

**The  
New  
Covenant, a  
Biblical Truth**

**By Will Smee  
© March 9, 2017  
Revised June 8, 2019**

Introduction .....	5
The Doctrine of Covenants .....	9
The Order of the Covenants .....	11
The Old Covenant of the Law.....	20
The Ten Commandments.....	20
The Judgments.....	21
The Ceremonial Law and the Law of the Priesthood .....	24
The Law of the Priesthood .....	24
The Laws of Sacrifice.....	25
The Atonement.....	26
The Purpose of the Old Covenant.....	29
The Promise of a Redeemer and a Savior .....	30
The Centrality of the Word of God .....	35
Ritual versus Reality.....	36
Transition from the Old to the New Covenant .....	38
The Kingdom of God and of Heaven .....	39
The Purpose of Jesus' Ministry .....	41
Jesus' Teaching in the Gospels.....	42
A New Way .....	47
How to Be Perfect.....	52
The Accomplishments of Jesus' Death on the Cross.....	54
1. The Righteous Requirements of the Law Have Been Met.....	54
2. The New Covenant Has Been Inaugurated.....	56
3. A Propitiation for Sin Has Been Made.....	57
4. The Way into Heaven Has Been Made Known .....	58
5. The Curse of the Law Has Been Lifted .....	61
6. The Priesthood Has Been Changed .....	64
7. An Advocate with the Father Has Been Provided.....	69
8. Our Justification Has Been Made Possible .....	70
9. Our Sanctification Has Been Made Possible.....	72
10. Our Adoption Has Been Made Possible.....	74
11. Our Glorification Has Been Made Possible.....	75
12. The Redemption of Mankind Has Been Accomplished.....	75
13. The Devil's Power Has Been Destroyed.....	77

The Doorway into the New Covenant.....	78
The New Man.....	79
The Old Man .....	80
The Washing of Regeneration .....	82
The New Covenant – a New and Living Way .....	87
A New Commandment .....	87
The Two Ordinances .....	89
The Place of the Law in the New Covenant .....	91
The Struggle in the Early Church.....	92
What Is Sin? .....	93
More Struggle in the Early Church.....	93
The Law of Liberty.....	95
Why the Law? .....	96
How to Deal with Sin in the New Covenant.....	98
Works in the New Covenant .....	100
Things to Remember in the New Covenant.....	103
How to Please Him in the New Covenant.....	104
Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus .....	106
Continue in the Word .....	107
Ritual Versus Reality .....	107
The Four Rests of the Believer .....	109
The Rest of Salvation .....	109
The Rest of Service.....	111
The Rest of the Inheritance .....	112
The Rest of Perfection .....	113
God’s Plan and Purpose .....	114
The Church.....	114
The Head of the Church .....	116
The Individuality of Believers.....	116
Ministry Gifts .....	119
The Empowering in the New Covenant .....	119
Our Ministry.....	121
The Difference Between Ministries Gifts, Spiritual Gifts, and the Fruit of the Spirit.....	121
Apostolic Vision .....	123

Why Do Churches Reject the Ministry of the Apostle .....	124
The Place of the Apostle .....	128
The Ministry of the Prophet.....	133
The Ministry of the Teacher.....	134
The Ministry of the Evangelist .....	135
The Ministry of the Pastor .....	136
Sign Gift Ministries.....	137
The Ministry of Exhortation .....	138
The Ministry of Giving.....	138
The Ministry of Shewing of Mercy .....	138
The Bishops and Deacons .....	139
How Tradition Has Affected Us.....	145
The Easter Tradition.....	146
The Real Easter .....	147
The Feasts .....	148
Christ Our Passover.....	153
Jesus to Be Raised the Third Day .....	153
The Preparation Day .....	155
The Gospel Accounts .....	156
The Supper .....	157
After Supper.....	158
Peter's Denial Predicted .....	159
In the Garden .....	160
Jesus' Betrayal .....	161
The Fulfillment of Peter's Denial of Jesus.....	162
Pilate Condemns Jesus.....	164
At What Hour was Jesus Crucified? .....	166
When Was Jesus Raised from the Dead?.....	170
So on What Day Did Jesus Die?.....	174
A Look at Church History .....	176
He Is the Rock .....	178
He That Is Spiritual.....	180
How Do We Become Spiritual? .....	182
God's Wisdom.....	185

## Introduction



We look at a flower and we see natural beauty. The intricacy is absolutely amazing. And this grows of itself with just the earth, the rain, and the sunshine to sustain it. And then we read in **Romans 1 (KJV):20** For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen. And we read in **Psalms 27 (KJV):4** One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

The beauty of the Lord is clearly seen by the things which are made. But we need eyes to see and ears to hear to behold it. This would relate to a certain disposition of our heart as Jesus reveals in **Matthew 13 (KJV):14** And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. 17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

The disciples of Jesus had the right heart disposition to see and hear what Jesus was teaching them. That is why they followed Him. To be a disciple of Jesus we must have the right heart disposition. That is, we must

surrender all that we have, our very lives, to Him as He Himself tells us in **Luke 14 (KJV):33** So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

As we surrender our hearts to Him, we then must pray as the Psalmist did in **Psalms 119 (KJV):18** Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

Jesus predicted that He would inaugurate the New Covenant with His blood on the cross as we read in **Luke 22 (ESV):20** And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”

Jeremiah the prophet, who began prophesying around 629 B.C., also prophesied of this New Covenant in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV):31** Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

The covenant in verse 32 above that God made with Israel when He “took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt” was the Mosaic Covenant, but it is also known as the Old Covenant as we read in **Hebrews 8 (KJV):13** In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

And in **2 Corinthians 3 (NASB):14** But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ.

