more than the Light which is His presence.

JOHN 3:18 He who believes on Him is not condemned (to the Lake of Fire for eternity): but he who believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.

JOHN 3:19 And this is the condemnation (verdict), that Light (Jesus as the Light of the world) is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light (from sin comes sinful desire and evil ways), because their deeds were evil.

JOHN 3:20 For every one who does evil hates the Light (the Light of the world), neither comes to the Light (Jesus - Who reveals sin for what it is), lest his deeds should be reproved (exposed).

Determined to self-rule and enjoy all manner of sinful desire, men reject Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, the only means of deliverance from their position and condition of sin. However this rejection is a result of their condition. It is not the reason they are in this condition. In other words, we are not sinners because we sin, man sins because he is a sinner. Men love their evil ways and desire to remain in darkness. Because of this they either reject or do not even seek the Light that would reveal their sin and set them free.

“...God’s wrath is His utter intolerance for whatever degrades and destroys. Wherever the holiness of God confronts unholiness there is a conflict. . .”

Those who will not, or do not accept that the price for their sin has been paid by the Saviour, will have to pay the price themselves for their sin - that price being separation from God in eternal torment. God has done all He can to expunge the ravages of sin. The wrath of God will remain on those who do not or will not embrace the Cross and all that was accomplished for man through it.

God is giving people warning in His Word of what will result from the sin of rejecting Jesus as Lord. The Book of Revelation tells us of the place where all those who have rejected God's love will go.

REVELATION 21:8 . . . the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (from which there is no escape).

REVELATION 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life (the written heavenly record of all the Redeemed) **was cast into the Lake of Fire.**

However God has given a promise, in His Covenant, of eternal life with Him to all who fulfill the conditions of the Covenant.

All who reject His Covenant are cursed, as Deuteronomy 28:14-68 states, but all who accept (reverence) His Covenant will live in the promises of it, provided they live by faith (Deuteronomy 28:1-13).

In modern preaching today, the message of God's wrath is almost entirely missing. The reason for this is because of the strategy of "positiveness at all costs." Indeed how could they, our modern ministers, present the truth about God's wrath to an unbelieving sinner in an "optimistic" way?

Contemporary preachers need to read and consider the definition Trench gave concerning "*the wrath of God*" as found in Matthew 3:7 as "*a wrath of God who would not love good unless He hated evil, the two being inseparable, that He must do both or neither.*"⁹

God's strategy in the writing of scripture was to balance His message of love with that of judgement (which is an expression of God's wrath e.g. John 3:36, 3:16). Only God, being perfect, can bring judgement to His free-willed creation. Therefore God's wrath, as revealed in His Word, is not a secondary or even a third theme. Rather it stands side by side with the message of love as a primary message - that being the warning "*to flee the wrath to come.*"

The Cross was God's plan to deal with His righteous wrath. Christ, on behalf of man, took sin's punishment, and in this way, God's wrath was satisfied. So all those "in Christ" are now free from sin's penalty because Christ died for us and on our behalf.

“. . .The wrath of God will remain on those who do not or will not embrace the Cross and all that was accomplished for man through it. . .”

Therefore concerning our salvation, we who remain in Christ are free from Divine judgement. Harper's Bible Dictionary defines God's wrath in these terms:

“WRATH, a word denoting the active feeling of God against sin, expressing in human categories an important attribute of God: that he is holy and righteous and rejects everything that is not. This rejection is real, manifesting itself in actual situations such as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Deuteronomy 29:23), the chastisement of Moses for his reluctance to obey (Exodus 4:14), and even the death of Uzzah for touching with profane hand the Ark of God (2 Samuel 6:7). The wrath of God is thus a divine reaction to human provocation, not an arbitrary passion or animosity. Even in this reaction God is ‘slow to anger’; the OT emphasizes that he is ‘merciful and gracious...abounding in steadfast love’ (Psalm 103:8; Joel 2:13). In the NT, the angry reaction of Jesus against those who desecrated the Temple (John 2:13-17) bears the characteristics of divine wrath. Wrath is also an essential part of Paul’s theology: he often mentions that human disobedience and transgression result in the coming of the wrath of God (Romans 1:18; 2:5; 2:8; 5:9; 9:22; Ephesians 2:3; 5:6; Colossians 3:6; 1 Thessalonians 1:10). The overpowering theme of the NT, however, is the love of God, not his anger. The NT can say that ‘God is love’ (1 John 4:8); the mission of Jesus was to take the wrath of God upon himself. That is the meaning of salvation in the NT: since the time when Jesus was sent into the world, only those who do not believe and do not obey have to worry about the wrath of God.”¹⁰

(underline added)

Yes the overpowering theme of the New Testament is love, but without the theme of judgement being placed alongside the teaching of God's love, the message will be unbalanced and therefore incomplete. The judgement that Christ suffered on our behalf is every bit as important as the message of God's love. In fact the two cannot be separated. Both belong to the Gospel and need to be preached together, side by side. Sadly, however, as we have said, the modern day church with its obsession regarding “numerical increase” and “prosperity” tailors its sermons/messages so that they are relevant, contemporary and positive - with no trace of any so-called negative component or nuance. This results in very little being required of the hearers in terms of changing their lifestyles. In other words, very little is preached that would cause any real conviction of sin.

Christians then believe, to some extent, that the day they repented of their sin and accepted Jesus as Lord was the only time that the Blood of Calvary needed to be applied to their sin. This is true in terms of salvation. However the Blood needs to be applied to ongoing sin after salvation if this sin is to be dealt with. And this must also be done through repentance (1 John 1:9). If the sin is not mortal, salvation is not the issue. It is a matter of walking in the Light as Jesus was and is in the Light (1 John 1:17). When sin is not repented of, and so not touched by this precious Blood, hell has a little mortgage on some aspect of the Christian's life. Another name for this “mortgage” is a bondage or a curse.

“...Yes the overpowering theme of the New Testament is love, but without the theme of judgement being placed alongside the teaching of God’s love, the message will be unbalanced and therefore incomplete. . .”

Sin which is not repented of in a Christian’s life frustrates the grace of God by keeping God’s influence and empowering grace at bay. The Blood must be applied to our sin through repentance if we are to walk in the light of God’s will.

When such spiritual truths are not taught in the churches, being the standard set out in God’s Word, and Christians do wrong, there is very little to both convict them of their sin and encourage them to deal with their sin in any real way. Therefore we have fornicators and drunkards in the Church who think they are still saved from “*the wrath to come*” because they made a decision for Christ a number of years ago. Yes, all this because of the demonic doctrine of “once saved always saved.” How foolish this is, when scripture declares so clearly that we can have our names blotted out of the Lamb’s Book of Life:

EXODUS 32:33 **And the Lord said unto Moses, “Whosoever has sinned against Me (one who has turned their back on God and refuses to repent), him will I blot out of My book.”**

Sin must be dealt with in our lives by applying the Blood of the Lamb to our sin in an attitude of true, heartfelt repentance. There is no other way. We are saved from sin, not saved so that we can continue in sin (Romans 6:15-16; Hebrews 3:12-14).

“...Sin which is not repented of in a Christian’s life frustrates the grace of God by keeping God’s influence and empowering grace at bay. . .”

The Charismatic Churches (with Pentecostal badges) operate according to the “seeker sensitive” philosophy which aims at giving people what they think they need rather than that which the true Gospel proclaims. How foolish it is to let man, without any direction or empowerment of a Divine order, set the agenda for church life!

All this does is turn whatever faith the people may have had into a cold, formalized fleshy religion. In this cold and darkened environment, there is nothing of God that would cause progression - only spiritual regression and frozen, stoney hearts.

Within its teaching the Church needs to preach the message of Romans 5:9 which states: “*Much more then, being now justified by His Blood, we shall be saved from (God’s) wrath through Him!*”

By His Blood we are saved from the wrath of God.

By His Blood we have had our names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

By His Blood we will enter heaven’s gates, not to come under judgement but to experience a welcome and a blessing that will last for eternity.

By His Blood we will walk in the Light of God's will.

All this by the Blood of the Lamb Who has taken away our sins! God's blessing now rests upon all those who have put their sins under the Blood of Calvary. The curse of sin is removed because the Blood has satisfied the justice of God. Hallelujah.

All this needs to be declared, proclaimed and preached in the churches of God until Jesus returns for those "in Him." Let our sins therefore be nailed to the Cross through our repentance, and the mercy and grace of God.

“. . .In this cold and darkened environment, there is nothing of God that would cause progression - only spiritual regression and frozen, stoney hearts. . .”

It is only "in Christ" that the wrath of God is satisfied, for God's holy judgement against us sinners has been dealt with. The Lamb of God stood in our place so that all those who have identified with Him can be identified in His Resurrection, being raised up with Him into "newness of life."

ROMANS 6:3 Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ (this refers to the baptism of regeneration, not water baptism: 1 Corinthians 12:13) **were baptized into His death?**

ROMANS 6:4 Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (*we died with Him, we were buried with Him, and His resurrection was our Resurrection to a "Newness of Life": E.S.B.*).

Divine justice and Divine anger are satisfied forever as we remain in Christ - the risen Saviour. All spiritual darkness, including sinners and sin, will eventually be banished from God's Kingdom at the time the earth is renovated, and death and hell are cast into the Lake of Fire (2 Peter 3:10-12; Revelation 21:1). At this time God will be able to fellowship with His creation in all righteousness, goodness and holiness - on man's part as well as God's.

Prior to this time, sin will be contained to some extent when the curse is dealt with in the Millennial Kingdom. Scripture shows us that nature awaits this great event, the time when the sons of God will be revealed. Even nature awaits the revelation of the sons of God and the removal of the curse.

ROMANS 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creature (should have been translated "creation") **waits for the manifestation of the sons of God** (nature, burdened with the curse, waits in a metaphorical sense for the curse to be lifted - this will be when the Saints are glorified, which is really the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom - when Christ's presence causes the curse to be removed, giving honour to Him as the King of kings).

ROMANS 8:22 For we know that the whole Creation (*everything has been affected by Satan's rebellion and Adam's Fall*) **groans and travails in pain together until now** (*refers to the common longing of the elements of the Creation to be brought back to their original perfection*). (E.S.B.)

ROMANS 8:23 And not only they (*the Creation, and all it entails*), but ourselves also (*refers to Believers*), which have the **Firstfruits of the Spirit** (*even though Jesus addressed every single thing lost in the Fall at the Cross, we only have a part of that possession now, with the balance coming at the Resurrection*), even we ourselves **groan within ourselves** (*proclaims the obvious fact that all Jesus paid for in the Atonement has not yet been fully realized*), **waiting for the Adoption** (*should be translated, "waiting for the fulfillment of the process, which Adoption into the Family of God guarantees"*), **to wit, the Redemption of our body** (*the glorifying of our physical body that will take place at the Resurrection*). (E.S.B.)

PREDESTINATION

Background Reading: Romans 10:8-13

Predestination is a false doctrine which claims that God has predetermined who will be saved and go to heaven, and who will be damned and go to hell. According to this doctrine, man has no choice to make, other than that which God has already made for him. Scripture does not support this view.

God has NOT chosen (predestinated) who is to be saved and who is not to be saved. Rather, God desires all people to be saved - but not all respond to His call.

2 PETER 3:9 The Lord is not slack (slow) concerning (in keeping) His promise, as some men count (understand) slackness (slowness); but is longsuffering (patient) to us-ward (patient - *God suffers long with man, attempting to bring him to a place of Repentance: E.S.B.*), **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**

1 TIMOTHY 2:4 **Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth** (salvation through the Gospel of Jesus Christ).

God does not select (predestinate) specific people to be saved. Salvation is available to all who call upon His Name - for God so loved the world that **whosoever** believes on His Son shall be saved (John 3:16). God has foreknowledge of who will come to Him, but He does not predetermine who will be saved or unsaved. Each person has a free will and only they can make this choice of life or death for themselves - for Jesus paid the price in respect to every single individual, not just a select few.

“ . . . Predestination is a false doctrine which claims that God has predetermined who will be saved and go to heaven, and who will be damned and go to hell. . . ”

Man determines his ultimate condition, for he is very much a free-willed agent, without a predetermined eternal existence in either heaven or hell. Therefore although God is in total control of His creation and overall plan, in the scheme of things, each person chooses his or her ultimate spiritual condition and hence destination. In other words, a

person is given a lifetime in which to repent and receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Nothing is predetermined, except the Plan of God through His Son Jesus Christ.

Note: Because of this belief, those who embrace the doctrine of predestination will have a different approach to evangelism than those who understand the validity and importance of man's free will in the process of salvation. Those with a passion for the lost will go to great lengths to present the Gospel to the lost and the dying in order to give them opportunity to accept Christ before they leave this earthly life. Those who believe God has already predetermined the eternal fate of such individuals will be less inclined to go the extra mile, believing that God, in His sovereignty, will deal with the individual, no matter what is done or not done on their behalf. Under the false light of predestination, the responsibility of the Christian to respond on a personal level to the Great Commission is severely minimized. After all, if God will do what He will do no matter what, the necessity for bringing the message of salvation to those around us is greatly diminished.

***“. . .Man determines his ultimate condition,
for he is very much a free-willed agent, without
a predetermined eternal existence in either
heaven or hell. . .”***

We know that God, in His foreknowledge, is clearly aware of who will receive salvation and who won't. Yet His foreknowledge is in no way causative in regard to people's spiritual condition and eternal abode. Only the Lord's grace made available to man and man's response to this grace produces change. Thus when the Bible uses the terms "*elect*," "*election*," "*predestined*," etc. in relation to Christians (e.g. 2 Peter 1:10; Ephesians 1:5; Romans 8:33), it is referring to selection according to God's foreknowledge. This is totally different to the concept of pre-selection by God. Therefore we see in 1 Peter 1:2 the address to the "*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. . .*" God knows who will respond to Jesus and become saved. This group then becomes the "*elect*," not by the force of God's sovereign will, but according to His foreknowledge. This view, rather than that of salvation which is predetermined, integrates harmoniously with the total body of scripture. God never contradicts Himself, and words such as "*election*" must be interpreted within the context of the general framework of scripture.

As we have seen, predestination is a doctrine which teaches that God elects or predetermines who will go to heaven or hell. Predestination is a primary doctrine of Calvinism, a system of reformed theology based on the teachings of John Calvin (1509 - 1564), a Protestant theologian of the Reformation. Calvinism holds to the view that man is unconditionally elected to be saved or unsaved, and that man's free will has no bearing on this process. Man cannot become saved unless God specifically draws him. And on the other side of the coin, man cannot resist the grace of God when He chooses to draw individuals to Himself. Furthermore, once people are saved, they cannot become unsaved. This is not what scripture teaches, for even a cursory reading of God's Word will clearly show that man is quite capable of falling from the grace of salvation, e.g. 2 Peter 2:20-22; Galatians 5:4; 1 Timothy 4:1.

Calvinism is usually contrasted to Arminianism, a system of theology which teaches that man cooperates with God in the work of salvation, and that by his own free will he can receive or reject God's grace.

Predestination demonstrates a complete misinterpretation of scripture, for God's Word states, "*Who (God) will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*" (1 Timothy 2:4). God actively seeks the lost. If a man or woman chooses to cooperate with God, by His grace (which is made available to that person through the Holy Spirit), he or she can respond to the Spirit's influence and become saved. As we have said, nothing is predetermined, except the Plan of God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

“. . . God, in His foreknowledge, is clearly aware of who will receive salvation and who won't. Yet His foreknowledge is in no way causative in regard to people's spiritual condition and eternal abode. . .”

Before the creation of man, God knew that man would sin and fall. God prepared for this and so designed a Plan of Redemption that would satisfy His great and perfect justice (Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:18-20). According to His foreknowledge, God knew, before the beginning of time, who would respond to His grace and mercy. Through His Plan of Redemption, and His provision of mercy to man, even before man came into existence, God predestinated, or a better word would be "foreordained," that man would be saved in Christ.

This point must be understood when we examine such scriptures as Ephesians 1:5 which speaks of predestination as follows:

EPHESIANS 1:5 Having predestinated (foreordained) us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will

According to God's Plan, it was "foreordained," because of the Fall, for all men to be saved before the beginning of time. For this to happen, God has done His part, but on man's part, each must repent of sin and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who died on behalf of all. Predestination in these scriptures is not pointing to people but rather to the "Plan of Salvation." One writer comments on the issue of predestination and the Plan of God in this way:

WHAT THE WORD ELECTION MEANS

"In Scripture, there is not the slightest hint to an election of God whereby one person is chosen to be saved and another is not. There is no teaching that a man is saved because of God's choice alone; there must also be the choice of the individual to meet God's terms of Salvation.

It is the "Plan of God" that is elected, chosen, foreknown, and predestined - not the individual or natural choice of man to conform to that Plan. The Plan is the same for all alike and everyone is invited, chosen, elected, foreknown, and predestined to Salvation, without exception on the sole basis of the individual's choice and total conformity to the

Gospel, simply because Jesus died for all. Otherwise, one will be lost, and there is no exception, nor can there be an exception to this, the Divine Plan.

God's part in Salvation for all men has been completed, and whoever meets His terms will be saved. The whole program of Salvation is simply that of being Born-Again - becoming a New Creature in Christ (Matthew 18:3; John 3:1-8; 14:17; II Corinthians 5:17-18). And the door is open to all (Revelation 22:17).

The "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia" is widely referred to as "the best Bible Encyclopedia." It says:

"Election never appears as a violation of human will. For never in the Bible is man treated as irresponsible. In the Bible, the relation of the human and Divine wills is inscrutable; the reality of both is assured. Never is the Doctrine presented apart from a moral context"

“. . .It is the “Plan of God” that is elected, chosen, foreknown, and predestined - not the individual or natural choice of man to conform to that Plan. . .”

THE MEANING OF PREDESTINATION

“The words “foreordain” and “predestinate” come from the same Greek word, “prooridzo,” and means “to determine beforehand.”

The meaning of the word “Predestination” means that God's Law is the thing that is predestinated, and not the individual conformity to that Law. All Scripture is clear that men are absolutely free to choose for themselves whether they conform to the predestined plan or not (John 3:16-20; Revelation 22:17, etc.). Those that do conform will enjoy forever the predestined blessings and those who do not will suffer eternally the predestined judgements of the Plan.

This, and this alone, is all that the Bible teaches concerning Predestination in connection with free moral agents, even as we have seen regarding “Election.”

In the Plan of God, it was predestinated that Christ would die for the world (Acts 4:28); that some (it is not stated who or which ones) would be saved by believing on Jesus as their Saviour (Romans 8:29-30); that those who would freely choose to be saved were predestinated to be holy and to be Children of God through Christ (Ephesians 1:5); that these Children of God have a predestinated inheritance according to the Eternal Purpose (Ephesians 1:11); that they were predestinated to be enlightened with wisdom kept secret from of old (I Corinthians 2:7); but no statement is made that God's predestined Plan and Purpose includes the free acts of free moral agents nor does it name those who will conform to the Plan.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD FOREKNOWLEDGE

The word “foreknowledge” simply means the Omniscience of God, which means that God has the ability to know any and all things, past, present, and future. He has a Plan, and He knows His Plan from the beginning to the end.

However, having the ability to know what will happen in the future, even as God does, in no way means that the free wills of men are necessarily violated. In fact, according to Scripture, they are not violated at all.”¹¹

“ . . . Those that do conform (to the predestined plan) will enjoy forever the predestined blessings and those who do not will suffer eternally the predestined judgements of the Plan. . . ”

God, being omniscient (knowing all things) and being in the ever-eternal present, has foreknowledge of who will respond and receive salvation through Jesus. With this foreknowledge, God has planned everything and allowed for all things - and He will achieve and accomplish all He has declared and promised in His Word of truth and power. Amen.

Who Condemns And Who Judges ?

Man condemns himself when he either rejects Jesus Christ, or does not seek God Who will then show him that Christ indeed is the only way to salvation. The created world bears witness to the existence of the Creator. Man therefore is without excuse to seek the Creator Who is clearly evidenced (Romans 1:20). God promises to respond to the open, unbiased, seeking heart (Matthew 7:7-8), the heart that cries out for God to reveal Himself. If we seek God, He will bring us to Calvary to meet the Saviour (through the teaching and preaching of the Gospel). God has therefore given the door of life to all those who seek it. Man needs only to remove himself from death by entering into life through this door found at Calvary, the only door to heaven. God can do no more than He has already done, for He has already given man His all, His very best.

JOHN 3:17 For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world (*means that the object of Christ's Mission was to save, but the issue to those who reject Him must and can only be condemnation: E.S.B.*); **but that the world through Him might be saved.**

JOHN 3:18 He who believes on Him is not condemned (to be eternally lost): **but he who believes not is condemned** (judged) **already, because he has not believed** (has not sought so as to find or has chosen not to believe) **in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.**

“ . . . Man condemns himself when he either rejects Jesus Christ, or does not seek God Who will then show him that Christ indeed is the only way to salvation. . . ”

Thus man condemns himself but it is Jesus Christ Who will judge the hearts of men, for all judgement has been committed unto Him.

ROMANS 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by (through) Jesus Christ according to my Gospel.