God then made a promise to Israel that they would not cease from being a nation before Him forever as we continue to read in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV):35** Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: 36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. 37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.

This promise of God is still in effect. Israel will never cease from being a nation forever. But what Jeremiah did not see was that Jesus would inaugurate the New Covenant with His blood, and that Israel would then be scattered amongst the nations, as Jesus prophesied in **Luke 21 (KJV):24** And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

And Paul in **Romans 11 (KJV):25** For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Israel will not enter into the New Covenant as a nation until the fullness of the Gentiles is come into the Church. When Jesus returns at the end of the tribulation in His revelation, then every eye will see Him and Israel will be saved as Zechariah reveals in **Zechariah 12 (KJV):9** And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

This future restoration of Israel is also spoken of in **Ezekiel 36 (KJV):22** Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. 23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. 24 For I will take you from

among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. 25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Verses 26 and 27 speak of the new birth. Israel as a nation shall be born again. That is, all the individuals who make up the nation of Israel at that time will be born again, and enter the kingdom of God as Jesus explains in **John 3 (KJV)**:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

The Lord promises that He will save Israel, and that they shall be His people as we continue to read in **Ezekiel 36 (KJV)**:28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 29 I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. 30 And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. 31 Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. 32 Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. 33 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. 34 And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. 35 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. 36 Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it. 37 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. 38 As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

This entering into the New Covenant is yet future for Israel, but it is a certainty. But those Jews who are in the Church, who have truly believed, have already entered into the New Covenant with the Gentiles. Now, in order to understand what the New Covenant is about, we must do some Biblical research.

First, we will look at what the Bible says about covenants. Then we will look at the time of the gospels where Jesus preached and taught in a way that prepared His disciples to make the transition from the Old Covenant of the law to the New Covenant. We will then look at the accomplishments of Jesus' death on the cross. This will help us understand the requirements of the New Covenant. Then we will look at the doorway into the New Covenant. How does one get in? Then, once we are in, we will look at what is the new and living way of the New Covenant. We will conclude by looking at God's plan and purpose for the Church, and the ministry gifts of individual members in His body, the Church. This will give us a clue as to where we fit in God's grand design in the New Covenant, and will help us find His will for our lives. We will then take a brief look at how tradition has impacted the Church. It is my hope that by looking at these things, we will find His rest, the rest that He promised us in the New Covenant, in all that we do.

Let us remember Paul's words to Timothy in **1 Timothy 5 (KJV)**:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

The word "labour" in the Greek is **κοπιῶ** (pronounced kopiaō). This word means "to grow weary, tired, exhausted (with toil or burdens or grief), to labour with wearisome effort, to toil of bodily labour. The word "doctrine" relates to teaching material from the word of God.

And in **2 Timothy 2 (KJV)**:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

To rightly divide the word of truth takes effort. Let us not be satisfied with a shallow understanding of the word of God. Let us ask ourselves who we want to be approved by, God or man? Let us be weary in well doing.

Let us also remember Paul's words in **1 Timothy 4 (KJV):16** Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.



## The Doctrine of Covenants

Before we can talk coherently about the New Covenant, we must understand the Doctrine of Covenants, that is, the Biblical truth about covenants. What does the Bible say about covenants?

A covenant in the Bible is an agreement between two parties. The word, “covenant”, is first found in **Genesis 6 (KJV):18** But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

God is speaking to Noah here. To establish some context, let us begin reading in **Genesis 6 (KJV):1** And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, 2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. 3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. 4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bear children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. 5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

At this point we might wonder what made things so bad on earth that God would want to destroy man from the face of the earth. Let us read a little further as we continue in **Genesis 6 (KJV):8** But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. 9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. 13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

We notice in verse 9 that Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations. It is possible that the rest of the human race on the earth had become corrupt in their generations by angels that sinned, for we read in **Jude 1 (KJV):6** And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

And we have more light on this as we read in **2 Peter 2 (KJV):4** For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; 5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

It is possible that these angels kept not their first estate, and left their own habitation to comingle with the daughters of men as mentioned in **Genesis 6 (KJV):2** That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

That the term, “sons of God”, refers to angels we know from **Job 2 (KJV):1** Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

The Lord is in heaven, so to present themselves before the Lord, they would have had to have been in heaven.

And we also read in **Job 38 (KJV):1** Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. 4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

The term “morning stars” in verse 7 refers to angels, as does “all the sons of God”. The “sons of God” shouted for joy when God laid the foundations of the earth, for they were already in heaven present with the

Lord apparently. If the term “sons of God” in Genesis 6:2 refers to angels, this would explain why the human race became so corrupt on the earth. In order to preserve the godly seed from which Christ would come, God would have had to destroy man from the face of the earth. This He did with the flood, but He preserved Noah, a just man, who was “perfect in his generations”.

So when God said He would establish His covenant with Noah in Genesis 6:18, He was speaking of the Noahic covenant. This is the covenant that God made with Noah and his sons when they came out of the ark after the flood as we read in **Genesis 6 (KJV):**18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. 20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive. 21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. 22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

And after Noah had come out of the ark, he offered sacrifice as we read in **Genesis 8 (KJV):**20 And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. 22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Then in Genesis, chapter 9, we read of the Noahic Covenant defined in **Genesis 9 (KJV):**1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. 3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. 4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

The human race was now allowed to eat meat. Capital punishment is also instituted at this time as we continue in **Genesis 9 (KJV):**5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. 6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. 7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein. 8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, 9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; 10 And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. 11 And I will establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

God then made a token, or a sign or distinguishing mark, of the covenant as we continue in **Genesis 9 (KJV):**12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: 15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. 17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

The token of this covenant is the rainbow mentioned in verses 12-17 above. This was an everlasting covenant. The main tenet of this covenant was that God would never again flood the earth so that all flesh would “be cut off”.

## The Order of the Covenants

Now that we have established what a covenant is in the Bible, that is, an agreement between God and man, we are well equipped to discover the Biblical truth about covenants, that is, the Doctrine of Covenants, or what the Bible says about covenants.

### The Edenic Covenant

The first covenant we find mentioned in the Bible is then the Edenic covenant. This was an agreement between the first man and the first woman and God. This covenant was inaugurated in **Genesis 2 (KJV):15** And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. 18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. 19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

This was a time of innocence for Adam and his wife, Eve, in the garden of Eden. They were given free access to this garden, and could eat of every tree but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as in verse 17 above. If they ate of this tree, in that same day they would die. This Edenic covenant is also referred to in **Hosea 6 (KJV):7** But like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me.

### The Adamic Covenant

Now the second covenant mentioned in the Bible is the Adamic covenant, which came about after Adam and Eve sinned. Though this is not mentioned specifically as a covenant in scripture, it is clear that it meets all of the criteria of a covenant. We see this covenant begin after man sinned as we read in **Genesis 3 (KJV):9** And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

There were consequences because of Adam and Eve's sin as we continue in **Genesis 3 (KJV):14** And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

The serpent was cursed above all cattle, and every beast of the field in verse 14, but in verse 15 the serpent represents Satan, for the enmity is between Satan and the woman, and between the seed of Satan, speaking of the unregenerated, and the seed of the woman, speaking of Christ. This is the same “seed” that was mentioned in the promise to Abraham as Paul reveals in **Galatians 3 (KJV):16** Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

That the serpent represents the devil and Satan in Genesis 3:15 is also revealed in **Revelation 12 (KJV):9** And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The woman would also have pain in child bearing, and her husband would rule or have dominion over her. The man would have to work for his living, and there would be sorrow or pain in the process until physical death would take place, for “dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”.

The man and his wife were then driven from the garden of Eden as we continue in **Genesis 3 (KJV):20** And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Man now had also become one who knows good and evil, but was doomed to die physically for the Lord drove him from the garden of Eden and the angels guarded the way of the tree of life. We know from other Scriptures that Adam also died spiritually. This is what Paul reveals in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):1** And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Man was now spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, and now possessed a sin nature, being by nature a child of wrath. Man also was doomed to die a physical death as well. This made a redeemer necessary if man was ever to recover his relationship with God, his creator. This redeemer was the seed that was promised in **Genesis 3 (KJV):15** And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The seed would bruise the serpent’s head, meaning Satan’s head. Satan would bruise His heel, which speaks of the cross where Christ would die for the sins of the world of mankind. The promise of a redeemer now brought men to faith in Him and to be born again. And we then read that men began to call upon name of the Lord in **Genesis 4 (KJV):26** And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.

## **The Noahic Covenant**

The third covenant mentioned in the Bible is the Noahic covenant. We already spoke of this covenant in the introduction but it is good to look at it again in the context of the other covenants as we read in **Genesis 6 (KJV):13** And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. 14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

God then spoke about the covenant with Noah as we continue in **Genesis 6 (KJV):17** And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die. 18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

And after Noah had come out of the ark, he offered sacrifice as we read in **Genesis 8 (KJV):20** And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again

curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. 22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Then in Genesis, chapter 9, we read again of the Noahic Covenant defined in **Genesis 9 (KJV)**:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. 3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. 4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

The human race was now allowed to eat meat, but not with the blood still in it. Capital punishment is also instituted at this time as we continue in **Genesis 9 (KJV)**:5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. 6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. 7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein. 8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, 9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; 10 And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. 11 And I will establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

Remember that God then made a token, or a sign or distinguishing mark, of the covenant as we continue in **Genesis 9 (KJV)**:12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: 15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. 17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth. 18 And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. 19 These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.

The bow seen in the cloud, or the rainbow, is the token of the Noahic covenant. The agreement that God made with man in this covenant was that He would not destroy all flesh and the earth with the waters of a flood ever again. This is an everlasting covenant.