JOHN 5:22 For the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgement unto the Son (Jesus Christ today is Saviour, but the time will come when He will be Judge)

Man condemns himself by staying in sin (or in the state of sin). God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the people who have condemned themselves to eternal darkness.

The Accountability Of Man

What YOU do or do not do on this earth, will determine whether you go to heaven or hell after your physical body dies.

It is up to each of us to choose where we will spend eternity.

WE MAKE THIS CHOICE by either accepting or rejecting God's free gift of salvation, through Christ Jesus. In fact by not seeking God, Who will direct us to the Cross, we are rebelling against the moral light within our conscience, the moral light which will tell us that there is a God. Having been given this light, we are responsible for seeking and finding (Romans 1:20). Indeed God has not hidden Himself and is easy to find if we truly seek with an open heart.

So even by not seeking truth we rebel against our God-given conscience. Man is born separated from God and on the road to eternal death. God throws man a lifeline to enable him to escape the waters of destruction - and this lifeline is Jesus Christ. If man rejects Jesus Christ, all he then does is continue on the road to hell, having either missed or rejected the opportunity to be saved and gain eternal life. The Word tells us that some fear and reject the very thing that would set them free because they love the darkness they are already in, and want to continue in it (John 3:18-20).

“. . .If man rejects Jesus Christ, all he then does is continue on the road to hell, having either missed or rejected the opportunity to be saved and gain eternal life. . .”

Nevertheless, man is accountable for his sin and his position. We know this because the scriptures tell us that man is without excuse to believe because the heavens declare that there is a Creator:

ROMANS 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

ROMANS 1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has shown it unto them.

ROMANS 1:20 For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made (His creation), even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they (all men) are without excuse (to believe there is a God)

Indeed men see God's handiwork as they look at the revelation of nature (Psalm 19:1; Acts 14:16-17). As man recognises, with an open heart, that there is a Creator, he then becomes responsible for seeking that Creator and finding a way of communicating with Him. God promises that those who seek will find, and those who ask will receive (Matthew 7:7-8). Indeed the Lord will move heaven and earth to respond to an open heart, and a seeker of truth - to reveal Christ to that person (John 14:6).

Many believe that those who have never heard the Gospel cannot be held accountable for rejecting it. However, the phrase "*so that they are without excuse*" (Romans 1:20) tells us otherwise. The scriptures declare that man has no defence when it comes to unbelief. Unsaved man in looking at the created world should acknowledge the existence of a Creator, a mighty Being to whom worship and obedience are due. That man denies this truth, represses it or shuns it in horror renders him as being "*without excuse.*" Men will be judged according to the light they have been given, not the light they have not been given.

As Cottrell says, "*Whether individuals have or have not heard the gospel is not the issue. Whether they will be saved or lost depends not on what they have not heard, but on what they have heard. They will be judged according to the light they have, not the light they do not have.*" And he quotes Morris as saying "*Our condemnation in each case lies in the fact that we have sinned against the light we have, not against the light we have never received.*" ¹²

Therefore it is not just because of Adam's sin that man is condemned.

"Some would claim, that God is unfair in condemning men who have been placed in their present position by the fault or act of another, namely Adam. In reply to this argument, it may be said that Scripture nowhere says that men are finally condemned for Adam's transgression as such. On the contrary, the Gospel reveals to us the Atonement, preordained from the first by the offering of animal Sacrifices, for the avoidance of such final condemnation.

So, man was given a way out even from the very beginning, but for the most part has ignored or rejected that Way, Who has always been Christ, which makes the transgression of all who followed Adam as far-reaching as was the original transgression. So man is lost not only because of original sin, but even more so because of his rejection of God's Solution for that sin (John 3:16). Once again, as Paul said, man is "Without excuse." "

" . . . all have sinned against Light which they might have followed." ¹³

“. . .Men will be judged according to the light they have been given, not the light they have not been given. . .”

The Word of God also tells us that every man has been given “*the measure of faith*” (or access to “*the measure of faith*”) to believe there is a God (Romans 12:3).

Note: This scripture also applies to the saved who are given access to “*the measure of faith*” required for service and obedience.

This “*measure of faith*” for the heathen is really an inward moral light, contained in the conscience, which gives man the ability to acknowledge a Creator. Sin has not extinguished this gift and man’s natural inclination is to seek out his Creator. Sin will stifle this inward motivation, however, and man can, through his own choosing, simply block off to the existence of a Creator. If man denies this part of himself, he will do himself damage, for only through being open to this light can he discover God. The measure of faith is a measure of awareness of God supplied by God’s grace. Man is therefore responsible for seeking truth, but he will not discover truth on his own terms, only on God’s terms!

God reveals Himself to man as man is open and seeks. Man is responsible for seeking the answers to life, but those answers can only be revealed by the Father. Man cannot discover them any other way.

JOHN 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again (born from above), he cannot see the Kingdom of God.”

JOHN 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

JOHN 3:17 For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.

JOHN 3:18 He who believes on Him is not condemned: but he who believes not is condemned (judged) already, because he has not believed (chosen not to believe) in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

We will still exist a million years from today, for we are eternal beings.

MATTHEW 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

God’s saving presence is what is needed for us to have direct communication with the Father, and an eternal promise of heaven after physical death.

*“ . . . This “*measure of faith*” for the heathen is really an inward moral light, contained in the conscience, which gives man the ability to acknowledge a Creator. . . ”*

It is also important to note that, if a child dies before the age of responsibility, by the law of perfect justice God would say, “This child could not have understood the Gospel at this age, and so cannot be held accountable.” The child, through God’s grace and perfect

justice, would then go straight to heaven. This is perfect justice, for we have a perfect and just God. Amen. The age of responsibility, however, is not a fixed or mandatory chronological age. It will vary according to individual differences such as culture, intelligence, exposure to truth, and ability to understand. While it varies from one child to the next, it represents a point in time at which the child or teenager concerned becomes personally responsible for their own response to the Gospel.

Jesus, Who is God the Word, will judge all, and He judges children under His law of perfect justice. This means that if they die before the age of responsibility, Jesus judges that they are not accountable for their spiritual position. Children are then able to enter heaven through Jesus, man's Mediator - for there is only one way to enter heaven, and that way is through Christ Jesus.

JOHN 14:6 Jesus said unto him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by Me."

Jesus is the only way - there is no other name, no other means by which we can be saved.

ACTS 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other (except Jesus): for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

OUR ETERNAL REWARD

The Rapture

As Christians we have much to look forward to in this life with the resurrection power of the Divine Nature at work in us. We also have eternal life and an eternal home with God in heaven. Jesus said in John 14:1-3:

JOHN 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe (have faith) also in Me.

JOHN 14:2 In My Father's house are many mansions (heaven is very expansive): if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

JOHN 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself (here the Lord is referring to the Rapture of the Church); that where I am, there you may be also."

Jesus is preparing a mansion for every person who responds to His love and receives His gift of salvation. But Jesus also stated, *"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself."* He refers, in these scriptures, to the redemption of our mortal bodies. Therefore at the appointed time, the scriptures tell us that Jesus will return to "rapture" ("snatch away") His Church of all true Believers, and take them to heaven. At this time all the Saints, both those who are physically dead and those who are physically alive, will be gathered together to meet with the Lord in the air and will receive, as God's Word tells us, glorified immortal bodies.

“. . .At the appointed time, the scriptures tell us that Jesus will return to “rapture” (“snatch away”) His Church of all true Believers, and take them to heaven. . .”

This wonderful event is called “the Rapture.”

1 THESSALONIANS 4:15 For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we (Christians) **who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent** (precede - go before) **those who are asleep** (Christians who have already gone home to be with the Lord).

1 THESSALONIANS 4:16 For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump (trumpet) of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1 THESSALONIANS 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up (raptured) together with them (the dead in Christ) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The Apostle Paul revealed in these scriptures that the dead in Christ shall rise first, being “resurrected” with glorified bodies. This means that the spirit-man of each Saint who has gone home to be with the Lord will be clothed with a glorified body and will meet Christ in the air, “*in the clouds*” above the earth. Also at this time, the bodies of the living Saints will be instantly and miraculously changed to immortal glorified ones. And, in an instant of time, all the living Saints will also join the Lord Jesus in the air.

After this sudden “snatching away” and gathering of all His people, Jesus will be united with them in unbroken fellowship forever. Our redemption will be completed and concerning us, there will be no more sickness, no more pain, no more suffering and no more death. Hallelujah!

After the Rapture has taken place, the Saints will spend the next seven years in heaven. Just prior to the Second Coming, when the Tribulation Saints are also gathered, and the Judgement Seat of Christ has been conducted, all the Redeemed from all the ages will celebrate with Christ the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9).

Once the Body of Christ is removed, the earth will plummet into the seven years of the Tribulation Period in which God’s judgement will be poured out upon the earth. God will not pour out His judgement until His people have been taken away, the reason being that all those “in Christ” have been declared righteous through His Blood. Judgement of this nature is therefore deemed by God to be unnecessary, and the Church will be protected from it by God’s grace through the Rapture.

The Rapture will also signal the time for the revealing of the “*man of sin*” (2 Thessalonians 2:3) - the Antichrist. This man will be empowered by Satan as no man has ever been before and he will seek to eradicate the nation of Israel, God’s ancient chosen people, from the face of the earth at the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:12-16). The

Tribulation will culminate with the Second Coming of Christ. This event alone could put an end to the Antichrist and his armies, and bring about the rescue of the remnant of Israel, and their recognition, finally, of Jesus as their long-awaited Messiah - Saviour and Lord (Zechariah 12:10; Romans 11:25-27).

“ . . . Once the Body of Christ is removed, the earth will plummet into the seven years of the Tribulation Period in which God’s judgement will be poured out upon the earth. . . ”

Christ’s Second Coming will mark the end of the outpouring of God’s judgement upon the earth, and usher in the Millennial Kingdom, Christ’s 1,000 year reign on the earth (Isaiah 65:20-25, Revelation 20:4-6).

In relation to the Rapture and Christ’s Second Coming, the following table will establish that these two events are separate and distinct, being separated by the seven year Tribulation period. The Rapture is the hope of the Church, Christ’s Body. The Second Coming is the hope of Israel, for only Christ’s triumphal return in power and glory can bring an end to Armageddon, and effect the reconciliation of the remnant of Israel to the Father, as they acknowledge Christ as their Messiah and Lord (Romans 11:25-26).

RAPTURE THE CHURCH	SECOND COMING OF CHRIST
1. It occurs before the Tribulation : Luke 21:36	1. It occurs after the Tribulation : Matthew 24:29-30
2. Christ comes <u>for</u> the Saints : 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17	2. Christ comes <u>with</u> the Saints : Jude 14; Zechariah 14:4-5; Revelation 19:11-21
3. Christ takes the Saints to heaven : 1 Thessalonians 4:17	3. Christ brings the Saints back to earth : Zechariah 14:4-5; Revelation 19:14
4. Christ returns in the clouds : 1 Thessalonians 4:17	4. Christ returns to the earth : Zechariah 14:4-5
5. Christ is not seen : 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:17	5. Every eye shall see Him : Revelation 1:7
6. It is the “ <i>blessed hope</i> ” of the Church : Titus 2:13	6. It is the great day of His wrath (Revelation 19:15) and also the hope of Israel : Zechariah 12:9, 10.

As we have seen, both the Rapture and the Second Coming are extremely important events, both for the Church and Israel. Both are clearly outlined in God’s Word and are revealed by Him as part of His eternal Plan of Redemption for all who will receive His Son, Jesus Christ, as Lord and Saviour.

“...Christ’s Second Coming will mark the end of the outpouring of God’s judgement upon the earth, and usher in the Millennial Kingdom, Christ’s 1,000 year reign on the earth. . .”

Following the Millennium, the 1,000 year reign of Christ, a final great earthly rebellion will take place before Satan and all that is evil is consigned forever to the Lake of Fire. Then the earth will be renovated by fire, and God’s throne will come to dwell on the earth. These subjects are covered in some depth in later studies. Suffice to say that our eternal reward is secure as we continue to hold on to Christ and His finished work as the only means of salvation - the only door to eternal life and the eternal blessing of the Father’s presence. Amen.

The Judgement Seat Of Christ

Background Reading: Romans 14:8-12

At some point after the Rapture, all Believers will stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10). The purpose of this judgement will not be to decide upon acquittal or condemnation - for we who are in Christ have been clothed with His righteousness and have passed from spiritual death to spiritual life. Rather, this judgement will be in regard to our service to Christ, to determine the reward due to each Believer for their works of faith and love while they were on the earth. The Apostle Paul spoke of this in his first epistle to the Corinthian Church:

1 CORINTHIANS 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is **Jesus Christ** (Who He is - God in the flesh - and what He accomplished - redemption through His death in which His Blood was shed).

1 CORINTHIANS 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation **gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble** (these are symbols of man’s works; the first three are materials which will stand the test of fire, the second three won’t);

1 CORINTHIANS 3:13 Every man’s work shall be made manifest (at the Judgement Seat of Christ): **for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire** (symbolic of God’s judgement according to the standard of His Word); **and the fire shall try** (test) **every man’s work of what sort it is** (by what motive and means the work was done).

1 CORINTHIANS 3:14 If any man’s work abide (remain) which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:15 If any man’s work shall be burned (revealing works that are useless in terms of eternal value, not being directed or empowered by God), **he shall suffer loss** (refers to a loss of reward, not a loss of salvation): **but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.**

These scriptures tell us that the works of Christians can be divided into six categories - those of *“gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble.”* These works will be tested by spiritual fire which represents God’s righteous standard. Those which are burned up (i.e. the works of *“wood, hay, stubble”*) will bring no reward to the person who has performed them. The reason for this is because these are inferior (or dead) works, e.g. done in a person’s own strength, reluctantly, or for self-gain. Those which do not burn (i.e. those of *“gold, silver, precious stones”*) are works of faith and love and will bring reward of varying degrees.

“. . .this judgement will be in regard to our service to Christ, to determine the reward due to each Believer for their works of faith and love while they were on the earth. . .”

So we need to remember the Judgement Seat of Christ and consider how we can serve Him in this life so that our works will stand the test of fire. We need always to be operating in love not selfishness, obeying the Lord in our service rather than fulfilling our own desires and ambitions, and doing all we do in faith and in the Lord’s strength. Our works need to be performed in faith and obedience, and for the glory of God, if they are to be acceptable to Him - not for self-gain but for the Kingdom’s sake. In this God is pleased, His grace having worked this love in us through the Divine Nature. Then the glory is His and His alone, for the works are not based in self but in Him - *“for in Him we live, and move, and have our being”* (Acts 17:28).

MAN’S LEASE

Genesis 1:28 tells us that when God created man, He gave man dominion over all the earth and its creatures. Once God had given this authority to man, it was meant to be an eternal privilege, expressed through an eternal Covenant. There was no condition required of man to maintain this position of authority other than refraining from eating of *“the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”* (Genesis 2:17).

“. . .There was no condition required of man to maintain this position of authority other than refraining from eating of “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”. . .”

As we know, however, Adam rebelled. He ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and so violated this eternal Covenant. God could have dealt with Adam and Eve by banishing them from His presence forever, as He had done with the fallen angels. However because man in his fallen state had not eaten of the Tree of Life, Adam and Eve and all their descendants were able to obtain God’s mercy (for they had not become irredeemable).

Through this mercy, they gained God’s grace in the form of a lease. The lease gave man the right to live on the earth and make use of its resources for a period of time.

The lease itself relates to:

1. **Usage** - man was given the right to make use of the earth and its resources.
2. **Time** - the lease is dispensational, i.e. it is limited in time. The Lord will thus return at some point to reclaim His property and take full control of it.

It is important to note that even though the Lord gave man a leasehold concerning the earth and its resources, God still owns the earth and everything on it:

PSALM 24:1 The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they who dwell therein.

PSALM 115:16 The heaven, even the (highest) heavens are the Lord’s, but the earth has He given to the children of men (for a season, under leasehold).

The Old Testament in fact records God telling Moses that Israel is to be the tenant in possession of the land into which they were going:

LEVITICUS 25:23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.

As such, they could never sell the land. It could only be received or transferred by inheritance. The permanent possession of landed property could only come by inheritance, and be disposed of only to one’s legal heirs. This was because of the principle of Divine ownership - the land was owned by God. It was not the tenant’s to sell for he did not own it.

This should be a salient reminder to the rest of the world that by God’s mercy we are, for a limited time, only tenants in our earthly home. Indeed we are strangers and sojourners on this earth that belongs to the Lord to do with as He sees fit (Psalm 50:12). If the people of Israel entered into poverty through, for example, financial mismanagement, they could only lease (or part-sell) their land that they were in possession of for the remaining time left of a 50 year period set forth by God. When the 50th year, the year of the Jubilee, arrived, the land had to be returned to its original possessor, for the Jubilee Year encompassed automatic release (Leviticus 27:24). The land then returned to its original tribal “owner” as set out by God. In this way, the inheritance allotted by God to the 12 tribes remained the same, with each portion of land continuing on a permanent basis with the original tenants (Numbers 36:9).

***“ . . . Indeed we are strangers and sojourners on
this earth that belongs to the Lord to do
with as He sees fit . . . ”***

The people of Israel in fact were to be given the Promised Land as an eternal inheritance (Genesis 17:8), but this tenancy again was conditional on them obeying the Covenant that they had with the Lord God of Israel (Exodus 6:8; Numbers 14:8; Deuteronomy 31:20; Judges 2:1). When their sin and spiritual adultery became so great that there was no remedy (2 Chronicles 36:16), they were removed from the land, but given promise of a return (Jeremiah 30:3). Then followed the scattering of the Jews in 70 A.D. all over the known world, and their restoration to the land of Israel in 1948 (although with greatly reduced boundaries). With the Second Coming, the national repentance of the Jewish people will occur as they finally recognize the Messiah they rejected (Zechariah 12:10). Then the land of promise in its entirety will be fully restored to God's ancient chosen people who will retain their national identity eternally (Isaiah 66:22).

Now there are so many things to learn from what could be called God's economic plan for Israel, but for the purpose of this study, the primary lesson is that: *"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof . . ."* (Psalm 24:1), and that man is only the tenant by sovereign design and mercy.

As we have stated, man before the Fall was to have an eternal tenancy with dominion over all the earth. After the Fall, God could have dealt with His human creation and sent them into everlasting punishment (along with Satan and his rebellious angels) in the Lake of Fire. However in His mercy, He made a Blood Covenant with man. Ultimately it would take the Blood of an innocent man to be shed for that Covenant to properly come into effect. The Cross of Calvary and the Blood of the Lamb gave man victory and freedom at an experiential level, plus another tenancy in another place that also belongs to God - that place being heaven, God's abode.

Now we will return to the subject of the lease given by God to man concerning the earth. Within the time-frame of this lease, man can generally do as he wills, and be punished or rewarded accordingly - for man is a free-willed agent and not a programmed robot. If mankind had chosen to stay within the boundaries of God's laws, he would have been blessed with success and prosperity. However the violation of God's principles brings a curse upon man, this curse being the natural result of continual sin. On a national or collective level, due to nations worshipping false gods and forsaking God's principles (Leviticus 18:25-30), the curse may become manifest in the form of wars, famines, drought, etc. God may allow this, for it is He Who has set spiritual laws in place by which people reap what they sow. However it is fallen man's master, Satan, who actively seeks to destroy humanity (John 10:10). And it is he who promotes wickedness and destruction, incites people to act on evil desires and gloats over his successes.

“ . . . If mankind had chosen to stay within the boundaries of God's laws, he would have been blessed with success and prosperity. However the violation of God's principles brings a curse upon man. . . “

On certain occasions since the dispensation of this lease, God's standards were violated to such an extent (with no sign of repentance) that God had to intervene and issue out severe judgement. It is rare for God to actually do this, for most of man's problems arise simply through his own sin issuing in the curse. However in the time of Noah, for example, God flooded the earth in order to remove the wickedness which then prevailed (Genesis 6:11-18). Also, in Abraham and Lot's generation, God rained down fire and brimstone on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:20-19:29). This judgement became necessary because of the degree of wickedness existing in these cities at that time.

Another reason God will intervene in man's affairs is if man is about to hinder or sidetrack His overall plan for the ages. Therefore God will, at times, cause the fall of empires and regimes, and help set others in place so that His plans may be brought to fruition - for the benefit of man's final outcome (Proverbs 21:1; Psalm 75:6-8; Isaiah 37:28-29).

Furthermore, because of the advancement in technology in this generation, we can see evil increasing at an enormous rate, reaching proportions never seen before in history (e.g. legalized abortion, pornography, anti-Christian views and practices such as homosexuality being promoted through the media, etc.). The Word of God teaches us that moral and spiritual depravity will be evident in the last days, shortly before Jesus' return (2 Timothy 3:1-7), and that we should take note of the signs of the times so that we will be aware of the season of His coming. Eventually man's lease will expire and God will again resume active control of the earth which He will regenerate to its original perfect state.

When Will The Lease Expire ?