### **The Abrahamic Covenant**

Then the fourth covenant mentioned in the Bible is the Abrahamic covenant as we read in **Genesis 15 (KJV)**:1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. 2 And Abram said, LORD God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

God has fulfilled this word to Abraham for he is the father of all of us who believe in the Lord. We continue to read of the covenant God made with Abraham in **Genesis 15 (KJV)**:7 And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. 8 And he said, LORD God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? 9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. 10 And he

took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. 11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. 12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. 13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. 15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. 16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. 17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. 18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: 19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, 20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, 21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

In this covenant God promised Abraham that his descendants would be as many as the stars in the heavens. God also promised Abraham that he and his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan. We continue to read of this covenant in **Genesis 17 (KJV)**: 1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

This covenant is also an everlasting covenant in which God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants. The token of the Abrahamic covenant was circumcision as we continue to read in **Genesis 17 (KJV)**: 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant. 15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. 17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? 18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! 19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. 20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. 21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. 22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

Abraham was obedient to God as we continue to read in **Genesis 17 (KJV)**: 23 And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. 24 And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 26 In the

selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. 27 And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

The Abrahamic covenant was kept by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as we read in **Exodus 2 (KJV):24** And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

And God spoke to Moses about this same Abrahamic covenant in **Exodus 6 (KJV):1** Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land. 2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD: 3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. 4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. 5 And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. 6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: 7 And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD.

The token of the Abrahamic Covenant is circumcision. The fifth covenant then occurs after the 400 years mentioned in God's word to Abraham in **Genesis 15 (KJV):13** And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

## **The Mosaic Covenant**

The Mosaic Covenant, also known as the Old Covenant, is first mentioned in **Exodus 19 (KJV):1** In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. 2 For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. 3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. 5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. 7 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. 8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD. 9 And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD.

And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord in a book, the book of the covenant, as we read in **Exodus 24 (KJV):1** And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. 2 And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him. 3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. 4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5 And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. 6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. 8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

Now the words of the covenant were also known as the ten commandments as we read in **Exodus 34 (ESV):**27 And the LORD said to Moses, "Write these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." 28 So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights. He neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

Under the Mosaic, or Old Covenant, circumcision was also a token, and a requirement of this covenant, as we read in **Leviticus 12 (NIV):**1 The LORD said to Moses, 2 "Say to the Israelites: 'A woman who becomes pregnant and gives birth to a son will be ceremonially unclean for seven days, just as she is unclean during her monthly period. 3 On the eighth day the boy is to be circumcised.

### **The Davidic Covenant**

The sixth covenant mentioned in the Bible is known as the Davidic Covenant. We begin to read of this covenant in **2 Samuel 7 (KJV):**12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. 17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

That this was a covenant that the Lord made with David is revealed in **2 Samuel 23 (KJV):**5 Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

And in **2 Chronicles 7 (KJV):**18 Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel.

And in **2 Chronicles 21 (KJV):**7 Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever.

And in Jeremiah's prophecy we read that this was an everlasting covenant in **Jeremiah 33 (KJV):**19 And the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, saying, 20 Thus saith the Lord; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; 21 Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. 22 As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.

This was also revealed in **Psalms 89 (KJV):**3 I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, 4 Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

### **The New Covenant**

Now the seventh covenant mentioned in the Bible is known as the New Covenant. Jeremiah the prophet prophesied of a new covenant that would be made, not like the former covenant, as we read in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV):**31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

The Lord characterizes His covenant with Israel, the Mosaic or Old Covenant, as a marriage relationship. He was a "husband" to them. That is, He had made a commitment to them, and they to Him. We continue to read in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV):**33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of



Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

The Lord has made an everlasting commitment with Israel as we continue in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV)**:35 Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: 36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. 37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.

This New Covenant is yet future for Israel, as he says in verse 31 above, “Behold, the days come...”. And the days will without doubt come for Israel, for the Lord promises in verse 37, that “If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done”. But before this New Covenant will happen for Israel, the Lord Jesus prophesied that Israel would be led away captive to all nations until the times of the Gentiles would be fulfilled as we read in **Luke 21 (KJV)**:20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter there into. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

In 70 A.D., Titus, the Roman general, in fulfillment of this prophecy, destroyed Jerusalem. Jesus also predicted that the temple would be utterly destroyed as we read in **Matthew 24 (KJV)**:1 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

Titus also destroyed the temple, fulfilling this prophecy by not leaving one stone upon another because the Romans wanted the gold that was inlaid between the stones in the walls of the temple.

Israel is now in a state of unbelief, and these are “the days of vengeance” and of “wrath upon this people” as Jesus prophesied in Luke 21:23 above. And this will continue until “the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”, and then God will again deal with Israel as He has promised in Jeremiah.

So we are now in the times of the Gentiles. When the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, then the prophecy of Ezekiel concerning Israel will come to pass as we read in **Ezekiel 36 (KJV)**:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. 25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. 28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

This prophecy speaks of the time when Israel will be born again by the Spirit of God, and they will all know the Lord. But before this prophecy will come to pass, the Lord has promised that He will melt Israel as we read in **Ezekiel 22 (KJV)**:19 Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. 19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. 20 As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. 21 Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. 22 As

silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you.

This will be the time of Jacob's trouble as Jeremiah prophesied in **Jeremiah 30 (KJV)**:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2 Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. 3 For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. 4 And these are the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. 5 For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. 6 Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? 7 Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it. It is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

Israel will be saved in one day as we read in **Isaiah 66 (KJV)**:7 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. 8 Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

How could Israel be born again in one day? This could be what Zechariah is referring to in **Zechariah 12 (KJV)**:8 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. 9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

This will finally fulfill the prophecy of Daniel in **Daniel 9 (KJV)**:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

The angel Gabriel explains that there would be 69 weeks (threescore and two weeks plus seven weeks), and then Messiah would be cut off as we continue in **Daniel 9 (KJV)**:25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

The seven weeks and the threescore and two weeks total 69 of the 70 weeks. The "people of the prince that shall come" who would "destroy the city and the sanctuary" in verse 26 speaks of the Romans under the Roman general Titus who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D. The 70<sup>th</sup> week is yet to be fulfilled as we continue in **Daniel 9 (KJV)**:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

This scripture is speaking of the Antichrist who will make a covenant with Israel for one week, but in the midst of the week he will betray them, and "cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease". He is the abomination that causes desolation that Jesus spoke of in **Matthew 24 (KJV)**:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

The Antichrist will actually set himself up in the temple and declare that he is God as Paul reveals in **2 Thessalonians 2 (KJV)**:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

This will be a time of trouble such as the world has never seen before, and will be so especially for Israel, but Israel will be saved out of it as we read again in **Jeremiah 30 (KJV):7** Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

So the New Covenant is yet future for Israel, but the Church is now in the time of the New Covenant since this covenant was inaugurated by Jesus' blood on the cross, His death, and resurrection. This is the order of the covenants. We will now look more closely at the Old Covenant of the Law.

## The Old Covenant of the Law

Now it is important that we understand clearly the Biblical truth about the Old Covenant of the Law, or the Mosaic Covenant, so that we may in turn understand clearly what the New Covenant is about.

The Old Covenant of the Law may be divided into three divisions:

- 1.) The first division is the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments expressed the holy will of God, that is, the standard of His righteousness. The Ten Commandments are listed in Exodus 20:1-17.
- 2.) The second division of the Law is the judgments, which relate to the relationship of man with his fellow man, and in the family, and in the household of servants, or employees, and with neighbors. This division is given forth in Exodus 21:1-23:33. This might be called the civil law.
- 3.) The third division is that which related to the ordinances, which made provision for their fellowship with the Lord, and worship, and is what might be called the ceremonial or ritual part of the law. This is given forth in Exodus 24:12-31:18. The law of offerings is also spelled out in Leviticus, chapters 1 to 8. Also, the laws concerning the consecration of the priests, laws of cleanliness, the feasts, and vows and other rituals are spelled out in the rest of the book of Leviticus.

## The Ten Commandments

Now we will list the Ten Commandments, which are the standard of God's righteousness. They were given in Exodus 20:1-17.

1. Worship God alone; no idolatry; verses 2-6  
**Exodus 20 (NASB):**2 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 You shall have no other gods before Me. 4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
2. Don't take the Name of the LORD in vain; verse 7  
**Exodus 20 (NASB):**7 You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.
3. Keep the Sabbath holy; verses 8-11  
**Exodus 20 (NASB):**8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.
4. Honor your father and mother; verse 12  
**Exodus 20 (NASB):**12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.
5. Don't commit murder; verse 13  
**Exodus 20 (NASB):**13 You shall not murder.
6. Don't commit adultery; verse 14  
**Exodus 20 (NASB):**14 You shall not commit adultery.
7. Don't steal; verse 15  
**Exodus 20 (NASB):**15 You shall not steal.

8. Don't bear false witness; verse 16  
**Exodus 20 (NASB):**16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. Don't covet your neighbor's house; verse 17a  
**Exodus 20 (KJV):**17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house.
10. Don't covet your neighbor's wife; verse 17b  
**Exodus 20 (KJV):**17 thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

## The Judgments

The judgments relate to the relationship of man with his fellow man, or in the family, or in the household of servants, or employees, or neighbors such as we read in **Exodus 21 (KJV):**1 Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them. 2 If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. 3 If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. 4 If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. 5 And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: 6 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever. 7 And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do. 8 If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her. 9 And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters. 10 If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. 11 And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.

There were many other commands of the Lord such as we read in **Exodus 23 (NASB):**1 You shall not bear a false report; do not join your hand with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. 2 You shall not follow the masses in doing evil, nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after a multitude in order to pervert *justice*; 3 nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his dispute.

The Lord had a plan for Israel, and that was to bring them into their own land as we continue to read in **Exodus 23 (KJV):**20 Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. 21 Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. 22 But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. 23 For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

The Israelites were not to bow down to other gods under any circumstances in their land as we continue to read in **Exodus 23 (KJV):**24 Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images. 25 And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee. 26 There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfill.

So the judgments had to do with how Israel would conduct themselves in the land that the Lord was giving them, as we continue to read in **Exodus 23 (KJV):**27 I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee. 28 And I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee. 29 I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. 30 By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land. 31 And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out

before thee. 32 Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. 33 They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.

The judgments had to do with how the Israelites were to conduct themselves in the land the Lord was giving them. That is, the judgments related to the civil law of the land. There were also penalties for disobeying these laws. Listed below are the mortal offenses which were punishable by death.

1.) Murder

**Exodus 21 (KJV):**12 He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death. 13 And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee. 14 But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.