One view is that with the expulsion of Satan and his angels from heaven, an imbalance in heaven's occupancy (numbers) would have occurred. So the time-frame for the duration of the lease could be linked to the time it takes to restore heaven's balance with the number of souls needed to replace the third of the angels who fell. If this be the case, the leasehold of man will continue until heaven's balance is restored. In the meantime, Satan will be at work promoting his evil schemes to bring about sickness, war and poverty on God's property.

Why Does Evil Continue Today ?

In the world today we see many wars, famines and atrocities occurring and many people respond to these tragedies by asking, "Why does God allow such things to happen?"

In dealing with the question of why God allows evil to continue, the rationale behind one explanation of this perplexing issue lies in the assumption that God's power is somehow limited by His moral character. The reasoning behind this thinking comes from the following appraisal.

We have learned that when God created man, He gave man dominion or rulership over all the earth. This was meant to be an eternal or everlasting arrangement. However man broke the conditions of the Covenant when he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good

and evil. Man was enticed to disobey God by Satan, for it was this evil spiritual being who used both deception and fear to cause the parents of the human race to rebel against their Creator. The consequences of their actions were enormous. Adam, through his sin, passed the dominion of the earth over to Satan who then became “*the god of this world*” (2 Corinthians 4:4). Adam died spiritually, thereby becoming separated from God and linked to Satan. Thus Adam entered into a state of spiritual death, causing all his descendants, which is every person who has ever lived (except Jesus), to be born into the same condition. The earth became cursed - the soil itself became barren (Genesis 3:17-18), and some of the animals which had eaten vegetation became carnivorous, and the fear of man entered into them.

Note: God could not have made another man from the dust of the earth in this case, for even the dust was cursed.

God could have legally and morally issued out judgement upon man and wiped him from the earth. In His mercy and grace, however, He decided against this, and set about His plan to redeem man rather than punish him. As we have seen, God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden so they would not take from the Tree of Life with sin in their hearts, and so become eternally separated from Him (Genesis 3:22-24). Also, as we have just learned, God allowed fallen man to continue to occupy the earth (which man had surrendered to Satan’s jurisdiction) under the conditions of a time-limited lease.

This meant, however, that God could normally no longer directly intervene in man’s affairs. In other words, God is limited by His own moral character and law because:

1. Man chose to give Satan most of the rights which God had originally given to man. By his own free will, man had opted to enter into Satan’s Kingdom and to come under his rulership.
2. In setting out the lease, God once again became limited in His right to intervene, at least until the expiry date of the lease arrives. If God wanted to reclaim the earth before this time, legally speaking, He could be accused of trespassing. This being the case, **God’s power to intervene is indeed limited by His moral law.**

Note: In issuing out the lease, God gave man legal possession of the earth - but only as a tenant. However, because Satan was then man’s master, Satan also had tenancy rights in a sub-lease arrangement. God did not deal directly with the evil usurper (Satan) who had deceptively obtained sovereignty over man, for He could not violate man’s free-will choice to submit to Satan’s rulership. He could only do that which His character of mercy and grace constrained Him to do. God, in response to His love for man, devised a Plan of Redemption.

“ . . . This meant, however, that God could normally no longer directly intervene in man’s affairs. In other words, God is limited by His own moral character and law. . . ”

Coming Out From Under The Curse

The earth and man had thus become cursed at the Fall because of man's sin, and man now had a lease to occupy the earth and to dwell upon it. God was now, however, on the outside looking in, for Adam had come under Satan's jurisdiction. Man still possessed his free will under Satan's dominion, and was still able to turn again to God if he so chose. There was, however, the problem of spiritual blindness (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). This made man unable to perceive his true position, that he was and is in spiritual darkness without the power to please a loving God.

The only way God could assist man to come out from under the curse (to varying degrees), that curse being spiritual darkness and everything pertaining to it, was to draw up a Covenant or agreement with man. We see evidence of this in the Old Testament where God made a Covenant with His chosen people in order to cover their sins and keep eternal death at bay.

“. . .The only way God could assist man to come out from under the curse (to varying degrees), that curse being spiritual darkness and everything pertaining to it, was to draw up a Covenant or agreement with man. . .”

A major instrument in God's Plan of Redemption for mankind was a man named Abraham. The scriptures tell us that God made a Covenant with Abraham, and promised that this Covenant would be "*an everlasting Covenant*" between Abraham and his "*seed*" (Genesis 17:1-7). The New Testament reveals that the "*seed*" to which God was referring was the Messiah - the Lord Jesus Christ.

GALATIANS 3:14 That the blessing of Abraham (justification by faith) might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

GALATIANS 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, "And to seeds," as of many; but as of one, "And to your seed," which is Christ (Abraham's Seed was Christ).

Scripture tells us that those who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour belong to Christ. They are then, by faith, Abraham's spiritual descendants, and are heirs of the wonderful promises given to Abraham (Galatians 3:29).

So today, man has opportunity to escape from Satan's dominion through faith in the greatest Blood Covenant of all time. Through this Covenant, man can also claim back that which Satan fraudulently obtained from man. To terminate Satan's rights to any particular area of one's life one must:

1. Be regenerated.

2. Die to sin through repentance.
3. **Have** faith in God's Word in any particular area.
4. **Apply** that faith in Jesus' Name.
5. **Yield** to the Holy Spirit so as to be empowered to do God's will.

“. . .So today, man has opportunity to escape from Satan's dominion through faith in the greatest Blood Covenant of all time. Through this Covenant, man can also claim back that which Satan fraudulently obtained from man. . .”

For example, Satan and his forces can now be told to leave (your life, your home, your property etc.) for you have a Covenant with God that gives you the right to use the Name of Jesus against the devil and his schemes (Ephesians 6:12). As we yield to the Holy Spirit in the power of the Cross, we are positioned to use the Name of Jesus to cause any illegal squatters in our lives to be evicted by God's power. It is the Cross and its finished work which has made us able to be partakers of the Divine Nature, and with this empowerment the enemy will not succeed in stealing from God's children. Indeed it is through the energies of the Divine Nature that we become one with God, and begin to think as He thinks (1 Corinthians 2:16). Through the Divine Nature we receive enablement to believe and trust, and so by faith make proper demands on God's power. It is therefore when we yield to God's Light of Truth that all evil and darkness must depart. This is the power of the Cross at work on our behalf and this is our rightful inheritance. Therefore we should not allow any devil to rob us of any part of it. Amen.

When God raised Jesus from the dead, Satan was defeated. Jesus is now able to take away from Satan, in a potential sense, that which Satan stole by deception. Now all those in Christ have the potential, by faith and with God, to take ground from the enemy, legally and morally. So now, when a member of the Body of Christ (who is led by the Spirit) prays, **THEY PROVIDE THE LEGAL AND MORAL JUSTIFICATION FOR GOD TO RELEASE HIS POWER AGAINST MANKIND'S ENEMY.**

What Does This Mean For The Body Of Christ ?

It seems to be a justified claim that without the Church's prayer, God will not move to repossess the territory which was invaded and overtaken by Satan. Every verse in the Bible dealing with prayer indicates that any resulting action which occurs is itself initiated on earth, quite often in response to the prompting and leading of the Holy Spirit. Thus we must ask God to answer, according to His will. However we must first, in faith, boldly (in confidence and knowing God's will) enter the throneroom of grace in our and others' times of need (Hebrews 4:16) if we are to obtain the grace required.

In other words, while man's lease is still alive and lawful, God is limited in helping man. He has, however, given us the way to reach Him and obtain His help in every situation. By our faith in the finished work of the Cross, our obedience and our prayer, we give God permission to help us. **Indeed we give Him the legal ground to do so.**

“. . . Now all those in Christ have the potential, by faith and with God, to take ground from the enemy, legally and morally. . .”

With this in mind, let us remember that God rarely intervenes sovereignly in man's affairs, for He is limited in doing so by His own moral character. We can take as an example of seemingly sovereign intervention, Paul's conversion experience on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-6). However Paul, even in persecuting the early church, had an attitude of wanting to serve God. This in itself could have constituted grounds for allowing God to take such action. Or faithful, Spirit-led servants may have been praying in tongues for such an event to take place. In any case, it appears that God will only intervene in such a dramatic way if the outcome is to be of paramount importance to His overall plan.

As Christians in rightstanding with God, however, we can pray so that God can help us. This is both our privilege and our responsibility - and this is why the Word of God tells us:

JAMES 5:16 . . . The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

JOHN 15:7 If you abide in Me (live in vital union with Me) **and My Words abide in you** (continue to live in your heart), **you shall ask what you will** (which will be what God wills), **and it shall be done unto you.**

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17 Pray without ceasing (pray about all things: Proverbs 3:5-6);

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18 In every thing give thanks (*not necessarily for everything*): **for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.** (*No matter what happens, or how negative things may seem to be, we are to never stop giving thanks to the Lord, which is the Will of God*). (E.S.B.)

EPHESIANS 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit (*an incessant pleading until the prayer is answered [Luke 18:1-8]*), **and watching thereunto** (*being sensitive to what the Holy Spirit desires*) **with all perseverance** (*don't stop*) **and supplication** (*petitions and requests*) **for all Saints** (*Saints praying for other Saints*); (E.S.B.)

We can also rest in the knowledge that God is in ultimate control of His overall plan, and that in His foreknowledge, He has taken everything into consideration. Our God knows the beginning and the ending, and has planned and made allowances for all things, even the weaknesses and frailties of man. He has shown us in His Word the events which are to transpire at the end of the age, the result of which will be the issuing in of everlasting peace. This will be a perfect work, for we serve a mighty God Whose works and ways are perfect and just.

DEUTERONOMY 32:3 . . . I will publish the Name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God (Almighty, Creator of all that is).

DEUTERONOMY 32:4 He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgement (just): a God of truth (faithfulness) and without iniquity (injustice), just and right (upright) is He.

Let us rejoice in this hope and assurance as we continue in our Christian walk, serving the Lord with willing, obedient and faithful hearts. And let us remember to intercede on behalf of others, so that the Lord can release His power to deliver and save.

“. . . So now, when a member of the Body of Christ (who is led by the Spirit) prays, they provide the legal and moral justification for God to release His power against mankind's enemy. . .”

We will now go on to look at some of the truths which pertain to our redemption in Christ and to the eternal Covenant we have in God.

THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD

In order for a legal will or testament to come into force or to become effectual, there must be a death. In the same way, by God's Law, His Covenant (testament or will) could only come into force through a death, by the shedding of blood.

HEBREWS 9:16 For where a testament is (legal will or covenant), there must also of necessity be the death of the testator (the one who made it - in this case referring to Christ Who was given this responsibility).

HEBREWS 9:17 For a testament is of force after men are dead (this tells us in no uncertain terms that the death of Christ on the Cross was a legal matter): otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator lives. (This simply means it is not valid until the individual to whom the Will belongs dies, as is the case of any Testament or Will.) (E.S.B.)

HEBREWS 9:18 Whereupon neither the first Testament (Old Testament) was dedicated (ratified, put into effect) without blood (the blood of animals)

HEBREWS 9:20 Saying (Moses), This is the blood of the Testament (Old Covenant - that which made it operational) which God has enjoined unto you (commanded you to keep).

HEBREWS 9:22 And almost all things are by the Law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (forgiveness of sins).

So the shedding of blood was needed for God's Covenant of Redemption to become spiritually legal, and thereby operational.

God's Covenant of Atonement in the Old Testament was brought into effect through the shedding of the blood of animals (Hebrews 9:7-14).

Our Covenant of Redemption with God today was brought into effect through Jesus' death and His shed Blood, so God could have, in force, an everlasting Covenant between Himself and man (Luke 22:20). So in this context, a covenant is a will or testament which can only come into effect through the death of something or someone.

The Value Of God's Covenant Was Limited To The Worth Of The Sacrifice

Background Reading: Hebrews 10:1-14

The worth of the animal sacrifices used in the Old Testament was not sufficient to take sin away. These sacrifices could only be used to atone for (cover up) the sins of the people (who lived according to God's Covenant), and could do no more than that, until Jesus came to set them free totally.

God could not use people as sacrifices because it would have been against His nature to allow or use death outside His law of perfect justice (judgement). Also people, because of the inherited sin nature, were not as pure as the animals used for the sacrifices. Because they could not sin, God used animals for sacrificial purposes. Having no sin in them, they were as innocent as Jesus was. These innocent animals were, in fact, a type-pattern of Jesus, the innocent One. As such they pointed to the Cross, for as we shall see, Jesus never sinned once during His earthly walk. Having no sin (original sin) imparted to Him through Adam's Fall, His Blood was also sinless.

*“. . .the value of God's Covenant was limited to the
worth of the sacrifice. . .”*

Why Was Jesus' Blood Sinless ?

Background Reading: 1 Peter 1:18-21

The reason Jesus had sinless Blood lies in the fact that Adam was not His father, and therefore Jesus did not inherit Adam's polluted blood and spiritual position of death.

The Blood which flowed in Jesus' veins originated from His father - God. The Holy Spirit, through a miracle, caused a virgin named Mary to conceive and bear a baby Whom they named Jesus. Yet because He had no earthly father, He did not possess the fallen human nature that came through Adam. He was indeed fully God yet also fully man.

LUKE 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth (six months prior to this, Gabriel had visited Zacharias, and Elizabeth had become pregnant with John),

LUKE 1:27 To a virgin espoused (engaged) to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house (lineage) of David (as prophesied: 2 Samuel 7:12-13); and the virgin's name was Mary. (Joseph was a direct descendant of David through his son Solomon, and Mary was directly descended from David through his son Nathan.)

LUKE 1:28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, "Hail, you are highly favoured, the Lord is with you: blessed are you among women."

LUKE 1:29 And when she saw him, she was (greatly) troubled (and disturbed) at his saying, and cast in her mind (wondered) what manner of salutation (greeting) this should be.

LUKE 1:30 And the angel said unto her, "Fear not, Mary: for you have found favour with God (*should have been translated, "you have received Grace from God"*). (E.S.B.)

LUKE 1:31 And, behold, you shall conceive in your womb (*should have been translated, "You shall forthwith conceive in your womb," meaning immediately*), and bring forth a Son (*proclaims the Incarnation, "God manifest in the flesh, God with us, Immanuel" [Isaiah 9:6]*), and shall call His Name JESUS (*the Greek version of the Hebrew, "Joshua"; it means "Saviour," or "The Salvation of Jehovah"*). (E.S.B.)

LUKE 1:32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David (2 Samuel Ch. 7):

LUKE 1:33 And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His Kingdom (beginning at the Second Coming and continuing forever) there shall be no end."

LUKE 1:34 Then said Mary unto the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (since I am a virgin)

LUKE 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you: therefore also that holy thing (baby) which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God."

God was Jesus' father, and for this reason, Jesus did not inherit original sin. And despite being tempted by the devil, for the whole time Jesus was here on earth, He walked as a perfect man without sin. Indeed the scriptures tell us clearly that Jesus never sinned once in all that He did (Hebrews 4:15). Therefore Jesus' Blood was sinless because He was not only born without original (Adam's) sin, He also remained sinless during the period of His earthly life.

“. . .The reason Jesus had sinless Blood lies in the fact that Adam was not His father, and therefore Jesus did not inherit Adam's polluted blood and spiritual position of death. . .”

Without The Shedding Of Blood There Is No Forgiveness

Let's turn to Hebrews 9:22:

HEBREWS 9:22 And almost all things are by the Law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (forgiveness of sins).

Under the Old Covenant, the sacrificing of animals was used for the spiritual purpose of keeping eternal death at bay. Under the New Covenant, however, a perfect sacrifice was made once and for all, to pay the price for the sins of mankind and to redeem mankind from spiritual death.

God, in His perfect wisdom, chose the time when He would send the Saviour named Jesus in order to establish a new Covenant through the shedding of Jesus' Blood. Until that appointed time, all the sacrifices in the Old Testament pointed to Jesus and Calvary.

The New Covenant, which is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant of promise, could not come into effect until Jesus' sinless Blood was shed and accepted as the redemptive price. To satisfy perfect justice, this was the price required to redeem mankind.

“ . . . Under the Old Covenant, the sacrificing of animals was used for the spiritual purpose of keeping eternal death at bay. Under the New Covenant a perfect sacrifice was made to redeem mankind from spiritual death. . . ”

In the Old Testament the value of something corresponded to the thing itself, e.g. an eye was worth an eye, a life had to be given for a life. Romans 5:12, 17-19 tells us that through the disobedience of one perfect man, Adam, all mankind was condemned to death. However through the obedience of the second perfect man, Jesus, salvation was brought to all men. This, the ransom price, was sufficient to do this.

ROMANS 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world (*by Adam*), and death by sin (*both spiritual and physical death*); and so death passed upon all men (*for all were in Adam*), for that all have sinned (*all are born in sin, because of Adam's transgression*): (E.S.B.)

ROMANS 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one (through Adam); much more they which receive abundance of grace (through the shed Blood of the Cross) and of the gift of righteousness (a gift from God which is received by faith) shall reign in life by (the) One (man), Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgement came upon all men to condemnation (all men are judged by God to be lost sinners); even so by the righteousness of One (Jesus Christ) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life (received by accepting Christ's finished work as the ransom price).

ROMANS 5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners (*the "many" referred to all*), so by the obedience of One (*obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross [Philippians 2:8]*) shall many be made Righteous (*"many" refers to all who will believe*). (E.S.B.)

The first Adam brought death to all men - the second Adam (Jesus) brought life to all men - all those who will receive Him:

1 CORINTHIANS 15:21 For since by man (his Fall in the Garden) came death (spiritual death - separation from God), by man (Jesus Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead (man can again be united with God and so resurrected into eternal life).

1 CORINTHIANS 15:22 For as in Adam all die (refers to spiritual death), even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (Amen and amen!)

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

Christ Our Redeemer

Background Reading: Ephesians 1:3-7

The Hebrew word "ga'al" is translated in the Authorized Version as "redeem" 50 times, as "redeemer" 18 times and as "kinsman" 13 times.

The primary meaning of this Hebrew root word is to do the part of a kinsman and thus redeem one's kin from difficulty or danger. This included the freeing of an Israelite who had sold himself into slavery in time of poverty (Leviticus 25:48). According to Hebrew tradition, it was therefore the duty of a near relative to do for the person that which he could not do for himself. In regard to God and mankind, God was man's original and true father; but through Adam's high treason, God lost His paternal rights to man. Then through Christ's sacrifice, God was able to regain His legal right to man. Jesus acted as our "Kinsman-Redeemer" in rescuing us from a bondage worse than slavery, a bondage into which man had placed himself. After the Cross, mankind then gained the potential to become "the redeemed" through accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

“. . . God was man's original and true father; but through Adam's high treason, God lost His paternal rights to man. Then through Christ's sacrifice, God was able to regain His legal right to man. . . ”

The courts of heaven had determined that man could only be redeemed by God (and thus brought back to his original spiritual state) through the death of a perfect man. According to the Plan of God, only Christ, the perfect man, truly God and truly man, could pay this ransom. God accepted this, the ransom price, on behalf of man. Such was the awesome redemptive price required for man, inextricably caught in the hopeless bondage

of sin. Note that the ransom payment was neither determined by nor paid to Satan. The courts of heaven determined and then accepted the Blood as the ransom price - according to God's holiness and perfect justice. This price was that which was needed to balance the scales of justice, so that sin's crimes could be justly penalised and man exonerated on the basis that punishment for sin had been metered out and justice had been vicariously satisfied. Therefore we should always be:

COLOSSIANS 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, Who has made us meet (fit, qualified) to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light:

COLOSSIANS 1:13 Who has delivered (saved) us (all who have received Jesus as Lord) from the power (authority) of darkness, and has (past tense) translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son:

COLOSSIANS 1:14 In Whom we have Redemption through His Blood (*proclaims the price that was paid for our Salvation*), even the forgiveness of sins (*at the Cross, the Lord broke the power of sin, and took away its guilt [Romans 6:6]*): (E.S.B.)

Jesus was not just a redeemer, He was a "kinsman-redeemer," the One Who bought us back from the slave market of death, doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

“. . . Jesus acted as our “Kinsman-Redeemer” in rescuing us from a bondage worse than slavery, a bondage into which man had placed himself. . .”

Jesus is both our brother and our Creator, for He was man as well as God. Thus He could truly enter into the position of the "Kinsman-Redeemer."

HEBREWS 2:10 For it became Him (*refers to God's Way, as it concerns the Redemption of mankind*), for Whom are all things (*God is the final reason for all things*), and by Whom are all things (*through Whose agency*), in bringing many sons unto Glory (*speaks of the Divine Purpose*), to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through sufferings. (*This carries the idea that Christ had to suffer the Cross in order to bring about Redemption for humanity.*) (E.S.B.)

HEBREWS 2:11 For both He Who sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one (in Christ): for which cause (for this reason) He (Jesus) is not ashamed to call them brethren (brothers),

HEBREWS 2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved Him (Jesus) to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

God the Word identified Himself with us as a man in order to become our Redeemer, and our redemption is attained through identification - for as Christians we identify ourselves with Christ in both His death and Resurrection (Romans 6:3-4).

God's Valuation of Man

God's love for man was so great that He was prepared to pay the terrible redemptive price required, that being the Blood of Jesus. This shows us how much He loved us, as John 3:16 states. God showed us the value He placed upon man when Jesus died and rose again - for even though we were worthless while in sin, God's valuation of us was great.

ROMANS 5:6 For when we were yet without strength (powerless, unsaved), in due time (at the appointed time) **Christ died for the ungodly** (the whole of humanity).

ROMANS 5:7 For scarcely (rarely) for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure (sometimes) for a good man some would even dare to die.

ROMANS 5:8 But God commends (demonstrates) His love toward us (*Christ dying for the ungodly is a proof of Love immeasurable: E.S.B.*), in that, while we were yet sinners (being in a worthless state and being haters of God), **Christ died for us.**

The value God placed upon man was in direct relation to His love for man. Even though we were worthless and hopeless without Christ, He still loved us. This then was our only value - that God loved us. We can see an example of God's love in His attitude to Satan.

“ . . . Even though we were worthless and hopeless without Christ, He still loved us. This then was our only value - that God loved us. . . ”

God still loves Satan, for no true father will ever stop loving his son, regardless of what that son may do. Through sinning, however, Satan chose to separate himself from the love of God forever. In doing so, Satan became worthless and hopeless. God's love for Satan has not ceased but Satan, unlike fallen man, can never again enter into this love and all of its benefits, the major one being that of eternal salvation. In other words, Satan can never be redeemed (Revelation 20:10).

However, man can be redeemed by the Blood of Jesus. God displayed His love for man by taking the first step towards restoring peace between Himself and man, the first step towards ending the enmity that had previously existed. It is now up to man to respond to what God has done, by laying aside his hostility and accepting the gift of love that is set before him.

Note that fallen man can only be redeemed during the course of his physical life. After physical death there is no “second chance,” no further opportunity for redemption.

The Guilty and the Innocent

Background Reading: Isaiah Chapter 53

We, the descendants of Adam, were guilty. Jesus was the innocent one, untainted by any sin. And if you think that you could have done a better job than Adam, think again.

We believe that God put His best man in the Garden to face the test of obedience. This test was needed to give Adam the chance to build his character, and strengthen his reliance on God so that he would be brought into even deeper fellowship. The failure of Adam, the best free-willed agent God could create, implies the failure of us all.

In order for Jesus to legally take our place and be our sin-bearer, a transference of places had to occur. This was necessary because we were bound by Adam's sin as well as our own, and unable to free ourselves from sin's eternal grip.

ISAIAH 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses (righteous acts) are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away (far from God's favour).

ROMANS 3:10 As it is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one:" (Psalm 14:1-3).

Jesus allowed Himself to be betrayed, taken captive and sentenced to death unjustly. He laid His life down for mankind according to the will of the Father, and allowed the curse to be placed on Himself. (This curse of death was needed for perfect justice to be satisfied.)

Now as we know, Jesus was sinless. The Word of God tells us however:

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 For He (the Father) **has made Him** (Jesus Christ) **to be sin** (the sin offering) **for us, Who knew no sin** (He was sinless before the Cross, on the Cross and after the Cross); **that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him** (our sin was imputed to Him, His righteousness was imputed to us).

Jesus was never personally acquainted with sin. He never knew sin in an experiential way. Rather, sin was imputed (legally attributed) to Him, and He became the representative of sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God. He became, in another sense, a curse for us (Galatians 3:13). The sin of the world was imputed to Him and He took the punishment for this sin in our place. **Our sin was therefore imputed to Him so that His righteousness could be imputed to us.** What a wonderful exchange - the Great Exchange!

“. . . In order for Jesus to legally take our place and be our sin-bearer, a transference of places had to occur. . . we were bound by Adam's sin as well as our own, and unable to free ourselves from sin's eternal grip. . . ”

Jesus also became our “scapegoat,” for the type-pattern of this Old Covenant practice was borne out in Him. From Leviticus chapter 16, on the Day of Atonement there were two goats used, the two goats together constituting one sin offering (Leviticus 16:7-10). One goat, “*the goat of the sin offering,*” was killed, and this typified the death of Christ (Leviticus 16:15-19). The other goat, “*the live goat*” or “*the goat of departure,*” was sent away into the wilderness, carrying away in a symbolic sense the people's sins

(Leviticus 16:20-22). This typified our sins being imputed to Christ and so removed from us forever (2 Corinthians 5:21). As the Psalmist said, “*As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us*” (Psalm 103:12). Two goats were needed because the slain goat could not depict the removal of the people’s sins from them forever. Therefore when the second goat, also called the “*scapegoat*,” was led into the wilderness, atonement, symbolically, was complete. Jesus became our scapegoat as the sin of the whole world was laid upon Him, the innocent Lamb of God (John 1:29). The truth was revealed when God raised Jesus from the dead, for He could not be kept by death by reason of His innocence.

REVELATION 1:18 I (Jesus - God the Word) **am He Who lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death** (the keys of truth to unlock men’s hearts).

Jesus now has the keys of truth in His hands and God is able to use these keys of truth to deliver people from the bondage of spiritual death. People with transformed lives, who have been delivered from spiritual death, the domination of the sin nature and hell itself, reveal to the world that Jesus is alive today, and has those spiritual keys in His possession - to deliver, restore and save. He was dead but is now alive forevermore, to the glory of God and to man’s eternal and immeasurable blessing.

However while all the world is legally pardoned, that pardon does not become binding or effective until we come to collect it from God through the only doorway - JESUS. Indeed Calvary is the only doorway to heaven. Until we go on bended knee to Calvary, the only place of pardon, we are still guilty, bent sinners needing God’s grace - grace which has been given, but not received. And we cannot receive God’s grace until we acknowledge we are guilty, corrupt sinners (being guilty by law and corrupt by nature).

“ . . .Until we go on bended knee to Calvary, the only place of pardon, we are still guilty, bent sinners needing God’s grace. . . ”

Just as it was in mankind’s beginnings, through one man’s (Adam’s) sin, death reigned (Romans 5:12); so also, through one perfect man (Jesus) dying as our sacrifice, **many** are brought back to spiritual life through spiritual regeneration by the power of God. The first perfect man brought death, through sin, to mankind. The second perfect man brought life to mankind, through His death and Resurrection.

TITUS 3:5 **Not by works of righteousness which we have done** (works cannot save man, only faith working through grace: Ephesians 2:8-9), **but according to His mercy He saved us** (the initiative of Salvation springs entirely from the Lord, and is carried out by means of the Cross: E.S.B.), **through the washing of regeneration** (in effect, the Born-Again Believer is regenerated, which is brought about by a cleansing process, with the Blood having cleansed all sin, both its power and its guilt [1 John 1:7]: E.S.B.), **and renewing by the** (ministry of the) **Holy Spirit;**

1 CORINTHIANS 15:21 For since by man came death (*refers to Adam and the Fall in the Garden of Eden, and speaks of spiritual death, separation from God*), by **Man came also the Resurrection of the dead.** (*This refers to the Lord Jesus Christ Who Atoned for all sin, thereby, making it possible for man to be united once again with God, which guarantees the Resurrection.*) (E.S.B.)

1 CORINTHIANS 15:22 For as in Adam all die (*spiritual death, separation from God*), even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (*In the first man, all died. In the Second Man, all shall be made alive, at least all who will believe [John 3:16].*) (E.S.B.)

JOHN 10:10 . . . I (Jesus) am come that they (all true Believers) might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Jesus died that we might have life. Then He was raised from the dead, victorious over every work of the enemy. This is the message of the Cross.

The Word of God tells us that a grain of wheat must fall to the ground and die before it can bear much fruit (John 12:24). This is a general principle, but Jesus was actually referring to Himself in this verse, and the death He was to suffer. Only through His death could the fruit of men's souls be brought forth. He would die an innocent man for a guilty world, and in this way God demonstrated His undying love for mankind.

CHOOSE LIFE OR STAY IN DEATH

Background Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

So by one man's (Adam's) sin we were condemned to death, but by one man's (Jesus') righteousness and His shed Blood, we are made righteous through our actions of faith.

A person is pardoned if they accept Jesus as their Saviour. We can then progress in the abundant life we have been promised through obeying God's laws in the power of the Divine Nature. We find all these laws are encompassed in the two commandments Jesus gave in Matthew 22:37-40:

- 1. Love the Lord your God** with all your heart, with all your mind and with all your strength (body).
- 2. Love your neighbour** as yourself - by taking up your cross of self-denial and putting the needs of others above your own.

God is Love, and His law of love is the highest law we can obey. As we fulfill these two great commandments, we will be living in and obeying the law of love.

“ . . . Calvary must be our daily focus if we are to obtain the grace needed to live the saved life, thereby pleasing the Father. . . ”

Each person must choose to come out of spiritual death. This is achieved through believing and acknowledging that Jesus was the sacrifice needed to redeem each of us. The first step is to repent of all sin in our lives. To receive the full victory that Jesus won for us, however, we must allow Him to be Lord of every area of our lives.

JOHN 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, “If you continue in My Word, then are you My Disciples indeed;

JOHN 8:32 And you shall know the truth (of God’s Word), and the truth (as you embrace it) shall make you free (from bondage).”

We can only fully obey the laws (principles) of God when we understand and rely on the finished work of the Cross. Calvary must be our daily focus if we are to obtain the grace needed to live the saved life, thereby pleasing the Father. The grace of God works through the Divine Nature, of which we are now partakers in Christ, as we yield to the Holy Spirit, seeking His empowerment, His wisdom, His direction, etc.

So we must choose life or stay in spiritual death. The timeframe in which this choice must be made is one’s physical lifespan. When a sinner physically dies, their grace period of physical life comes to an end. They will then face the same judgement as their father Satan - eternal death. Each person is therefore given the period of their own lifetime in which to repent and receive Jesus as Lord. This is the message of the Gospel - as we have said, there is no “second chance” beyond the grave:

HEBREWS 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die (shows the teaching of reincarnation to be utterly false; teaching which has condemned many to hell), **but after this the judgement** (. . . *if Christ the Saviour is rejected, all will face Christ the Judge; for as death was inevitable, the Judgement is inevitable as well: E.S.B.*)

Throughout the Gospel, in every area, God is on our side. As our Creator, He is now rejoicing over us. As our Judge, He is now satisfied. As our Lord, He now blesses us. As our King, He now shares His realm with us. As our Father, He now shares His very Self with us, making us in Christ to be partakers of His Divine Nature. Hallelujah!

Sin And The Christian

Most basically defined, sin is anything that does not conform to the character and nature of God. Sin is not only doing that which is wrong, in thought, word or deed, sin is also not doing that which is right, morally and spiritually. This means that there are sins of commission - wrongdoing - and sins of omission - not doing right. Without God in your life, positionally and experientially, you will sin. Only through Jesus Christ, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, can we avoid sin and walk in righteousness. God’s will shows us the path of righteousness in which no sin lies. However we must seek, find and embrace His will for in it alone does His grace become available to us.

“ . . . The grace of God works through the Divine Nature, of which we are now partakers in Christ, as we yield to the Holy Spirit, seeking His empowerment, His wisdom, His direction, etc. . . ”

Sin blocks His grace from being imparted. When we, as Christians, want the darkness of sin, we frustrate His grace from being imparted to us (Galatians 2:21). When Christians sin without repentance, they invite darkness of some degree or measure into their lives. This darkness becomes an obstacle to fellowship with God, even though their relationship with Him continues. As stated, sin will frustrate the grace of God, for He cannot give Divine enablement when His children desire to hold onto the sin and darkness they are in. For the unsaved, the wages of sin is death. For the saved, the wages of sin are that God’s grace is frustrated and the Christian remains in bondage in that area of sin.

As we have said, sin is anything that does not conform to the character and nature of God. This means we need the grace of the Divine Nature to energize our human nature so that we do not sin - for no one can conform to God’s righteous standard without His help. We need God in us, energizing us as we flow in the Holy Spirit.

Any sin we commit must be put under the Blood of Calvary through repentance so that God can forgive and cleanse us. Repentance allows heaven’s graces to be imparted so that our sin can be dealt with. What gives God the legal right to forgive and cleanse us, so that the sin is never again to be held to our account, is the finished work of the Cross - the Atonement. The penalty for our sin has been paid. Not only this but God has made us partakers of His Divine Nature so we can both will and do of His good pleasure - so we can live righteously. We can never do this in our own strength. If good works are done in our own strength, according to our own leading, this is flesh and so is sin - because we could and would claim the credit for such works (Galatians 5:17). We are to be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit in all we do (Romans 8:1; Galatians 2:20). As the scriptures tell us:

ROMANS 14:23 **And he who doubts** (that what he is doing is right) **is damned** (judged as guilty) **if he eat, because he eats not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**

Another version reads:

ROMANS 14:23 . . . whatever does not originate and proceed from faith (the union of belief and trust - the Divine Nature is thus involved here) **is sin - that is, whatever is done without a conviction of its approval by God is sinful.** (Amp.)

Rossier speaks of this verse as follows:

“Paul encouraged new converts by bringing up another crucial principle - any action is sin if it does not stem from faith. In other words, a person’s conscience feels “condemned” (kekritai) if the action does not arise out “of faith” (ek pisteos). If a person experiences a hesitation and yet acts in spite of that hesitation, then a sense of condemnation exists. Therefore, even though other people may do something, if you do not feel comfortable with it yourself, do not do it!”¹⁴

In all the major decisions we make in life, we should seek the Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit. As Dake says, “*Any thing done to violate the faith principle by which one is saved, and by which he lives (Romans 1:17; Hebrews 10:38), is sin. One must know beyond all doubt or hesitation in his mind that what he allows is in perfect accord with the Word of God before he acts.*”¹⁵

“ . . . As we have said, sin is anything that does not conform to the character and nature of God. . . ”

Thus we must seek, find and choose (embrace) light rather than darkness - day by day, minute by minute, so that although we are in the Light, we will walk experientially in righteousness (light) rather than the unrighteousness of the flesh (darkness). As the Word tells us:

1 JOHN 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

All this takes place as the grace of God is imparted to us in an experiential sense.

The Sin Nature

We as humans are eternal spirit beings, each person having a soul that contains our mind, will and emotions. Thus man is a spirit and has a soul, all this encompassed within a physical body which functions in a physical world.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When a man is born again, his spirit is regenerated to life by the very presence of God (John 14:17-20). While his mind is then positionally (or legally) saved, conditionally it is not saved until it is renewed by the Word of God (James 1:21; Romans 12:2; Psalm 23:3). Therefore our soul (mind) is saved by the Blood of Jesus in a legal or positional sense. But in colloquial terms, to cash the cheque, our mind must be renewed in God’s truth by His power in order for it to be conditionally (or experientially) saved (John 15:26, 16:13).

As a Christian, therefore, our spirit is positionally and conditionally saved, washed clean by the Blood of the Lamb. As stated, however, after salvation, it is up to us, as Christians, each day, to “*receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save your souls*” (James 1:21), i.e. to renew our minds. Renewal means that we seek and then embrace God’s truth by His grace. As a result, our thinking becomes aligned with God’s thinking. By this means we become “a work in progress,” as by God’s grace, our mind progressively receives God’s truth and so comes to line up with His mind and His thinking.

The last installment of our salvation concerns our physical body and will occur on the day that the Lord comes back for His Church. Called the “*blessed hope*” (Titus 2:13), this is the time of the Rapture. On that day, all who are in Christ will receive a glorified body,

the same as Jesus received when He was raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:52-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

“. . .Renewal means that we seek and then embrace God’s truth by His grace. As a result, our thinking becomes aligned with God’s thinking. . .”

Our mind in the next life will be both positionally and conditionally saved. It will therefore merely expand in holy knowledge for the rest of eternity, continually progressing in regard to God and His truth. In other words, there will be no areas of darkness in our minds in heaven.

While on this earth in this dispensation, however, we may experience difficulties in regard to mind renewal. For instance, we may not be able to hear God properly, or alternatively, we may not want to. From whatever inherited genetic negatives we possess concerning memory function or the lack of it, to the dictates of whatever worldly connection we are plugged into, or whatever tries to influence us, physically or spiritually, all these factors will contribute to the problems we will have with mind renewal.

Chapter 6 in Romans tells us that we, as Christians, still have the sin nature to deal with. When we trust God, rely on Him and are led by the Spirit, then the sin nature will remain dormant or deactivated. This is when the Divine Nature is enthroned in our hearts.

At salvation the sin nature becomes legally dead to us. Conditionally or experientially, however, is another story. If we have accepted thinking in our mind that is contrary to God’s truth, then we are, in actual fact, thinking without God’s influence. Therefore, in that area (of sin), we are in spiritual darkness. This darkness will be, of course, in our mind and will not impact in any way upon our regenerated spirit.

So it is in this state that we have entered, in our minds, into spiritual darkness. This state provides us with what is known as “the sin nature” - which can be defined as man thinking in spiritual darkness. For the unsaved, this state is perpetual. For the Christian, this is an optional state because we have an alternative.

The sin nature empowers man to sin when he does not seek to embrace God’s Word of truth concerning the matters of life about which God has spoken.

The sin nature also contains a “gravitational factor” or spiritual weight which seemingly makes it easier to sin in the area of accepted thought or embraced thinking. The more one meditates on wrong thinking with the intent to embrace it, seemingly the greater the gravitational pull which is exerted. So with more meditation comes greater pull (gravity) toward sin and with less meditation comes less pull (gravity) towards sin. As has been said before, the battleground regarding sin is always located in the mind.

“. . .The sin nature also contains a “gravitational factor” or spiritual weight which seemingly makes it easier to sin in the area of accepted thought or embraced thinking. . .”

Man was originally created with a human nature, which is simply the sum of qualities and traits shared by all humans. To function properly and be complete, the human nature, contained in the spirit of man, needs to be energized by the energies and graces of God's Divine Nature. This is how man was created to function at his optimum capacity. In other words, we always needed this spiritual influence to properly order our thinking and therefore our behaviour in relation to both God and our fellowman - the vertical and the horizontal.

Only as we are yielded to God will we be allowing Him to energize us by the graces and energies of His Divine Nature. This is when the Divine Nature is enthroned in our hearts. Without this influence on our minds in a continual sense, we will be thinking in relation to accepted and embraced thought, by ourselves, in isolation from God.

We were thus created not with a defect, but with an inbuilt need to rely on God at all times. Even though we are free-willed beings, we cannot reach our potential in any way without our Creator's influence on our thinking (Isaiah 55:7-9). We were created to function in relationship with Him and dependence upon Him.

When man stepped away from the graces of God's influence, the sin nature - spiritual darkness - flooded into his life. The sin nature was not created by God because God does not create evil.

Without God's influence, we live with the sin nature, and as we operate in isolation from God, from this nature flows all manner of evil intent. When man remains in, or places himself into this dark place, then dark thoughts emerge. When man has no connection to God in his thinking, he is immersed in spiritual darkness. In this state the sin nature dominates his life as he follows after his flesh (Galatians 5:19-21).

Man is a free-willed being with ethical and moral accountability to his Creator. Without God's influence, however, he is unable to discern, in a true sense, his responsibilities to his God and his fellow man. He is unable to correct himself or self-regulate because he is engulfed by the darkness in his mind and cannot think at a Godly level.

The only possible answer to man's dilemma came through God's grace and mercy. God in His love sent a Saviour into this world for this world. In fact God Himself, the second member of the Trinity, entered this temporal world, becoming flesh (John 1:14) and dying as a man for us.

So it can be seen that man without the spiritual restraints of God's truths will be empowered to sin when the opportunity arises, and the sin nature will come alive in that opportunity.

“ . . . When man stepped away from the graces of God's influence, the sin nature - spiritual darkness - flooded into his life. . . ”

When man enters into the dark cave of self, he becomes self-absorbed and self-centred. By himself, and according to whatever he may think, there are no moral restraints to obstruct or impede him. Sin's opportunity arises when man focuses on his own thoughts and desires to the point of accepting and embracing them so as to act upon them.

The power to sin comes from man's unrestrained mind - operating without God's influence. Sin is therefore the result of man thinking by himself so as to embrace thinking which is at odds with God.

Man acts in accordance with the nature with which he was born, and when given opportunity to sin will do so. In the Word we find man described as a sinner by nature:

ISAIAH 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses (so-called good deeds) are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

PSALM 51:5 Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin (original sin) did my mother conceive me.

JEREMIAH 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

JEREMIAH 16:12 And you have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, you walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto Me:

Indeed Jesus identified the source of man's defilement as being his evil heart:

MARK 7:20 And He (Jesus) said, "That which comes out of the man, that defiles the man.

MARK 7:21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

MARK 7:22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

MARK 7:23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man (the heart of man is not good but evil)."

Without the guiding moral light of God's truth and the grace that accompanies it, man is defenceless against the onslaught of the sin nature that ravages his character and lays waste to his soul.

“. . .The power to sin comes from man's unrestrained mind - operating without God's influence. . .”

Unsaved man can still be influenced by God from the outside to some extent, as we see, for example, in the Old Testament - and his conscience is still there to assist him in some way. But man will continue to fail miserably without God on the inside. Therefore Christ came so that God can make His abode on the inside of man, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to influence his whole being.