2.) Striking your mother or father

**Exodus 21 (KJV):**15 And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.

3.) Kidnapping

**Exodus 21 (KJV):**16 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

4.) Cursing your father or mother

**Exodus 21 (KJV):**17 And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

**Leviticus 20 (KJV):**9 For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him.

5.) You were also held responsible if it is in your power, and you had knowledge of danger to anyone and you do nothing about it

**Exodus 21 (KJV):**28 If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. 29 But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.

6.) Bestiality

**Exodus 22 (KJV):**19 Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death.

**Leviticus 20 (KJV):**15 And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast. 16 And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

7.) Idolatry

**Exodus 22 (KJV):**20 He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

8.) Breaking the Sabbath, that is, doing work on the Sabbath

**Exodus 31 (KJV):**13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. 14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

9.) Offering a child sacrifice

**Leviticus 20 (KJV):**1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones. 3 And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.

10.) Adultery

**Leviticus 20 (KJV):**10 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

**Leviticus 20 (KJV):**11 And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

**Leviticus 20 (KJV):**12 And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

**Leviticus 20 (KJV):**14 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

11.) Homosexuality

**Leviticus 20 (KJV):**13 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

12.) Cursing God

**Leviticus 24 (KJV):**15 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. 16 And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.

13.) Entering the court of the tabernacle if you were not a Levite.

**Numbers 1 (NASB):**51 So when the tabernacle is to set out, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle encamps, the Levites shall set it up. But the layman who comes near shall be put to death.

14.) Entering the tabernacle in the midst of the court if you were not a priest. Only a son of Aaron could enter.

**Numbers 3 (NASB):**10 So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons that they may keep their priesthood, but the layman who comes near shall be put to death.

**Numbers 3 (NASB):**38 Now those who were to camp before the tabernacle eastward, before the tent of meeting toward the sunrise, are Moses and Aaron and his sons, performing the duties of the sanctuary for the obligation of the sons of Israel; but the layman coming near was to be put to death.

**Numbers 18 (NASB):**7 But you and your sons with you shall attend to your priesthood for everything concerning the altar and inside the veil, and you are to perform service. I am giving you the priesthood as a bestowed service, but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death.

15.) False prophets

**Deuteronomy 13 (NASB):**1 "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has counseled rebellion against the LORD your God who brought you from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to seduce you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from among you."

So, for the first six of the ten commandments, you could suffer the death penalty if you broke them. At least two witnesses must testify for someone to be put to death as we read in **Deuteronomy 17 (NASB):**6 On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. 7 The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

The idea was that the punishment should fit the crime as we read in **Exodus 21 (KJV):**22 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, 24 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

When we read of these punishments for sin under the Old Covenant, we are better able to understand Jesus' warnings in **Matthew 18 (KJV):**2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of

them, 3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. 6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! 8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. 9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

The severity of the punishments Jesus mentions here, that is, having a millstone hung around your neck, and being “drowned in the depth of the sea”, or cutting off a limb rather than “having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire”, makes us understand God’s holiness. With Him there is no shiftiness, or shadow of turning. He doesn’t lie or repent. He doesn’t say one thing and do another. This is why He is trustworthy.

Now these laws of punishment for sin we would today call the civil law, for they have to do with how the Israelites were to conduct themselves in the land. The Ten Commandments on the other hand are the standard of God’s righteousness, and these gave the people the knowledge of sin. The judgments governed their relationship between one another, but the ceremonial or ritual laws governed the priesthood, and the ritual laws of sacrifice enabled the people to deal with their sin.

## **The Ceremonial Law and the Law of the Priesthood**

The ceremonial law, or ritual law, had to do with their fellowship with the Lord and worship. The priesthood was responsible for offering sacrifice for the people, and for maintaining the tabernacle sanctuary.

### **The Law of the Priesthood**

The law of the priesthood specified that you could only be a priest if you were a son of Aaron as we read in **Exodus 28 (KJV)**: 1 And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. 2 And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. 3 And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. 4 And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

The law of the Old Covenant assigned the care of the court of the tabernacle to the Levites, but it gave the Levitical priesthood to Aaron and his sons exclusively as we see in **Numbers 18 (KJV)**: 1 And the LORD said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. 2 And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou with thee, that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee: but thou and thy sons with thee shall minister before the tabernacle of witness. 3 And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor ye also, die. 4 And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the service of the tabernacle: and a stranger shall not come nigh unto you. 5 And ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar: that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel. 6 And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the LORD, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. 7 Therefore thou and



thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for everything of the altar, and within the veil; and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

The Levites who were not sons of Aaron were to assist the sons of Aaron in their duties of their priesthood, but those Levites who were not sons of Aaron were not to perform the duties of the priests. If those Levites who were not sons of Aaron, but were of the tribe of Levi, came near to “the furnishings of the sanctuary and the altar,” both they and Aaron and his sons would die, as in verse 3 above. Aaron and his sons were to “bear the iniquity” in connection with their priesthood, as in verse 1 above. The Levitical priesthood was therefore not given to all the Levites, but only to the sons of Aaron. This was a perpetual statute as stated in **Exodus 29 (KJV)**: 4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water. 5 And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: 6 And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. 7 Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him. 8 And thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them. 9 And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the bonnets on them: and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute: and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.

We should remember that the priesthood of the Old Covenant belonged to the sons of Aaron exclusively. It is therefore not transferrable. We shall soon see the importance of this in the New Covenant.

## The Laws of Sacrifice

The tabernacle was built as described in Exodus, chapters 34 to 40. The laws of sacrifice were given later, after the tabernacle was built. They are described in Leviticus as we read in **Leviticus 1 (KJV)**: 1 And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock. 3 If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. 4 And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

It was the priests, the sons of Aaron, who performed the sacrifice as we continue in **Leviticus 1 (KJV)**: 5 And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 6 And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his pieces. 7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire: 8 And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar: 9 But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

The priests, the sons of Aaron, also offered other animals for a burnt sacrifice as we continue in **Leviticus 1 (KJV)**: 10 And if his offering be of the flocks, namely, of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt sacrifice; he shall bring it a male without blemish. 11 And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar. 12 And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat: and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar: 13 But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water: and the priest shall bring it all, and burn it upon the altar: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. 14 And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the LORD be of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves, or of young pigeons. 15 And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn it on the altar; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar: 16 And he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes: 17 And he shall

cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

The Lord told them not only what to sacrifice, but who would sacrifice it for them, and how and where they were to sacrifice it. Other laws, such as dietary laws, were also very specific as we read in **Leviticus 11 (KJV):1** And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth...

There are many other laws which the Lord gave to Moses. In reality, the Israelites were responsible to keep all the words of the Lord. So Moses wrote all the words of the Lord down in a book as we read in **Exodus 24 (KJV):3** And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. 4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

All the words the Lord spoke were part of the covenant the Lord made with the people as we read in **Exodus 24 (KJV):5** And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. 6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. 8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

The blood of this covenant, the Mosaic or Old Covenant, was only the blood of oxen as in verse 5 above, but this sacrifice is what confirmed the Mosaic or Old Covenant with the people.

Now we must understand that the people were not only responsible for keeping the Ten Commandments, but also for keeping all the words the Lord has spoken as we read in **Deuteronomy 6 (KJV):1** Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: 2 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

It is by every word of God that they were to live as we read in **Deuteronomy 8 (KJV):3** And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

## The Atonement

The word “atonement” is found 70 times in the King James Version of the Bible, and only once in the New Testament in **Romans 5 (KJV):11** And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

The word “atonement” in the New Testament in Greek is **καταλλαγή** (pronounced katallagē), and means “to change, exchange; to reconcile;” **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, Page 217.**

The first time the word “atonement” is used in the Old Testament, we find that it had to do with their sanctification as we read in **Exodus 29 (KJV):33** And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy.

The Hebrew word for “atonement” here is **כִּפָּר** (pronounced kaphar), and means “to cover, to cover over”. **Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament, page 411.** The thought is that the Old Covenant sacrifices only covered over the sin of the offerer, but did not eradicate it, as we read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):4** For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

This is why Christ had to come. The next time it is used in the Old Testament, we find that it also relates to sin as we read in **Exodus 29 (KJV):36** And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for

atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it.

And this is also the case in **Exodus 32 (KJV):30** And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.

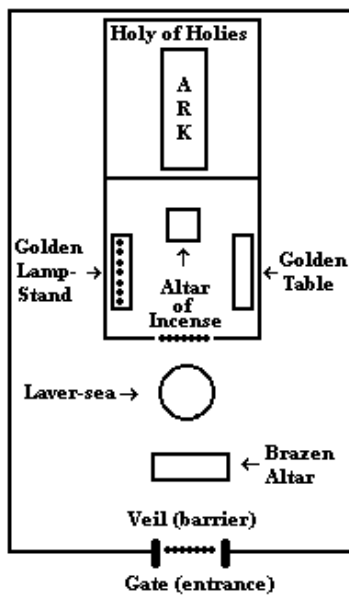
This word “atonement” also has to do with forgiveness as we read in **Leviticus 4 (KJV):26** And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

And in **Leviticus 4 (KJV):35** And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the Lord: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

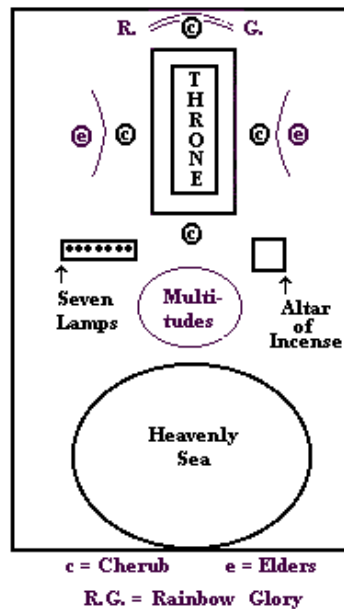
The annual atonement sacrifice is described in **Leviticus 16 (KJV):1** And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died; 2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.

The holy place within the veil was the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle, the Holy of Holies. There were two rooms in the tabernacle, separated by a veil. The Lord is here giving instructions to Moses for his brother Aaron as priest.

Now here is a diagram of the earthly tabernacle under the Old Covenant which was after the pattern of the heavenly tabernacle shown on the right.