JOHN 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, “If a man loves Me, he will keep my Words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.”

The Divine Nature

ROMANS 6:3 Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ (this is baptism into Christ, not water baptism: 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27) were baptized into His death (through identification, we die with Him and are raised with Him)?

ROMANS 6:4 Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death (we are buried with Him - all past sin is left in the grave): that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father (we too are raised with Him, His Resurrection is our resurrection), even so we also should walk in newness of life (now having access to the graces and energies of God’s Divine Nature).

The Cross of Calvary is the cross-road we should come to every morning, before we start the day. Every day we should remember the Cross, what Jesus accomplished there and who we are because of it. This is where we were born again, where we became new creations in Christ - but only after a funeral had taken place for the old man. We are now new creations, new men and women raised, after the death of the old man, into “*newness of life.*” This new man whom we now are, has been given access to a new nature, the Divine Nature, so we can be at one with God in spirit (our human nature being energized by the Holy Spirit) and truth:

2 PETER 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises (in the Word of God): that by these (promises) you might be partakers of the Divine Nature (implanted in us when we were born again), having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (by the graces of the Divine Nature, we can live a sanctified life above the lusts of the flesh).

We can now overcome sin through this new Nature given by the grace of God. It works through us as we yield to the Holy Spirit, believing and reckoning to our account that this miraculous change has taken place. We have been transferred spiritually from darkness and death into light and life. This has taken place not only in a positional sense, but as we say “Yes” to God in the course of our lives, then the empowerment to live the saved life is made available to us through the grace of the Divine Nature. This takes place as it enmeshes with our human nature, thus providing us with the energies and graces to both desire God’s will and then to do it (Philippians 2:12-13).

“ . . . This new man whom we now are, has been given access to a new nature, the Divine Nature, so we can be at one with God in spirit (our human nature being energized by the Holy Spirit) and truth. . . ”

Only through focusing our faith on what happened at Calvary can we begin a journey with Christ which provides us with today's answers, and the power needed to live a righteous life. Indeed the Christian is meant to live in complete dependence upon God so that through His power we can keep the sin nature dethroned. Then our carnal desires will not hold sway, and we will thus please Him in our daily walk, giving Him the glory for all that is righteous in our lives.

Note: The sin nature can only be enthroned in our flesh - it can never touch the regenerated spirit of the person who remains in Christ.

The reality of Romans 6:3-4 must be kept alive in our minds and hearts on a day-to-day basis, so that our feet move to the beat of God's heart. Only humble hearts can do this, and so with this attitude reach the spiritual heights that our Lord wants His sons and daughters to attain. All this can only come about through man first kneeling at the Cross of Calvary and trusting in the finished work of the Saviour. Not only has the ledger of our sins been wiped clear and stamped "paid in full," the power to rise above sin has been given to us through the Divine Nature. Let us now read Kenneth Wuest's expanded translation of Romans 6:1-14:

ROMANS 6:1 What then shall we say? Shall we habitually sustain an attitude of dependence upon, yieldedness to, and cordiality with the sinful nature in order that grace may abound?

ROMANS 6:2 May such a thing never occur. How is it possible for us, such persons as we are, who have been separated once for all from the sinful nature, any longer to live in its grip?

ROMANS 6:3 Do you not know that all we who were placed in Christ Jesus, in His death were placed?

ROMANS 6:4 We therefore were entombed with Him through this being placed in His death, in order that in the same manner as there was raised up Christ out from among those who are dead through the glory of the Father, thus also we by means of a new life imparted may order our behavior.

ROMANS 6:5 For in view of the fact that we are those who have become permanently united with Him with respect to the likeness of His death, certainly also we shall be those who as a logical result have become permanently united with Him with respect to the likeness of His resurrection,

ROMANS 6:6 Knowing this experientially, that our old [unregenerate] self was crucified once for all with Him in order that the physical body [heretofore] dominated by the sinful nature might be rendered inoperative [in that respect], with the result that no longer are we rendering a slave's habitual obedience to the sinful nature,

ROMANS 6:7 For the one who died once for all stands in the position of a permanent relationship of freedom from the sinful nature.

ROMANS 6:8 Now, in view of the fact that we died once for all with Christ, we believe that we shall also live by means of Him,

ROMANS 6:9 Knowing that Christ, having been raised up from among those who are dead, no longer dies. Death over Him no longer exercises lordship.

ROMANS 6:10 For the death He died, He died with respect to our sinful nature once for all. But the life He lives, He lives with respect to God.

ROMANS 6:11 Thus, also, as for you, you be constantly counting upon the fact that, on the one hand, you are those who have been separated from the sinful nature, and, on the other, that you are living ones with respect to God in Christ Jesus.

ROMANS 6:12 Stop therefore allowing the sinful nature to reign as king in your mortal body with a view to obeying it [the body] in its passionate cravings.

ROMANS 6:13 Moreover, stop putting your members at the disposal of the sinful nature as weapons of unrighteousness, but by a once-for-all act and at once, put yourselves at the disposal of God as those who are actively alive out from among the dead, and put your members as weapons of righteousness at the disposal of God,

ROMANS 6:14 For [then] the sinful nature will not exercise lordship over you, for you are not under Law but under grace.

(Wuest K.S., The New Testament, An Expanded Translation, underlines added)

In Romans Ch.6 the Holy Spirit reveals the workings of what happens at the conversion of a sinner, and how we are to take advantage of this new-found position in Christ.

Then in Romans Ch.7 the Holy Spirit reveals through Paul's life his failings, even after his conversion.

“. . .Not only has the ledger of our sins been wiped clear and stamped “paid in full,” the power to rise above sin has been given to us through the Divine Nature. . .”

Wuest outlines Paul's experience in Romans Ch. 7 in terms of self-dependence. Victory eludes him when he does not use the resources provided for him by the Holy Spirit to defeat sin in his life. Wuest goes on to describe self-dependence as the “*monkey wrench*” of the Christian life:

THE MONKEY WRENCH IN THE MACHINERY

“Paul says in Romans 7:15, “That which I do, I allow not.” He is describing his experience as a saved person, but one ignorant of the way of living the victorious life. The things he desires to do, namely, good things, he does not do. Things he does not want to do, namely, sinful things, he does do. The power of sin in his life has been broken, and the divine nature implanted. But the correct adjustment to these facts, Paul does not know. Hence the evil nature is still the master. Paul says that this experience he does not “allow.” The word “allow” is from a Greek word which means “to know by experience.” Paul says

in effect, “What I carry out I do not recognize in its true nature, as a slave who ignorantly performs his master’s behest without knowing its tendency or result.” Paul does not recognize his experience in its true nature. He is acting blindly at the dictates of another, like a slave who does not have the liberty to determine the details of his life for himself because he is governed by another. He is somewhat of an automaton, not quite a machine, but yet a human being without self-determination in his spiritual life. He has the desire to do good but no power to put that desire into practice. He rebels against doing evil, but does not have the power to keep from sinning. He fights as one that blindly beats the air. He is in a spiritual fog. He does not understand his experience, for he is acting involuntarily.

Romans can be likened to a great factory. The sixth chapter takes us to the floors where the machinery is located. There we have the mechanics of the Spirit-filled life, namely, the power of sin broken and the divine nature implanted. The eighth ushers us into the basement where the power to operate that machinery is generated. There we have the dynamics of the Spirit-filled life, the power of the Holy Spirit. Chapters twelve to sixteen take us to the upper floors of the factory where the finished product is on display. Chapter seven is the monkey wrench which, if it falls into the machinery, interferes with its working and thus prevents the production of the finished product. That monkey wrench in the Christian life is self-dependence. All the resources of the Holy Spirit are there to put down sin and produce a Christ-like life, but they are not appropriated because the believer is depending upon self.”¹⁶

(underlines added)

“ . . . Paul . . . is describing his experience as a saved person, but one ignorant of the way of living the victorious life. . . ”

We can struggle in our own strength to overcome the sin nature and the carnal cravings we have because of it - but we will fail until we, like Paul, discover God’s prescribed order for doing so. It is only through dependence on the Lord’s grace, which comes to us via the energies and graces of the Divine Nature, that we are able to serve the Lord, overcome sin and walk in righteousness. As we yield to the Lord and ask for His grace, the power we need will be made available to us. The Divine Nature is implanted in us at the new birth, through the internal presence of the Holy Spirit bringing this grace to us. Access to the Divine Nature is part of our inheritance according to the New Covenant in which we now stand.

“ . . . The Divine Nature is implanted in us at the new birth, through the internal presence of the Holy Spirit bringing this grace to us. . . ”

Our Covenant

The New Covenant has redemption instead of atonement.

It has remission instead of a scapegoat.

It has the new birth (regeneration) instead of circumcision.

It has fellowship with the Father in place of the burnt offering, the peace offering and the meal offering.

The New Covenant has the Lord's Table in place of the Passover.

We are sons instead of servants.

We have the law of love in place of the law of sin and death.

We have life in place of death.

We have righteousness instead of condemnation.

We have an Advocate to turn to when we break the law of love.

We have an eternal and merciful Father who watches over us.

To enter into and partake of God's wonderful peace and provision, all we need to do is believe and reckon to our account all that our Teacher the Holy Spirit reveals to us through His Word. This illumination begins at the Cross of Calvary, with the old man dead and the new man alive to God, being a partaker of the brand new Divine Nature.

Calvary's vicarious (acting on behalf of another, substitutionary) sacrifice has atoned for our sin and so Jesus is the "*propitiation for our sins*" (1 John 2:2). In other words, God's justice has been satisfied.

1 JOHN 2:2 And He (Jesus) is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 JOHN 4:10 *Herein is love (the Greek says, "herein is the love"), not that we loved God, but that He loved us (the unconverted human race does not love God; nevertheless, He loved the human race), and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ("Propitiation" is the Sacrifice, which fully satisfied the demands of the broken Law and did so by our Lord's Death on Calvary's Cross. His Death eternally satisfied the Righteousness of God.)* (E.S.B.)

ROMANS 3:24 **Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:**

ROMANS 3:25 **Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation** (*Atonement or Reconciliation* : E.S.B.) **through faith in His Blood . . .**

"The word translated "propitiation" is exceedingly important, and demands a careful treatment. It is hilastērion (ἱλαστήριον). The word in its classical form was used of the act of appeasing the Greek gods by a sacrifice, of rendering them favorable toward the worshipper. In other words, the sacrifice was offered to buy off the anger of the god and buy his love. Such a use is not brought over into the New Testament, for our God does not need to be appeased nor is His love for sale. The English word "propitiate" has the meaning of the Greek word as used in classical Greek, namely, to appease and rendered favorable. It is therefore not the correct word to use when translating the New Testament meaning of this word which it has accrued by its usage in the contexts in which it is found.

The word is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (LXX), in the sense of an atonement or reconciliation. It refers to the act of getting rid of sin which has come between God and man. Canon Westcott says, "The scripture conception of this word is not that of appeasing one who is angry with a personal feeling against an offender, but of altering the character of that which, from without, occasions a necessary alienation, and interposes an inevitable obstacle to fellowship." The word hilastērion (ἱλαστήριον) is used in Leviticus 16:14 (LXX) to refer to the golden cover on the Ark of the Covenant. In the Ark, below this cover, were the tablets of stone upon which were written the ten commandments which Israel had violated. Before the Ark stood the High Priest representing the people. When the sacrificial blood is sprinkled on this cover, it ceases to be a place of judgement and becomes a place of mercy. The blood comes between the violated law and the violators, the people. The blood of Jesus satisfies the just requirements of God's holy law which mankind broke, pays the penalty for man, and thus removes that which had separated between a holy God and sinful man, sin, its guilt and penalty. This is a far cry from the pagan idea of propitiation which appeased the anger of the god and purchased his love. The words, "an expiatory satisfaction" seem to be the words rather than "propitiation" to adequately translate hilastērion (ἱλαστήριον). Hilastērion (ἱλαστήριον) is the place of satisfaction, hilasmos (ἱλασμος) (I John 2:2, 4:10) that which provides that satisfaction for the broken law. Thus, our blessed Lord is both the Mercy Seat and the Sacrifice which transforms the former from a judgement seat to one where mercy is offered a sinner on the basis of justice satisfied. . .

Translation. Being justified gratuitously by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God placed before the eyes of all, an expiatory satisfaction through faith in His blood, for a proof of His righteousness in view of the pretermission of the sins previously committed, this pretermission being in the sphere of the forbearance of God, for a proof of His righteousness at the present season, with a view to His being just and the justifier of the one whose faith is in Jesus. (Romans 3:24-26) ¹⁷

(underlines added)

“. . . Calvary's vicarious (acting on behalf of another, substitutionary) sacrifice has atoned for our sin and so Jesus is the "propitiation for our sins" - in other words, God's justice has been satisfied. . ."

"The sacrificial blood sprinkled on the cover of the ark fully satisfies the demands of the broken law, and comes between the tablets of the law reposing in the ark and the high priest who represents the people and in whom the people stand. Thus, did the blood of Jesus interpose itself between the law of God and the guilty sinner. The hilasterion (ἱλαστήριον) or cover of the ark, called the mercy seat, the throne where mercy is offered on the basis of justice satisfied, is the place where a holy God will meet sinful man and save him." ¹⁸

(underlines added)

So we can say that Jesus is the satisfaction for our sins. Not only has the Atonement (the suffering, death and Resurrection of Jesus) brought this about, it has redeemed us completely, reconciling us to the Father. As His adopted children we now cry “*Abba Father*” (Romans 8:15). We are, in fact, the prodigals returned because of Christ’s shed Blood and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

THE WRITING OF THE BIBLE

The Bible’s Authorship

The Bible is the divinely inspired and authoritative written Word of God. Indeed God chose and anointed specific men over centuries of time to write down His principles and laws for the benefit of mankind, and these writings together make up a book called the Bible.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God (literally “theopneustos or “God-breathed”), and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness

“ *“All Scripture is God-breathed.” This is exactly what the Greek says. Even though God used different men over an approximately 1,600 year period to write the Scriptures, it was God Who gave the words to them. That means that not only is the thought inspired, but even down to the very word (Matthew 4:4). In fact, the Holy Spirit searched through the vocabulary of each one of the writers to find the word that He knew which would best fit the statement at hand. So, when we say that the Scripture is God-breathed, we are meaning not only the general context, or the thought, but even down to the very word.*

This Passage given by Paul is one of the greatest Texts in the New Testament on the Inspiration of the Bible. Another outstanding Passage is II Peter 1:21, which indicates something of how the Divine Inspiration took place. Here in II Timothy we have the fact simply and plainly stated; the process of Inspiration is not dealt with here.

As well, the Apostle in this Passage tells how the Word of God is to be used.

“. . .So, when we say that the Scripture is God-breathed, we are meaning not only the general context, or the thought, but even down to the very word. . .”

INSPIRATION

The phrase, “All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God,” proclaims the fact that after exhorting Timothy to hold fast to the Sacred Scriptures he had been taught, and those as stated were the Old Testament Scriptures, Paul now proceeds to describe them (Wuest).

“All” in the Greek is “pas,” and means “every.”

“Scripture” in the Greek as here used is “graphe,” and means “a writing, thing written.” It is used of the writings of the Old Testament Prophets (Matthew 26:56), and of the Old Testament Scriptures in general (Matthew 26:54), and as well of the New Testament.

The Greek expression “pasa graphe” (“every Scripture”) speaks not of the Old Testament Scriptures as a whole, but of each separate Passage considered as a unit. The first thing Paul says about the Old Testament Scriptures which Timothy was taught, is that every part of them is inspired of God.

“Inspired of God” in the Greek is “theopneustos,” and means, as stated, “God-breathed.” The statement therefore is “Every Scripture is God-breathed.”

Even though the context limits these writings to the Old Testament, and because the New Testament had not then been completed, lacking the writings of John the Beloved, which would come about 22 or 23 years later, the same thing can definitely be said of the New Testament. Thus, Paul declares the Divine Inspiration of the Old Testament (Wuest).

THE NEW TESTAMENT

As stated, the New Testament Canon of Scripture would be finished in a little over two decades, with the Book of Revelation written by John on the Isle of Patmos being the last body of work. It was probably written in about A.D.90.

The word “Inspiration” means that a Divine quality is present in Scripture, distinguishing it from all human utterance. With the development of the New Testament Canon alongside the Canon of the Old Testament, it was easy and highly proper for this concept of Inspiration to be attributed as well to these newer writings which developed in the context of the Christian Church. However, it must always be understood, that both Testaments go hand in hand. As someone as well said, “The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, while the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed!” In fact, and even as we’ve already stated, it is virtually impossible to properly understand the New Testament, unless one has a proper understanding of the Old. Actually, most, if not all, found in the New Testament, can as well be found in type or shadow in the Old.

Concerning the Scripture, John Wesley calls our attention to the fact that “the Spirit of God not only once inspired those who wrote it, but continually inspires, supernaturally assists, those who read it with earnest prayer. Hence it is so profitable for Doctrine, for instruction of the ignorant, for the reproof or conviction of those who are in error or sin, for the correction or amendment of whatever is amiss, and for instructing or training up the Children of God in all Righteousness.”

“. . .The word “Inspiration” means that a Divine quality is present in Scripture, distinguishing it from all human utterance. . .”

WHAT EXACTLY IS INSPIRATION?

Inspiration is that special influence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of holy men, which qualified and enabled them to make an infallible record of Divine Truth concerning the Will of God to man.

The purpose of Inspiration is to secure Truth and unity in record and not sameness of words or statement. "Revelation" discovers new Truth; "Inspiration" superintends the communicating and recording of that Truth. We have examples of Inspiration without Revelation (Luke 1:1-4); of Inspiration including Revelation (Revelation 1:1; 11); of Inspiration without Illumination (1 Corinthians 14:13-19; 1 Peter 1:11); and of Revelation and Inspiration including Illumination (1 Corinthians 2:12-16; 14:30).

We find lies of Satan and man; false doctrine; and many sins listed in Scripture. Inspiration simply guarantees that these lies were told; these fallacies were taught by certain men; and that these crimes were committed, but it does not make these lies and fallacies the Truth or place God's sanction upon the crimes. One must find out whether Satan, evil men, or God is speaking in Scripture. God is not responsible for what others have said just because He causes what they did say to be recorded by Inspiration. All God guarantees is that these things were said and done as they are recorded. Only what God says or teaches is Truth which He requires men to obey.

***“ . . . John Wesley calls our attention to the fact that
“the Spirit of God not only once inspired those who
wrote it, but continually inspires, supernaturally
assists, those who read it with earnest prayer” . . . ”***

TO WHAT DEGREE WERE WRITERS INSPIRED?

1. Some parts of Scripture give the exact words of God (Exodus 32:16; Deuteronomy 5:4, 24; Matthew 3:17).

2. Some words were put into the mouths of the speakers who spoke as the Spirit inspired them (Exodus 4:12; Numbers 23:5; Ezekiel 2:7; 3:10-11; Acts 3:21).

3. Some words were written as the Spirit moved men (Exodus 34:27; II Peter 1:21).

4. In some parts of Scripture it was left up to the writers to choose their own words and relate Truth by the Inspiration and Guidance of the Spirit (Daniel 12:8-9; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31; Acts 1:1-2).

The Spirit used the faculties and abilities of the Writers to record things, past, present, and future. He gave direct Revelations, guided them to choose records of men, and superintended the writers and all their work until we now have a perfect and infallible record of the origin and destiny of all creation (Dake).”¹⁹

(underlines added.)

The word “Bible” is derived from a Greek word meaning “the books.” The Bible is actually a library of 66 books, of which 39 make up the Old Testament and 27 the New Testament. These books of the Old Testament are not arranged chronologically, but

according to the subjects they cover. The New Testament books are also arranged by subject or author, not by the order in which they were written.

In its original form the Old Testament was written in Hebrew and Chaldee, and the New Testament in Greek.

Sometimes the Bible is referred to as “the Holy Scriptures.” The word “holy” means “set apart for a special purpose” and the word “scripture” simply means “writings”: Thus the Holy Scriptures are “holy writings.”

The Bible primarily contains:

- (a) an account of the origins of man, and an outline of man’s future
- (b) the early history of God’s chosen people
- (c) God’s principles and commandments by which we are to live
- (d) God’s will and plan for mankind.

The Bible is God’s Word, divinely inspired and full of truth, and God backs up His Word with His power. The Word of God provides us with boundaries, exhorts us to live according to Godly principles and contains the way to life. We should treasure God’s Word and read it daily, drawing from its pages the direction and correction we need. For:

2 TIMOTHY 3:16 All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God (*the Greek says, “all Scripture is God-breathed,” which means it is the Word of God, and, thereby, infallible!*), and is profitable for Doctrine (*all we believe, teach, and do must be based squarely on the Scriptures*), for reproof (*proclaims the use of the Word of God in setting direction*), for correction (*refers to restoration to an upright state*), for instruction in Righteousness (*presents the Bible as the only guide for such instruction*): (E.S.B.)

HEBREWS 4:12 For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions (motives) of the heart. (R.S.V.)

PSALM 119:105 Your Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

The writers of the Bible were inspired by the Spirit of God to write the words they wrote. This is why Christians refer to the Bible as “the Word of God.” In fact, as we have stated, the Greek word “theopneustos” found in 2 Timothy 3:16 literally means “God-breathed,” or “given by inspiration of God.” Thus the holy scriptures were breathed out by God and breathed into the hearts and minds of the writers of the Bible by the Holy Spirit. These men then wrote words from God Who is the ultimate source of what they wrote.

“ . . . Thus the holy scriptures were breathed out by God and breathed into the hearts and minds of the writers of the Bible by the Holy Spirit . . . ”

The Holy Spirit gave His Word to the individual writers of the Bible via the temperament, culture and experience of each one. Therefore the Bible, quite often, has a human stamp on it as well as a Divine stamp, and each book displays the character of the writer as well as the character of God.

Such is the incredible power of God, that He has been able to use the human personality, disposition and experience to produce His infallible Word.

2 PETER 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

“If one closely studies the Scriptures one sees that as far as instruction is concerned, the Holy Spirit does not go beyond the intelligence of the writer. While tremendous predictions were given by the Prophets concerning things they did not know or understand, this was not the case as it regards instruction. Regarding instruction, the Holy Spirit definitely inspired the writers, but did so only up to the limit of their understanding.”²⁰
(underlines added)

“ . . .Such is the incredible power of God, that He has been able to use the human personality, disposition and experience to produce His infallible Word. . . ”

There are many writers of the Bible, but one Author, that being God Almighty - and it is written proof of His love for mankind. The Bible has been divided into two sections: the Old Testament or Covenant and the New Testament or Covenant. It has been said: the Old Covenant was the New Covenant concealed and the New Covenant is the Old Covenant revealed. So **BOTH** the Old Covenant and the New Covenant constitute the written Word of God.

2 PETER 1:19 We have also a more sure Word of prophecy (here Peter is speaking of the Old Testament which was the Bible of his day); **whereunto you do well that you take heed** (pay attention to the Word of God), **as unto a light that shines in a dark place** (the Word is Light that dispels darkness), **until the day dawn, and the Day Star** (Who is Christ: Revelation 22:16) **arise in your hearts** (a metaphor for the Rapture):

2 PETER 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation (the Word of God did not come from the mind of man).

2 PETER 1:21 For the prophecy (here is a general term meaning the whole of the Word of God) **came not in old time by the will of man** (did not come from man): **but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.**

2 TIMOTHY 3:15 And that from a child you (Timothy) **have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

2 TIMOTHY 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness

These scriptures in Peter and Timothy declare that the Word of God is exactly that, “the Word of God.” No man devised it and no man was its author. It did not originate in man’s mind, and was not the product of his intellect. Rather, the Word of God was written down by man under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9 But as it is written (*Isaiah 64:4*), **Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man** (*the purpose is to show that we cannot come to a knowledge of God through these normal ways of learning*), **the things which God has prepared for them who love Him.** (E.S.B.)

1 CORINTHIANS 2:10 But God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit (*tells us the manner of impartation of spiritual knowledge, which is Revelation*): **for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.** (*The Holy Spirit is the only One amply qualified to reveal God because He is God, and He is the member of the Godhead Who deals directly with man.*) (E.S.B.)

1 CORINTHIANS 2:11 For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? (*The spirit of a man can know some things about another man, but within itself cannot know anything about God.*) **even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God.** (*Men cannot learn about God through scientific investigation or human reasoning, but only as the Spirit of God reveals such to the Believer.*) (E.S.B.)

1 CORINTHIANS 2:12 Now we have received, **not the spirit of the world** (who is Satan), **but the Spirit Who is of God** (the Holy Spirit); **that we might know** (understand and appreciate) **the things that are freely given to us of God** (the Holy Spirit reveals such).

1 CORINTHIANS 2:13 Which things also we speak (of), **not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches** (not in words taught by human wisdom), **but (in words) which the Holy Spirit teaches** (*which is an understanding of the Word of God : E.S.B.*); **comparing spiritual things with spiritual** (*communicating spiritual Truths to spiritual men by the Spirit : E.S.B.*).

1 CORINTHIANS 2:14 But the natural (unsaved) man receives **not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness** (mean nothing, are nonsense) **unto him: neither can he know them** (unregenerated man cannot understand spiritual truth), **because they are spiritually discerned** (*only the Regenerated spirit of man can understand the things of the Spirit : E.S.B.*).

1 CORINTHIANS 2:15 But he who is spiritual judges all things (*portrays only the spiritual person as capable of proper judgement*), **yet he himself is judged of no man** (*refers to judgement which God will accept*). (E.S.B.)

1 CORINTHIANS 2:16 For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? (No one: *Isaiah 40:14*) **But we have** (access to) **the mind of Christ** (so as to see things as God sees them through the eye of faith).

Kenneth Wuest comments on 1 Corinthians 2:9-16 in regard to “inspiration” as follows:

“We use the expression today, “It never entered my mind,” meaning by that that the thing never occurred to us. Thus we have the statement of Paul that the truth of Scripture never arose in the consciousness of man, never found its source in the reason of man.”

Observe the bearing this has upon teaching that finds its basis in the theory of evolution, teaching to the effect that all that the human race knows is the result of divinity resident in man, and that therefore, all knowledge has come from within the race, none from without. After asserting the fact of the final inadequacy of reason in solving the riddle of existence, Paul proceeds to describe the three successive steps in the transmission of truth from the heart of God to the heart of man. These are, revelation, the act of God the Holy Spirit imparting to the Bible writers, truth incapable of being discovered by man's unaided reason (2:10–12); inspiration, the act of God the Holy Spirit enabling the Bible writers to write down in God-chosen words, infallibly, the truth revealed (2:13); and illumination, the act of God the Holy Spirit enabling believers to understand the truth given by revelation and written down by inspiration (2:14–16).

“. . . Paul proceeds to describe the three successive steps (revelation . . . inspiration . . . and illumination) in the transmission of truth from the heart of God to the heart of man. . . ”

We will deal first with revelation. The first word in our English translation in verse nine, Authorized Version, is “but,” and is the translation of the strong adversative particle in the Greek. But the first word in verse ten should not be “but,” but “for,” since the Greek word here is not adversative but explanatory. Paul explains that the Bible did not come by the way of scientific investigation and human reason, but that it came in another way, by revelation. Then he shows that the very fact that God gave this truth by revelation proves that in the nature of things it could not have been given in any other way, and proceeds in verse eleven to show that this is true. The word “revealed” is the translation of a Greek word which means “to uncover, to lay open what has been veiled or covered up.” The word “us” refers to the Bible writers, for Paul is explaining to the Greeks his knowledge of the truth. The Holy Spirit who searches the deep things of God uncovered this truth to the vision of these men.

Then Paul by the use of pure logic proves to these Greeks the impossibility of discovering God's Word through scientific investigation or human reason. The word “man” in the Greek is not the word which refers to an individual male member of the human race, but is the generic term for man, which includes individuals of both sexes. The second use of the word “man” is accompanied by the definite article which in Greek points out individuality. Thus, our translation is, “For who is there of men who knows the things of the (individual) man.” That is, no individual knows the inner thoughts and heart-life of another person. Man is inscrutable to his fellow-man.

The word “spirit” in the Greek refers here to the rational spirit, the power by which a human being feels, thinks, wills, and decides. Again, the word “man” in the phrase, “save the spirit of man,” is preceded by the article. The Greek article originally came from the demonstrative pronoun, and it retains much of the demonstrative's force of pointing out. Therefore, we translate, “For who is there of men who knows the things of the (individual) man except the spirit of (that) man which is in him.” Only the individual knows what is in his heart of hearts. To his fellow-man he is inscrutable.

Just so, Paul says, logic will lead us to the conclusion that if a man is inscrutable to his fellow-man, so God must be inscrutable to man. And just as only the individual person knows what is in his own heart, so only God knows what is in His own heart. Therefore, if man finds it impossible through scientific investigation and human reason to discover the inner secrets of his fellow-man, it is clear that he cannot find out the mind of God by the same methods. The only way in which a person can come to know the inner heart-life of another person is to have that person uncover the secrets of his inner life to him. It likewise follows that the only way in which a person can know the mind of God is to have God uncover His thoughts to man. Thus Paul has demonstrated to these Greeks the absolute need of a revelation from God if we are to know what is in His heart. The first step therefore, in the transmission of truth from the heart of God to the heart of the believer is revelation, the act of God the Holy Spirit uncovering the things in the heart of God to the Bible writers, thus imparting the truth of Scripture to them.

This brings us to the doctrine of verbal inspiration which Paul states in verse thirteen. After the Bible writers had been given the truth by means of the act of the Holy Spirit in uncovering it to them, the apostle says that they were not left to themselves to make a record of it. It is one thing to know a certain fact. It is quite another to find the exact words which will give someone else an adequate understanding of that fact. And right here is where the need of verbal inspiration comes in. Paul first makes the negative statement, “Which things we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom.” That is, the words which the Bible writers used were not dictated by their human reason or wisdom.

**“ . . .the only way in which a person can know the
mind of God is to have God uncover
His thoughts to man. . . ”**

Then the apostle makes the positive statement, “but in words taught by the Spirit.” He says that the words which the Bible writers used were taught them by the Holy Spirit. That is, as they wrote the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit who had revealed the truth to them, now chooses the correct word out of the writer’s vocabulary, whose content of meaning will give to the believer the exact truth God desires him to have. This however does not imply mechanical dictation nor the effacement of the writer’s own personality. The Holy Spirit took the writers as He found them and used them infallibly. Luke’s Greek is the purest and most beautiful. He was a native Greek. Paul’s Greek is far more involved and difficult than John’s, for Paul had a university training, while John’s knowledge of Greek was that of the average man of the first century who knew Greek as his second language but never had any formal training in it. Professor John A. Scott in his excellent book, *We Would Know Jesus*, speaks of “the superb control of the Greek language” which Luke everywhere showed, and of the “hard and crabbed Greek of Paul as shown in Romans,” also of the flowing language of Paul’s speeches recorded in the Acts, which quality is not due to Paul’s delivery but Luke’s literary excellence.

However, whether it is the pure Greek of Luke, the difficult Greek of Paul, or the simple Greek of John, it is all correct as to grammar and syntax. The Holy Spirit observed the rules of Greek grammar as they existed in the Koine Greek of that time. And the wonder of it all is seen in the fact that John brings to his readers just as precious, just as deep truth,

in his simple Greek, as Paul does in his intricate constructions and involved sentences. God the Holy Spirit is above language. Thus we have in the original Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible manuscripts the very words that God taught the writers to use as they recorded the truth which they had received by revelation. This is what is meant by verbal inspiration.

Translation. *But just as it stands written: The things which eye did not see and ear did not hear, and which did not arise within the heart of man, as many things as God prepared for those that love Him. For, to us God uncovered them through the agency of His Spirit. For the Spirit explores all things, yes, the deep things of God. For who is there of men who knows the things of the (individual) man, unless it be the spirit of (that) man which is in him. Even so also the things of God no one knows, but the Spirit of God (knows the things of God). But as for us, not the spirit which animates the world did we receive, but the Spirit who proceeds from God, in order that we might know the things which by God have been freely given to us; which things we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, matching spiritual things with Spirit-taught words. But the man whose powers of apprehension are limited to the exercise of his reason rejects the things of God since they are foolishness to him. And he is powerless to know them, because they are investigated through the instrumentality of the Spirit. But the man equipped by the Spirit comes to an apprehension of all things, yet he himself is comprehended by no one. For who knows the Lord's mind, that he should instruct Him? But as for us, we have the mind of Christ." ²¹ (underlines added).*

The Construction Of The Bible

Knowing that God is in the ever eternal present, and we (mankind) are locked into a time zone, our approach and thinking when studying God's Word (as we have previously noted) should be in the knowledge of the following:

The present and final outcome of mankind was known by God even before the Book of Genesis was written. With this foreknowledge, God's Spirit chose, directed and anointed people to write down His Word. So from God's perspective, and according to His foreknowledge, the Bible (God's Plan of Redemption for mankind) has been constructed from the back (Book of Revelation) to the front (Book of Genesis). This explains why the Old Testament shows us many physical type-patterns of truths which apply to us today - because God placed them there to highlight the spiritual truths of Calvary. **We could also say that everything recorded in the Bible points to Calvary.** Indeed the Old Testament sacrifices, ceremonies and festivals are a shadow or a type-pattern of the reality of Christ's sacrifice and His finished work. The precious Blood of Jesus flowed backwards from the Cross to cleanse the sins of the Old Testament Saints as well as flowing forwards from the Cross to cleanse the sins of the New Testament Saints. Everything points to the Cross, God's pivotal point for mankind's redemption.

“. . .So from God’s perspective, and according to His foreknowledge, the Bible (God’s Plan of Redemption for mankind) has been constructed from the back (Book of Revelation) to the front (Book of Genesis). . .”

Remember too that the books of the Old Testament contain the principles of God which are for us to live by today, just as the books of the New Testament do. These principles and commandments are contained within the historical, prophetic, literary and apostolic writings of the entire Bible.

In New Testament times, Jesus revealed to the Pharisees that God was far more concerned with justice, compassion and humility than with outward ritual e.g. man-made religious ordinances and traditions, etc. The same was true in Old Testament times and is still true today - for there is a continuity expressed throughout the whole Bible regarding God’s commandments, principles and requirements. Therefore we should take time to study the Old Testament as well as the New, and not regard it, as some do, as either outdated or pertaining only to Israel. Indeed to go one step further, it is not possible to truly understand the New Testament unless we understand the Old.

God has endorsed and will continue to endorse and confirm His Word of Truth with His power, when people receive and act on His truths in faith. Indeed God our Creator has given this “Manual of Life” to mankind to live by, so we can have victory in every area of our lives.

HEBREWS 4:12 **For the Word of God is quick** (*alive*), **and powerful** (*active, energizing*), **and sharper than any twoedged sword** (*refers to the ability of the Word of God to “probe”*), **piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow** (*doesn’t mean the dividing asunder of soul from spirit or joints from marrow, but rather that the Word of God pierces the soul and the spirit, adequately proclaiming what man ought to be and can only be in Christ; as well, the Word of God portrays to us the Holy Spirit and His Power, and proclaims the fact that He Alone can “quicken our mortal bodies” [Romans. 8:11], which refers to giving us power to yield this physical body to that which is Righteous [Romans 6:12-13], and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (carries the idea of “sifting out and analyzing evidence”*). (E.S.B.)

Because the Bible is the inspired Word of God, it is “*quick and powerful,*” will show us the ways of truth and give us direction day by day. It is indeed our Manual of Life.

THE MANUAL OF LIFE

Understanding God's Word

Background Reading: Ephesians 1:17-18

Do not be disappointed when studying God's Word if you cannot, at first, fully understand all that you study. In fact your spirit needs to be educated and trained in spiritual matters, just as your body has been trained in physical skills - and this takes time.

Also just because a person reads the Word of God does not necessarily mean that his or her spirit will become educated. Understanding is required before this process can take place. A person could sit down and read a great deal of scientific material, for instance, but it would not necessarily mean that this person would understand what he or she was reading.

You too can read the Bible and not understand what you are reading. This is one reason the Lord has provided the Church with Teachers (Ephesians 4:11-12), so that His people can gain a clear understanding of the whole Word of God.

Also, spiritual matters cannot be fully understood from our natural reasoning alone (unrenewed mind), for God's Word is spiritually understood as revelation knowledge by the heart (spirit) of a man.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:14 But the natural man (natural thinking man) **receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned** (understood).

ISAIAH 28:10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little

This is why we need to continually meditate on God's Word, to give the Holy Spirit (our true Teacher) the opportunity to reveal His truths to us, little by little. In this way we can grow in knowledge, faith and wisdom.

“. . .Spiritual matters cannot be fully understood from our natural reasoning alone (unrenewed mind), for God's Word is spiritually understood as revelation knowledge by the heart (spirit) of a man. . .”

We have taken from Dake's Annotated Bible the following reference entitled as follows:

TWENTY PROOFS THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED:

“1. Its wonderful unity. Over 40 authors wrote 66 books in different lands and over a period of 1800 years.

Many never saw the writings of the others and yet there is no contradiction between any two of them. Collect any group of books by any other 40 men on any subject and see if they agree.

2. Its superiority to other books in its origin, formation, doctrines, principles, claims, moral tone, histories, prophecies, revelation, literature, present redemption and eternal benefits, and its general contents.

3. Its influence in the world. It has blessed millions in every generation, made the highest civilizations, and given man the highest hope and destiny.

4. The character and greatness of those who accept it. The wisest, most godly, and honest of men acknowledge it as God's Word. Only infidels and the ungodly reject it.

5. Man could not have written it if he would, and would not have written it if he could. No critic of Scripture has ever been able to improve or disprove it.

6. Good men must have written it. It condemns all sin and records the sins and faults of its writers as well as others. This, evil men would not do. Even good men would not do it unless inspired to do so to help others.

7. All man's present and eternal needs are met by the Bible. Redemption and promised benefits have been given to all who believed in all generations and this will always be so.

8. Its preservation through the ages. Whole kingdoms and religions have sought in vain to destroy it. It is still victor and indestructible.

9. The heavenly and eternal character of its contents proves it to be of God.

10. The response of the soul to it. The Bible fits the soul as a key to a lock.

11. Its infinite depths and lofty ideals. It is universal in its appeal, reasonable in its teachings, reliable in its promises, durable in its conflicts, everlasting in its usefulness, new and modern in its statements, indispensable to human civilization, indisputable in its authority, interesting in its histories, colorful in its biographies, accurate in its prophecies, individual in its messages, far reaching in its vision, complete in its laws, comprehensive in its knowledge, infinite in its detail, unselfish in its purpose, simple in its application, just in its demands, righteous in its judgements, clear in its application, and masterful in its wisdom.

12. Fulfilled prophecy. About 3,300 verses of prophecy have been fulfilled, predictions made hundreds and even thousands of years before their fulfillment. Not one detail has failed yet. About 2,908 verses are being fulfilled, or will yet be fulfilled.

13. Miracles. Hundreds are recorded in Scripture, and many happen daily among those who pray and claim Bible promises.

14. Its perfection. It is scientifically and historically correct. No one man has ever found the Bible at fault in any of its many hundreds of statements on history, astronomy, botany, geology, or any other branch of learning.

15. Its adaptability. It is always up to date on any subject. It fits the lives of all people of all ages and all lands.

16. Its spiritual and moral power. It meets perfectly every spiritual and moral need of man.

17. Its doctrines. They surpass all human principles in relationship, religion, culture, etc. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

18. Claims of the Bible itself. Over 3,800 times Bible writers claim God spoke what they wrote. The Bible itself claims to be the Word of God.

19. Secular history. Many pagan as well as Jewish and Christian writers confirm the facts of the Bible, quoting it as being genuine, authentic, and inspired of God.

20. *Its inexhaustible proofs.* It would take many volumes to deal fully with the many thousands of facts which confirm the Bible to be the Word of God. The book must be divine. If one will use it properly it will confirm itself to him as the inspired Word of God.”
22

“ . . . Over 40 authors wrote 66 books in different lands and over a period of 1800 years. Many never saw the writings of the others and yet there is no contradiction between any two of them. . . ”

The Importance Of Meditating On God’s Word

Background Reading: Psalm 1:1-3

Studying and meditating on the Word of God are both vital to a person’s growth in the Lord. We must first study the Word in order to gain an understanding of God’s promises and righteous standards. Then as we meditate upon the Word, and accept it wholeheartedly, it will be deposited into our hearts as revelation (heart) knowledge - as of course we open up to the Holy Spirit. (And we meditate upon God’s Word by considering it thoughtfully or thinking deeply upon it.)

We need to read and meditate on the Word of God daily in order to know and keep God’s principles alive and active within our minds and hearts. This needs to be a continual process, as the Book of Joshua tells us:

JOSHUA 1:8 This Book of the Law (God’s Word) shall not depart out of your mouth (speak about the Word all the time); **but you shall meditate therein day and night** (think about the Word all the time), **that you may observe** (be watchful) **to do** (act) **according to all that is written therein:** (and this is the promise) **for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success.**

Then when a particular situation or trial arises, we will know how the Lord wants us to deal with it - according to the logos Word. The test will be whether we apply the Word we have learned to that situation or circumstance which has presented itself, trusting also in Christ’s finished work at Calvary, with us in Him partaking of the Divine Nature in “*newness of life.*” Our reliance must always be on the Lord, for He tells us in His Word, “*without Me you can do nothing*” (John 15:5), nothing, that is, of any eternal value. Only by His grace at work in our lives can real change be made, and character developed. Then the glory for any good thing goes to Him, “*the Author and Finisher of our faith*” (Hebrews 12:2).

“ . . . The test will be whether we apply the Word we have learned to that situation or circumstance which has presented itself. . . ”

If we lack the spiritual fruits of love, joy, peace, strength, etc., in any area of our lives, we need to seek so that we may find and embrace His truths, for this means we are lacking that which is rightfully ours. We can know this because God's Word says that we have spiritual prosperity, love, joy, peace, inner strength, etc. Indeed all our needs are met in Christ Jesus as we meet the conditions set out in His Word, and rely on His grace.

PHILIPPIANS 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

To bring us to this position of reliance, however, we need to be fellowshiping with God and studying His Word, seeking the face of the Creator to do His will rather than His hands to obtain a blessing. In this we will be learning of Him and His ways and also discovering that all our needs are met in Christ. Throughout the Word there are promises which say we are healed, we have prosperity, we have peace and the power of God, through Jesus Christ, to meet the need. However, if we do not take the time to discover that these promises exist and then to embrace them for ourselves, they will not become a reality in our lives.

Just mentally acknowledging that the promises of God are real is only the first step. We then need to seek out the conditions and fulfill them in order for the promises to be manifested in our lives. Indeed, we may be thinking or acting wrongly in some areas, and not be aware of it. In either case, we will be preventing God from blessing us. Studying God's Word, however, and fellowshiping with Him will help us discover, with the help of the Holy Spirit, areas in our lives which need to be changed. Through these means, the Lord is able to speak to us, and reveal Himself to us. Then by His grace and the power of His Spirit, as we seek the Lord's will, we can be changed.

However, as we have said, let us not just seek the Word in regard to the promises of the Covenant. Let us seek fellowship with the Giver of the Covenant Himself, so that we may draw water from the deep wells of our salvation.

The Results Of Stagnation

Background Reading: Mark 4:3-19

Due to the Fall of man, there seems to have been a genetic deterioration which has affected not only man's physical body, but also, to some extent, man's memory (his ability to recall information).

There is a saying which states, "What you don't use you will lose." When we were at school, for example, we learned the various maths formulas of the day. However because most of us would not have applied them in our daily lives, we will have forgotten them simply through a lack of usage.

The same applies to the Word of God. We need to continually meditate on it and observe to do what it says, in the Lord's strength not ours, so that we will not lose what we have learned.

If we are not observing to do all, then we will, at some point, lose ground and slip backwards in our faith-walk. And “observing to do all” simply means that on a day to day basis, we are going to do all the Lord has told us to do, which is really going to allow the Holy Spirit to lead us and empower us. We need, in fact, to journey daily with the Holy Spirit, relying on His graces to grow in character into the likeness of Christ. Amen.

“ . . . We need, in fact, to journey daily with the Holy Spirit, relying on His graces to grow in character into the likeness of Christ. . . ”

In extreme cases, if people become stagnant and do not move on in God, life’s current will eventually push them onto the rocks and their ship will either rot or be broken, depending on the life they have led.

Because the enemy is always waiting for us to relax a little in regard to our faith so that he can attack us, we simply cannot afford to become complacent or lazy in our commitment to the Lord (1 Peter 5:8). There is an old saying which may have some merit - “If you are in the same position today as you were yesterday, then you are a backslider.” This means that our spiritual growth needs to be ongoing and progressive - so we should always be stretching ahead towards victory in Christ. Therefore:

HEBREWS 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight (all that hinders), and the sin which does so easily beset (entangles) us, and let us run with patience (perseverance) the race that is set before us (*the only “weight” God will allow in the running of this race is our taking up and bearing the Cross, and doing so constantly [Luke 9:23-24]: E.S.B.*)

And as Paul encourages his readers to strive spiritually, with holy ambition:

PHILIPPIANS 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended (attained complete Christlikeness): but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, reaching forth unto those things which are before (God’s will on a daily basis),

PHILIPPIANS 3:14 I press toward the mark (the holy standard by which we must live) for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (God’s will for one’s life which is to be an imitator of Christ).

It is sound advice never to follow a parked vehicle because a parked vehicle is going nowhere. The same could be said in regard to a “parked pastor” or a “parked church.” We need to be able to spiritually swim in the river of truth so we can progress towards the goal that God has set before us. It is very hard, however, to swim in only a few inches of water. Therefore we need to wade out into the deeper waters of truth with the help of a God-fearing, Holy-Spirit-led pastor and church that are moving forward in God’s will. A point to remember in all this is that we must not rely on our own strength to swim in this river. Rather we must believe for God to strengthen us and give us the ability to do so. This is only possible as we become humble and submit ourselves to the mighty hand of God. Then

He can lift us up and empower us to do His will (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6; Philippians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:4).

“ . . . We need to wade out into the deeper waters of truth with the help of a God-fearing, Holy-Spirit-led pastor and church that are moving forward in God’s will. . . ”

If people stagnate in their Christian walk, the devil and his agents will not give them priority, for such Christians can do him very little harm. The enemy will concentrate his efforts on those who are doing damage to his Kingdom. You see with little effort the enemy will be able to take the Word out of the hearts of stagnant Christians, and whatever heart-knowledge they had will be reduced to mere intellectual knowledge (Mark 4:25). He will then simply be able to attack and destroy them at his leisure, whether directly or indirectly - for it is Satan’s nature to kill, steal and destroy (John 10:10). And because such people are not renewing their minds, and are not taking ground by gaining empowerment through the Divine Nature, the enemy’s task is made easy.

However if Christians move on in Christ, they become more of a target for the enemy and should prepare themselves for his attacks. Indeed the Word of God tells us that if we live a Godly life in Christ, we will be persecuted (2 Timothy 3:12). This persecution can come in the form of words spoken against us, even by members of our own family (Luke 12:51-53). We should always remember, however, that we do not fight, in a spiritual sense, against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:12), but against spiritual forces of wickedness, and that God is bigger, stronger and mightier than Satan and all his plans. As we walk by faith in God’s Word, yielding to the Holy Spirit, no weapon of the enemy will prosper against us (Isaiah 54:17). We will then be living under God’s canopy of protection with Jesus fighting the enemy on our behalf (as we allow Him to do so).

Paul says in Philippians 2:12-13:

PHILIPPIANS 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation (growing towards maturity in Christ) with fear and trembling (this involves the process of ongoing sanctification).

PHILIPPIANS 2:13 For it is God Who works in you (through Divine enablement) both to will and to do of His good pleasure (to not only desire God’s will but also to do it).

Wuest comments on these verses as follows:

“ *“Wherefore,” goes back to 1:27 where Paul’s presence and absence are referred to as in this verse. In 1:27 we have Paul’s exhortation to the Philippian saints to conduct themselves as citizens of heaven should. Then the apostle singles out one of the obligations of a citizen of heaven, that of living in harmony and unity with his fellow-saints. In 2:1-4, he gives four reasons which in themselves are enablements, why they should live in unity*

together, and further develops the theme of Christian unity. In 2:5, he tells them that such unity is one of the constituent elements in the mind of Christ, and in 2:6-8, he shows how Christ Jesus exhibited the basic quality of unity, namely, humility and self-abnegation in His incarnation and vicarious death on the Cross, which act on His part was recognized by God the Father in that He exalted His Son as the Man Christ Jesus, placing Him in the place of highest honor in the universe.

Now, in 2:12, 13, the apostle exhorts these saints to make the humility and self-abnegation exhibited by the Lord Jesus, a fact in their own lives. He calls them, “my beloved ones,” the word being plural in the Greek. The distinctive word here for “love” refers to the love that God is, to the love produced in the heart by the Holy Spirit, a love that impels one to sacrifice one’s self for the benefit of others. This is the heavenly love with which the great apostle loved the Philippians. He commends them for their constant obedience. Then he exhorts them to work out their own salvation. Let us be clear first of all as to what this exhortation does not mean. It does not mean to work for one’s salvation, and for two reasons; first, Paul was writing to those who were already saved, and second, salvation is not a work of man for God, but a work of God for man, a work that was accomplished at the Cross. Neither does it mean to work out an inworked salvation. The idea of working out an inworked salvation is merely a play upon the English words “work out,” and has no support from the Greek.

“ . . .The Philippians are exhorted to carry their salvation to its ultimate conclusion, namely, Christlikeness . . . victory over sin and the living of a life pleasing to the Lord Jesus. . . ”

The words “work out” are the translation of a Greek word which means “to carry out to the goal, to carry to its ultimate conclusion.” We say, “The student worked out a problem in arithmetic.” That is, he carried the problem to its ultimate conclusion. This is the way it is used here. The Philippians are exhorted to carry their salvation to its ultimate conclusion, namely, Christlikeness. The salvation spoken of here is not justification, but sanctification, victory over sin and the living of a life pleasing to the Lord Jesus. They are to see to it that they make progress in their Christian lives. They are to do this with fear and trembling. This is not a slavish terror, but a wholesome caution. “This fear is self-distrust; it is tenderness of conscience; it is vigilance against temptation; it is the fear which inspiration opposes to high-mindedness in the admonition, ‘be not high-minded but fear.’ It is taking heed lest we fall; it is a constant apprehension of the deceitfulness of the heart, and of the insidiousness and power of inward corruption. It is the caution and circumspection which timidly shrinks from whatever would offend and dishonor God and the Saviour” (Vincent, quoting Wardlaw On Proverbs). This is human responsibility.

In verse thirteen we have divine enablement. The saints are to carry their salvation which God has given them and which thus belongs to them, to its ultimate goal, always remembering and depending upon the fact that it is God who is working in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure. The word “worketh” in the Greek means “to energize, to work effectively.” Our words “energy” and “energize” come from it. The words “to will” are the translation of a Greek word meaning “to desire,” and refer to a desire that

comes from one's emotions rather than from one's reason. It is this desire to do the good pleasure of God that is produced by divine energy in the heart of the saint as he definitely subjects himself to the Holy Spirit's ministry. It is God the Holy Spirit who energizes the saint, making him not only willing, but actively desirous of doing God's sweet will. But He does not merely leave the saint with the desire to do His will. He provides the necessary power to do it. This we have in the words "to do." The Greek construction implies habit, the habitual doing of God's will.

In verse twelve, we have human responsibility, in verse thirteen, divine enablement, a perfect balance which must be kept if the Christian life is to be lived at its best. It is not a "let go and let God" affair. It is a "take hold with God" business. It is a mutual co-operation with the Holy Spirit in an interest and an activity in the things of God. The saint must not merely rest in the Holy Spirit for victory over sin and the production of a holy life. He must in addition to this dependence upon the Spirit, say a positive NO to sin and exert himself to the doing of the right. Here we have that incomprehensible and mysterious interaction between the free will of man and the sovereign grace of God.

TRANSLATION: Wherefore, my beloved ones, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, carry to its ultimate conclusion your own salvation with fear and trembling, for God is the One who is constantly putting forth His power in you, both in the form of the constant activity of (your) being desirous of and the constant activity of (your) putting into operation His good pleasure." ²³

(underlines added)

***“. . . It is not a “let go and let God” affair.
It is a “take hold with God” business. . .”***

Knowledge Alone Is Useless

Background Reading: 2 Peter 1:4-8

There are many Christians who have an intellectual knowledge of God's laws and principles of victory and blessing. They may even understand the mechanics of how these laws operate. But while they seem to know a lot about the Word of God, they are unable to receive the promises of God. For example, many Christians may know that healing is available through Jesus. However, many are unable to personally appropriate the healing promises for themselves.

Intellectual knowledge alone of God's Word will achieve nothing spiritually and be of very little use physically. It is only revelation knowledge - knowledge revealed to our hearts by the Holy Spirit - which will enable us to appropriate the promises. Once Christians have revelation knowledge of God's Word in any area, there are two further elements needed to make this knowledge fruitful.

- 1. We need the wisdom of God** to know how to correctly apply the knowledge we have.

2. **We then need to act in faith** according to the knowledge and wisdom we have received, with the Divine Nature energizing our human nature.

So we need revelation knowledge and the wisdom of God to apply it - we then need to act on it in faith. In this way the scriptures can become a reality in our lives, and we can receive the promises of God.

2 CORINTHIANS 1:20 For all the promises of God in Him (Christ) are yes, and in Him Amen (are sure), unto the glory of God by us (as we allow God's graces to work in us).

Therefore:

HEBREWS 6:12 That you be not slothful (lazy and sluggish towards the things of the Lord), but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

God's laws of blessing and protection are set in place for the benefit of all mankind. It is up to each one of us to seek out and discover what is needed so that we may walk in the victory which God's laws promise.

The promises are, however, not meant to be the most important aspect of our lives. Rather, the prosperity to be most valued is the journey along the way which enriches one's soul. While certainly healing of the body is needed, the journey to that place of healing can often provide a far greater blessing as our relationship with the Lord is strengthened and deepened. Through the journey we can work out our weaknesses, discover the mind of God on many things, pray, laugh and cry. We can also develop a deep gratitude for God - His love, mercy and grace.

“. . . While certainly healing of the body is needed, the journey to that place of healing can often provide a far greater blessing as our relationship with the Lord is strengthened and deepened. . . ”

We must progress in faith's journey, working out our own salvation not in our strength but in the strength of the Holy Spirit Who dwells within us. Again, Kenneth Wuest explains it as follows:

WORKING OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION

“Before attempting to explain this passage (Philippians 2:12-13), we must be clear as to what it does not teach. There is no idea here of an unsaved person doing good works to earn salvation, and for two reasons, first, because those addressed were already saved, and second, because the Bible is clear in its teaching that “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us” (Titus 3:5). Again, the passage does not mean that a Christian should work out an inworked salvation. There is no such idea in the Greek.

The English translation is good, if one uses the words “work out” as one does when referring to the working out of a problem in mathematics, that is, carrying it to its ultimate goal or conclusion. The Greek word here means just this.

The words “your own salvation,” are to be taken in their context. The working out of the Philippians’ salvation was affected in some way by the presence of Paul with them and his absence from them. When Paul was with them, his teaching instructed them, his example inspired them, his encouragement urged them on in their growth in grace. Now in his absence they were thrown upon their own initiative. They must learn to paddle their own canoe. Thus Paul sets before them their human responsibility in their growth in grace, for sanctification is in the apostle’s mind. They have their justification. Their glorification will be theirs in eternity. Their growth in Christlikeness is the salvation concerning which Paul is speaking. Thus, the saints are exhorted to carry their growth in grace to its ultimate goal, Christlikeness. I John 3:2 speaks of the saint’s future conformation to the image of Christ, and (3:3) says, “And every man that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself even as he is pure.”

The salvation spoken of in verse twelve is defined for us in verse thirteen, namely, the definite act of willing to do God’s good pleasure and the doing of it. That is the saint’s responsibility from the human standpoint. But the saint is not left without resources with which to do both, for God the Holy Spirit indwelling him produces in him both the willingness and the power to do His will. The saint avails himself of both of these by fulfilling the requirements laid down by our Lord in John 7:37, 38, namely, a thirst or desire for the fullness of the Spirit, and a trust in the Lord Jesus for that fullness In verse twelve we have human responsibility, and in verse thirteen, divine enablement.” ²⁴

(underlines added)

Light Exposes Darkness

Background Reading: 1 John 1:5-7

The truth is Light and when allowed to shine in a person’s life, this Light will expose and dispose of darkness (bondage). But darkness will only be expelled in the areas in which this spiritual Light is allowed to shine. This will take yieldedness to God’s will, not ours. Note too that God’s spiritual Light is a part of His essence, His presence. It is not just light as we perceive a lighted room. Spiritual Light provides the power to bring change and to deliver those in the bondage of ignorance and the darkness of deception.

“ . . . God’s spiritual Light is a part of His essence, His presence. It . . . provides the power to bring change and to deliver those in the bondage of ignorance and the darkness of deception. . . ”

Christians will continue to have areas of spiritual darkness in their lives until they allow the Light of God’s Word to enter every area. To use a natural illustration, when we turn on a light in a darkened room, all darkness leaves as the light shines. Then when the light is

switched off, the darkness returns. So too in the spiritual realm, when we allow God's truth (His Light) to shine in an area of our lives, the darkness in that area has to leave. As we have said, this will only take place as we yield to the Holy Spirit, laying down our thinking and desires in order to embrace His thinking and desires. Jesus said:

JOHN 12:46 "I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believes on Me (and My Word) should (will) not abide in darkness (for Christians this relates to the areas in which they believe)."

JOHN 12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, "Yet a little while is the Light with you. Walk while you have the Light, lest darkness come upon you: for he who walks in darkness knows not where he goes."

JOHN 12:36 While you have Light (Jesus Himself is the Light), believe in the Light (*make Christ the central focus of your life and living: E.S.B.*), that you may be the children of Light"

JOHN 3:21 But he who does truth (lives by the truth) comes to the Light, that his deeds may be made manifest (clearly revealed), that they are wrought in God (performed in dependence on Him). (Note that one who lives according to the truth does not fear, hate or shun the Light but comes willingly to the Light: John 3:19-20)

As we allow truth to enter our hearts through meditating on the Word of God and fellowshiping with our Father, we are allowing soul-enriching Light into our lives. We not only need the written Word, we also need to know the Author of that Word, for it is by and through Him that all truth, and hence all Light, comes. When Light is allowed to shine, the darkness has to depart - for darkness cannot enter a lighted room and darkness cannot return where Light continues to shine. So let us be truth-centred and focused on God's Word. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to gently reveal His truths to us as we seek to live in the Light. Let us then embrace that which is revealed so that we can become one with the Lord in these areas of truth revealed.

“. . .As we allow truth to enter our hearts through meditating on the Word of God and fellowshiping with our Father, we are allowing soul-enriching Light into our lives. . .”

When the Light enters an area of our lives, our eyes are opened. We can then see clearly in that area for the darkness has been removed.

JOHN 8:12 . . . I am the Light of the world (*He is the Light of the World, because He is the Source of its Life*): he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life (*in effect, says that all who do not follow Jesus, walk in darkness*). (E.S.B.)

Jesus thus identifies Himself as the Source of spiritual Light, for without God and His presence, the world is in darkness, in the bondage of sin and spiritual death. The Light of God is in Jesus. We who are in Jesus are in this Holy Light also, having been spiritually

cleansed of the darkness in our spirit. We then need the truths of God's Word so that our minds can be renewed and other areas of darkness removed from our lives - as we allow the Light to enter.

PSALM 119:105 **Your Word** (Oh Lord) **is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path** (showing me the way I should go).

Scripture tells us if we are ignorant of truth, we are walking in darkness and are not aware of where we are going. We need the Light of truth shining in every area of our lives so we can be vessels of Light which radiate God's love to the world.

MATTHEW 5:14 **You are the light of the world** (Christians are to reflect the light that comes from Christ). **A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid** (we are not to hide that light but to show it forth - true light, in fact, will not be hidden).

MATTHEW 5:16 **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works** (of faith - your living witness, true faith will produce works of righteousness: James 2:17-20), **and glorify your Father Who is in heaven** (works led and empowered by the Holy Spirit will bring glory to God; other works glorify man and are not what is being referred to here: 1 Corinthians 3:12-13).

Above all things let us therefore seek the Giver of this Light, and let us then journey with Him and no other. This is how our relationship is meant to develop. But be aware that He also dwells with other Believers, and at times He speaks to us not only in the quiet of the night, but through other faith-filled Christians. This is one reason why the Word tells us not to forsake fellowship with others in the Lord:

HEBREWS 10:25 **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is** (*it is important that Believers assemble together, however the meeting might be conducted: E.S.B.*); **but exhorting one another** (encouraging and lifting one another up in the faith); **and so much the more, as you see the day** (of the Rapture) **approaching.**

Therefore we can fellowship with God by ourselves or with others, and as we do so, we can allow His Light and His presence to shine through and give us both comfort and direction.

“. . .Above all things let us therefore seek the Giver of this Light, and let us then journey with Him and no other. . .”

Approaching God's Word

Background Reading: Matthew 7:7-11

God's Word has the answer to every problem we will ever face, for it leads us into all truth. Indeed He is sufficient in every situation. But we need to seek Him and His Word

with a sincere and honest heart, really desiring to know the truth. We also need to rid ourselves of our biased attitudes and preconceived ideas in order to clearly understand what God is saying.

Firstly we need to separate ourselves, through true repentance, from all sin - for we are a holy people unto God, set aside for His use and His purposes. As we seek His Word diligently, His truths will be revealed to us and written on our hearts. Then as we act on it, the implanted word will produce the salvation of our souls (minds) at a conditional level.

JAMES 1:21 Wherefore (Christians) **lay apart all filthiness** (*refers to moral impurity: E.S.B.*) **and superfluity of naughtiness** (*increased evil to which moral impurity will lead . . . : E.S.B.*), **and receive with meekness** (seek, find and embrace) **the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls** (minds: Romans 12:2).

Some people would say, however, “I thought my soul was already saved.” This is where we need to take note of the context in which the scripture was written. First of all, the Book of James was written to Christians and so this scripture is not referring to the salvation of the spirit. When people are regenerated (born again), their spirits are saved. The soul (mind), however, is not saved (conditionally) at this point and that is why God commands us to renew our minds (Romans 12:2). Our souls (minds) are saved (renewed) by receiving God’s Word into our hearts and acting upon it in faith. In this way we begin to think as God thinks, and to harmonize the desires of our soul and spirit.

Yes - positionally we are saved, but our condition does not always match our position. Ongoing daily sanctification is needed in order for our condition on an experiential level to match our position of righteousness. This takes place as we renew our minds and act on that renewal. The grace of God is needed to bring such righteous fruit into existence at an experiential level on a daily basis. How do we receive this grace needed for the daily journey of faith? First we must take up our cross, and yield to the Holy Spirit Who then energizes our human nature with the energies of His Divine Nature. The empowerment of the Divine Nature will give us that which we need to run the race strong, and complete life’s most important journey.

“. . .Ongoing daily sanctification is needed in order for our condition on an experiential level to match our position of righteousness. . .”

The only way we can allow the Spirit of God to implant His Word in our hearts is by us submitting to it with all meekness. Then we need to keep it alive in our hearts by continually watering it through meditating and acting upon it. James goes on to say:

JAMES 1:22 . . . be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

JAMES 1:23 For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer (one who listens to the Word but does not obey it), **he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass** (mirror):

JAMES 1:24 For he behold himself, and goes his way (*which is not God's way*), and straightway forgets what manner of man he was. (*An evaluation of ourselves is necessary. However, it is God Alone Who knows the heart which the Word of God, properly presented, reveals.*) (E.S.B.)

Therefore we should not only study the Word of God, we must remember to do what it says. For instance, we need to be yielding to the Holy Spirit, believing the old man to be dead, and also reckoning that we have been raised with Christ in newness of life, making us partakers of the Divine Nature.

The Divine Nature gives us both the desire and the power to do God's will, through us yielding to the Holy Spirit. How is this possible? Our will is the trigger that gives permission for the Lord's grace to work through us as we yield to Him. We are then given holy desire and empowerment through the Divine Nature to live in the will of God. This is how our character can be changed and spiritual maturity developed in our lives. We need to take the Word of God and act on it with commitment and a holy desire, once again this being birthed in God's grace as we yield to Him and flow with Him.

To use a natural example, if someone asked us how many freckles we had on our face, most of us would say, "I don't know." We would probably have looked in the mirror this morning but we would not have purposed to count how many freckles we had. To know how many freckles we have we would need to deliberately count them.

We need to approach God's Word with this kind of intensity. We need to purpose in our hearts to really look into it, desiring to be able to believe and reckon it to our account. If we approach God with this attitude, He gives us a promise:

JAMES 1:25 But whoso looks into the perfect Law of Liberty (*defines the whole body of revealed truth concerning the Word of God*), and continues therein (*there must be a continuous abiding in the Word*), **he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.** (*Obeying the Word of God brings great Blessing . . .*) (E.S.B.)

We cannot afford to merely browse through the Word to see what God has for us today. Neither can we afford to pick and choose, saying, "I won't have any of that, but I'll have some of this." God does not work this way. We need to be open to receive all He has for us by purposing in our hearts to live in "*the fear of the Lord*" which, the scriptures tell us, is "*the beginning of wisdom*" (Proverbs 9:10).

We can define "*the fear of the Lord*" as "reverencing God unto obedience" and this means of course "reverencing God's Word of truth unto obedience." Remember that the Word tells us that to love God is to keep His commands (John 14:21; 1 John 5:3). So the proof of our love for God will be whether we obey what He says.

***“ . . . Our will is the trigger that gives permission
for the Lord's grace to work through us
as we yield to Him. . . ”***

If we have the will, He has the power. He wants to give to us, but only through the Divine Nature can our character be developed to become more Christlike. Yes, so that we

can love instead of hate, so that we won't respond to persecution with anger or to weakness with intolerance. We can be changed and become a different person - but only as we yield every area of our life to the Holy Spirit and lay down our life in His service.

Reverencing God's Word of truth unto obedience produces victory and so salvation, first of spirit, then soul and body. Indeed the Word of God is life to all those who seek it and act upon it with a diligent and sincere heart.

PROVERBS 4:20 My son, attend to my words (this equates to the Word of God); **incline your ear unto my sayings.**

PROVERBS 4:21 Let them not depart from your eyes (read the Word daily); **keep them in the midst of your heart** (digest the Word so that it becomes a part of you).

PROVERBS 4:22 For they are life unto those who find them, and health to all their flesh (what God says is life and health).

So when we look into the Word of God, we need to come with the attitude of wanting to know everything we can, spoonful by spoonful, precept upon precept, knowledge added to knowledge.

Christians do not have a sin problem so much as a yielding problem, a receiving problem - for Christ rose from the dead and defeated Satan, sin and the sin nature. The biggest problem in a Christian's life is usually the reflection he sees in the mirror. We are delivered from hell at salvation. But we also need to be delivered from self - self-interest, self-promotion, self-desire etc. etc., and this is the focus and work of ongoing sanctification.

“ . . . We can be changed and become a different person - but only as we yield every area of our life to the Holy Spirit and lay down our life in His service. . . ”

It is impossible to know all that God knows and we will never know it all. But God promises that He will give us what we need when it is needed, as we fulfill the conditions and journey with Him. Whatever is needed God will provide. For example, if you ask the Father for bread, will He give you a stone? Of course not. God will give you bread, if that is what is needed. However, when you come to God to ask Him for the bread, you must believe and trust that He will give it to you because He said He would (Matthew 7:7-11). This is because faith is heaven's currency (Hebrews 11:6).

Initially, in a Christian's early faith-walk, God's hand of grace seems at times, in certain areas, abundantly available to assist them. If they trust, God will do for them what they are not yet able to do for themselves. Then as we grow, God expects more from us. This is why scripture tells us that “ . . . *unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required . . .*” (Luke 12:48).

As a child grows and matures, more is required and expected of that child. Similarly, the longer we are Christians, the more God requires of us - for He wants us to eventually walk by faith in every area of our lives and be vessels fit for our Master's use (2 Timothy 2:20-21).

It should be our desire as Christians to serve God by knowing His will through first studying His Word. Remember that it took the Blood of Jesus to prove this Word to us. Therefore we should not leave it on the book shelf. Instead, let us reverence the Word of God, and move forward without any hesitation to seek the Lord's will and to serve Him so as to be living witnesses of His love throughout the earth. This will happen as we have ongoing fellowship with our Heavenly Father and believe and reckon to our account that which is written in God's Word of deliverance, protection and provision.

May you have the victory in Christ.

TIME LIMIT - Due on or before.....

*This time limit is based on a minimum of hours of study per week.
You should allow as a general guideline, hours to answer the questions.*

TOTAL ALLOWANCE hours.

If you are having problems completing this study within these guidelines, you may need to seek assistance from those in charge of distribution.

STUDY QUESTIONS

The following questions are designed to assess how much you have understood and retained from your studies.

Answer and number all questions on line-ruled paper, giving two or three scriptures with each answer whenever possible. Also give an explanation, whenever possible, of how you arrived at your answer.

Answer these questions according to the instructions given regarding the grade you have chosen to work at, i.e. either Intermediate Grade or Ordinary Grade.

If you do not understand a particular question, contact those responsible for distribution.

*For ease of correction **write the actual question down on your answer sheet before answering each question, and please print all answers to the questions.***

Note: If you do not agree with any particular viewpoint expressed in the studies and you have another viewpoint, answer questions relating to this area in the following manner:

The view that the studies teach is

*But I believe
(and state the reasons why you do so)*

Note: Remember the time limit and complete the study and your answers within the allotted period.

If you are studying at Intermediate Grade, you will later be eligible to do the Advanced Questions if you so desire. You will not be able to use your study books or notes to help you answer these questions. In fact all you will be able to use are Bibles and Concordances. So prepare for this by studying properly and answering these questions according to the instructions given.

(See letters concerning how to study.)

FALL AND REDEMPTION OF MAN

Study Questions

1. What are the three attributes of God which distinguish Him from His creation?
2. Describe briefly the Holy Trinity and how it functions.
3. What can be said about the identity of Emmanuel?
4. Did Christ pre-exist before He came in human form to the earth, and how can we know the answer to this question?
5. God the Word could never be diminished. He was in fact increased. How?
6. Why is God now free to bestow His mercy on us?
7. In whose image was man created, what name did God give to the first man and where did God place him?
8. What commandment did God give to man in this place and what did God mean when He said, "*you shall surely die*" (Genesis 2:17)?
9. What were the full consequences of Adam's sin?
10. Before the Fall, what natures did man possess and have access to, and after the Fall how was this situation changed?
11. Explain both the significance and the weakness of the conscience in man.
12. Why is it important for us to have a correct Biblical understanding of the Fall?
13. When Adam disobeyed God, what legal position did he give to the devil?
14. Why did God send man out of the Garden of Eden, and what could have happened if God had not done this?
- 15 (a) What must happen before the spirit-man (the real you) can live in God's presence after you die?

(b) Could we, as Christians, live physically in God's presence while we were still dwelling in our earthly (physical) bodies? Explain your answer.
16. What is the glorified body and when will we receive it?
17. What are the attributes of the glorified body, and what will we be able to do with it? Refer in your answer to Jesus' example.

18. According to the particular view expounded in this study, why are Satan and the evil angels irredeemable?
- 19 (a) According to the particular view given in the study, what does “eating of the Tree of Life” mean, and why didn’t God command Adam not to eat of the Tree of Life before he sinned?
 - (b) What happens to those who eat of the Tree of Life with sin in their hearts? Give a prime example of this.
20. What is the difference, spiritually speaking, between fallen man and the fallen angels?
- 21 (a) What causes man to be in darkness, and what causes man to remain in darkness?
 - (b) What does this darkness produce?
22. Explain this statement as it relates to God’s work with man: “The proper balance of mercy and justice brings order out of chaos.”
23. What is “the wrath of God,” and how is it an expression of His holy love?
24. On whom does the wrath of God remain?
25. The Word tells us that men reject the Light that would set them free. Why do they do this?
26. Who pays the price for the sin of those who reject the Saviour and the Cross?
27. What and where is “*the second death*” and who will experience this?
28. What was God’s plan to deal with His righteous wrath?
29. Why is the subject of God’s judgement very rarely heard in modern-day preaching?
30. When very little is preached that would bring about any real conviction of sin, what is the result?
31. What is the Lamb’s Book of Life, how do we know that names can be blotted out of it and what does this tell us?
32. What is the significance of the Blood of Christ to God’s people?
33. What is the only way Divine justice and Divine anger are satisfied?
34. What does the false doctrine of predestination claim, and what is wrong with this teaching?

- 35 (a) In the light of the general framework of scripture, how must words like “elect,” “predestined,” etc. be interpreted?
- (b) What is it that is predetermined?
36. Who condemns the sinner and who is mankind’s judge?
- 37 (a) Why is man without excuse to believe there is a Creator?
- (b) What has God given man to help him come to a position of belief?
38. What is man responsible for doing in relation to the existence of a Creator, and how must this be done?
39. If a man has not heard the Gospel preached, will allowance be made for his sin and position of spiritual death? Why?
40. What is “the Rapture” and what can we see from scripture will actually take place at this event?
- 41 (a) What will take place at the Judgement Seat of Christ?
- (b) For what kinds of works will we be rewarded, and what kinds of works will receive no reward? How does the Bible define these works?
42. Who owns the earth and what are the boundaries of the lease which God has given to man?
43. What example is found in God’s economic plan for Israel which reminds us of the earth’s owner and man’s tenancy rights?
44. The Lord’s chosen people were to be given the Promised Land as an eternal inheritance. State briefly what happened in regard to this promise, what has recently taken place and what will take place in the future.
45. What new tenancy rights has the Cross of Calvary given to man?
46. What are some of the factors which work together to produce wars, famines, droughts etc.?
47. When and why has God intervened in a sovereign way in earth’s affairs, and what other factors may be involved in this kind of intervention?
48. What is one view of the possible time-frame of man’s lease?

49. In relation to the continuation of evil, why is God limited by His own moral character and law?
50. Man still possesses a free will and can turn to God if he chooses. What is the effect of spiritual blindness in this case?
51. By what means did God assist man, still a free-willed agent, to come out from under the curse?
52. To terminate Satan's rights to any other particular area of one's life, what must one do?
- 53 (a) What gives God legal and moral justification to release His power against the enemy?
 (b) What does this mean for the Body of Christ?
54. What are the conditions by which we, through prayer, give God permission to help us, to intervene on our behalf?
55. What is required for a legal will or testament to come into force and how does this principle apply to us as Christians?
56. In Old Testament times, how was God's Covenant brought into effect, and what was this Covenant called?
57. How and when did God's Covenant of Redemption come into force?
58. Why couldn't the sacrificing of animals take away sin, and what in fact did the sacrificing of animals achieve for God's people?
59. In Old Testament times, why did God use animals rather than people as atoning sacrifices?
60. Why was Jesus' Blood sinless?
61. Under the New Covenant, what was the price required to satisfy perfect justice?
62. Why was Jesus' shed Blood able to pay the price for the redemption of all mankind?
63. Using Romans 5:19, compare the first Adam and the second Adam.
64. When Adam sinned, what rights did God lose to man and what rights did man lose to God?
- 65 (a) What did the kinsman-redeemer do in Old Testament times?

- (b) How did Jesus qualify as our Kinsman-Redeemer, and as such, what did He do?
66. To what or to whom was our ransom payment made?
- 67 (a) On what is man's value based?
- (b) Who took the first step towards ending the enmity between God and man, and how does man end the enmity between God and himself?
68. Could you have done a better job than Adam? Explain your answer.
- 69 (a) What does 2 Corinthians 5:21 mean, in relation to sin and Jesus?
- (b) What then is the basis of the Great Exchange?
70. Is Jesus the man alive today and what evidence exists to prove this?
71. All the world is legally pardoned. What does this mean, and what more is needed for this pardon to become effective?
72. What are the two commandments that Jesus said fulfill all the Law?
73. What is the highest law of all and how do we live in it?
74. By what means are we given the power and grace to obey God's laws?
75. Is there any further opportunity to repent after we leave this earth? Use scripture to prove your answer.
76. What is sin and what are the wages of sin - to the saved and the unsaved?
77. How do we frustrate the grace of God, and what will be the result when we do this?
78. Define the sin nature and explain its origins.
79. Without God's influence, what happens to man's thinking and behaviour?
80. How was man created to function at optimum capacity?
81. What is the Divine Nature, when and why is it implanted in man and how is its power made available to us?
82. What happened to us at the Cross of Calvary, and how important to us is a daily visit to the Cross?
83. What is the "monkey wrench" of the Christian life, and how is Paul's problem in Romans 7:15 to be addressed?

84. What was Calvary's vicarious sacrifice?
85. What was the Mercy Seat and why was it called so?
86. Who is the author of the Bible, what does it contain, and how was it written?
87. Explain what the Greek term "theopneustos" (literally "God-breathed") as found in 2 Timothy 3:16 means, and how this process took place.
88. In what languages were the Old and New Testaments originally written, how are the books in each Testament arranged, and how many books are found in each Testament?
89. What does the Bible tell us, is the purpose of all scripture?
90. Why may we see human qualities displayed through the writings of the Bible?
91. Why can't unsaved man understand spiritual truth?
92. Why are there physical type-patterns in the Old Testament which match real spiritual truths today?
93. Why should we study the Old Testament as well as the New?
94. What does God use to back up His Word of Truth, and what must happen before God can do so?
- 95 (a) Will just reading the Word of God necessarily educate your spirit? If not, what more is needed?
 (b) Who do we need to help us in this process?
96. List three of Dake's proofs that the Bible is inspired.
97. When a trial arises, what is the real test?
98. Explain what Jesus meant by the statement, "*without Me you can do nothing*" (John 15:5), and state how this becomes a reality in our lives.
99. As we study the Word of God, apart from seeking the promises of God, what else should we be doing and why?
- 100(a) Due to the Fall of mankind, what other part of man's make-up was apparently affected, along with his physical body?
 (b) What does this mean for us as Christians?

101. What does “observing to do all” really mean? Give an example of how we would make this a way of life.
102. What are the dangers of stagnation, and how do we as Christians avoid this problem?
103. When Christians are moving forward in Christ, what should they prepare themselves for, and what does the Word of God tell us about this?
104. As we walk by faith in God’s Word, what are we living under, and what is Jesus able to do on our behalf?
- 105(a) Explain what Paul was meaning concerning the responsibility of man in Philippians 2:12.
 - (b) What is the nature of the Divine balance revealed in Philippians 2:12-13, and what is the goal?
106. Once Christians have revelation knowledge of God’s Word in any area, what are the two other elements needed to make this knowledge fruitful?
107. “The promises of God are not meant to be the most important aspect of our lives.” If not, what is?
108. In spiritual terms, what is Light, what is darkness, and how is truth related to Light?
109. How is darkness exposed and disposed of in our lives?
110. How does Jesus identify Himself in terms of Light, and what does this say in regard to our position in terms of spiritual Light and darkness?
111. What can the implanted Word produce in our lives?
112. How do we keep God’s Word alive in our hearts?
113. What is the trigger by which the human nature can receive the energies of the Divine Nature, and what is the process by which our character is changed and maturity developed?
114. What does God promise in James 1:25, and what are the conditions for receiving this promise?
115. What is “*the fear of the Lord,*” and what does this mean in relation to the Word of God?
116. What does the development of our character mean in practical terms?

117. What is usually the greatest problem in a Christian's life?
118. What does "to whom much is given, from him much will be required" (Luke 12:48b) mean in terms of our walk with the Lord?
119. At what grade did you study this booklet and answer the questions, Ordinary Grade or Intermediate Grade?
120. Do you wish to commit yourself to studying at 7 hours a week or 4 hours a week in regard to your next study?

Note: Please send \$..... with these answers for your next study.

Note: Under certain circumstances, you may not feel you can commit 7 hours a week to the next study. You can then opt to study at 4 hours a week. The time limits will be adjusted accordingly. Should your situation change, you can increase your time to 7 hours a week - just notify the college or those in charge of distribution.

WE BELIEVE:

1. The Bible is the inspired, infallible and authoritative written Word of God.
2. There is one true triune God, eternally co-existent in three persons Who form the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit. These three dwell together in perfect unity, forming one heavenly government called God, and each of the three divine persons we recognize to be God.
3. God the Word stripped Himself of His rightful godly privileges and became flesh, a human being called Jesus Christ. Nevertheless He remained God the Word, being both truly God and truly man.
4. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of a virgin. He was crucified, buried, and then raised from the dead by the power of God. He now sits at the right hand of the Father, and is the only Mediator between God and man.
5. In the spiritually lost condition of men - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (are deprived of God's saving presence).
6. Salvation is found in no one else except Jesus, and there is no other name under heaven which is given to men whereby mankind can be saved.
7. In the essential need of the new birth by faith in Jesus Christ. The only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Christ.
8. Spiritual regeneration (the new birth) is brought about by making Jesus Christ Lord and Saviour, and by believing that Jesus' precious shed blood was the price needed to redeem man from sin.
9. In the Person and work of the Holy Spirit with His gifts and fruit abiding in the Church.
10. In the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues, as the Spirit gives utterance.
11. That believers should be water-baptized, as the Lord commands, by full immersion, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
12. That divine healing is provided in the New Covenant through Jesus Christ, by applying faith to God's Word of promise.
13. In the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit by Whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a holy life.
14. Jesus Himself shall descend from heaven to resurrect the righteous dead and to catch away the living saints to meet with Him in the air. This event is known as the Rapture of the Church.
15. In the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth along with His glorified saints. This event will take place after the Rapture (the snatching away).
16. That all who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour will enjoy everlasting life with Him.
17. That all who do not accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour will spend eternity in everlasting torment in the lake of fire, along with Satan and his forces of evil.

- 1 Israel My Glory: Vol.55 Issue 4.
- 2 S.B.C., John, Vol.10, pg.229.
- 3 Wuest K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Golden Nuggets From The Greek New Testament, pg.82.
- 4 Smith's Bible Dictionary.
- 5 Wood D.R.W., New Bible Dictionary, pg.360.
- 6 Wuest K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Great Truths To Live By, pg.149.
- 7 Hayford, J. W., Hayford's Bible Handbook.
- 8 A.W. Tozer
- 9 Wuest K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament.
- 10 Achtemeier, P. J., Harper's Bible Dictionary.
- 11 S.B.C., II Corinthians, Vol. 14, pages 232-233.
- 12 Cottrell, J., Romans, Vol.1.
- 13 S.B.C., Romans, pg.31.
- 14 Dr.Bernard Rossier, A Study Through The Book Of Romans, Vol.4, pg.229.
- 15 Dake's Annotated Reference Bible, pg.172.
- 16 Wuest K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Golden Nuggets From The Greek New Testament, pg.63.
- 17 Wuest K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Romans 3:24-26.
- 18 Wuest K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Hebrews 9:5.
- 19 S.B.C., Vol.20, 1 Timothy - Philemon, pgs. 466-468.
- 20 S.B.C., Vol.21, Hebrews pg. v1,
- 21 Wuest, K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, 1 Corinthians 2:9-16.
- 22 Dake F.J., Dake's Annotated Reference Bible, pg.241 of the New Testament.
- 23 Wuest K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Philippians 2:12,13.
- 24 Wuest K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Wuest's Golden Nuggets From The Greek New Testament, pg. 69.