**Earthly Tabernacle** (not to scale)



c = Cherub e = Elders  
R.G. = Rainbow Glory

**Heavenly Temple**

As we continue to read in Leviticus, Aaron is told how he should enter the holy place, the Holy of Holies in **Leviticus 16 (KJV):3** Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. 4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

The washing he was to perform is what the Laver of the Earthly Tabernacle in the diagram above was for. It was just outside the tabernacle in front of the door. We continue to read in **Leviticus 16 (KJV):5** And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. 6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house. 7 And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. 9 And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. 10 But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

The goats had special significance as we shall see. We continue to read in **Leviticus 16 (KJV):11** And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: 12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: 13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: 14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

When Aaron entered “within the veil” in verse 12 above, he entered the holy place, the Holy of Holies in the Earthly Tabernacle in the diagram above. The mercy seat was a part of the ark which was in the Holy of Holies shown in the diagram above, which had the golden angels on each end, and the mercy seat in between the angels. The book of the covenant was inside the ark.

We continue to read in **Leviticus 16 (KJV):15** Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: 16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

The tabernacle itself was divided in two by the veil. The first part contained the altar of incense, the golden table, and the lampstand. Aaron, as the high priest, was to go into the holy place, the part of the tabernacle within the veil where the ark was, alone and cleanse it. Aaron would then cleanse the altar outside of the tabernacle as we continue to read in **Leviticus 16 (KJV):18** And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. 19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. 20 And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: 21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: 22 And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

This goat symbolized the removal of sin from Israel in a typical, or symbolic way. It was not actually removed by the blood of bulls and goats. The goat only symbolized in type what would happen when their sin would actually be removed by the death of Christ on the cross.

We continue to read in **Leviticus 16 (KJV):23** And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: 24 And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people. 25 And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar. 26 And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the

camp. 27 And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung. 28 And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp. 29 And this shall be a statute forever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:

All of this ritual was to be done on one day, the day of atonement, once a year, as we continue to read in **Leviticus 16 (KJV):**30 For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. 31 It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute forever. 32 And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: 33 And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. 34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Notice that the priest's office was handed down from father to son, Aaron being the first priest of the Old Covenant, that is, the Mosaic Covenant. One had to be a son of Aaron to be a priest under the Old Covenant.

Now again, this day was known as the Day of Atonement as we read in **Leviticus 23 (KJV):**27 Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

And in **Leviticus 23 (KJV):**29 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God.

And in **Leviticus 25 (KJV):**9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

## **The Purpose of the Old Covenant**

God's purpose in all the covenants is relationship with us. This is what God wanted from the beginning. God wants relationship with us. But He wants a healthy relationship, according to His righteous character. God has healthy boundaries. He is not willing to make the adjustment to His righteous character so that we can be unrighteous. The Old Covenant gave Israel more knowledge about God's righteous character. With this knowledge, Israel became responsible to keep the covenant in a far greater way than those under the previous covenants. But each of the covenants displays the wisdom of God in preparing man for the coming of a redeemer.

The Old Covenant, the law of Moses, consisted of three parts. The Ten Commandments were the standard of God's righteousness. The Judgments related to the relationship of man with his fellow man. That is, the judgments related to the civil laws by which the nation of Israel would be governed. The ceremonial law related to the law of the priesthood, and the rituals of sacrifice for sin, and the feasts during the year as we read in **Exodus 23 (KJV):**14 Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. 15 Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) 16 And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. 17 Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the LORD God. 18 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning. 19 The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.

The law was given for a specific purpose, and that was to reveal sin, for by the law is the knowledge of sin as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

In God's plan of redemption, He gradually revealed, as man was able to receive it, the knowledge of sin to man. Now imagine if the law had not been given by God to Moses. Then when Jesus finally comes, and tells people to repent, they would have said, "Repent from what?" They would have had no knowledge of their sin, and therefore no knowledge of their need of a redeemer. The law was given by God to Moses to prepare us for the coming of our redeemer. Without it, we would have no knowledge of right and wrong, or of our sin. The law shows us our need. This is why it is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ as we read again in **Galatians 3 (KJV):25** Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

So the law gives us a knowledge of our sinful character, and thus our need for a redeemer. Now the concept of a redeemer was not completely understood under the Old Covenant. But the purpose of the law was to reveal to us our sin, and therefore our need of a redeemer. So what the law does for us now is what it was intended to do for Israel as well. The law revealed their sin, and therefore their need for a redeemer, just as it does for us today.

We know that Israel knew the Lord as a savior as we read in **Exodus 14 (KJV):21** And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. 22 And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 23 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24 And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, 25 And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians. 26 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. 27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. 28 And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. 29 But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. 31 And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

The idea of the Lord as a savior is also seen in the song of Moses in **Exodus 15 (KJV):1** Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. 2 The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.

The concept of the Lord as redeemer is also revealed in **Exodus 15 (KJV):11** Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? 12 Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. 13 Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

The idea of the Lord as a savior began to be closely associated with the Lord as redeemer.

## **The Promise of a Redeemer and a Savior**

The promise of a redeemer and a savior was gradually revealed more and more to Israel throughout their history. People in Jesus' time were aware that God had promised that a king would come as we read in **Matthew 2 (KJV):1** Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold,

there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. 3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

The chief priests knew about the promise in **Micah 5 (KJV):2** But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Under the Old Covenant, the people were not aware of all that we in the New Covenant are now aware of about a redeemer because Jesus had not come yet, and God had not made known all that we have in the Gospels and the Epistles.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God hinted at a redeemer as we read in **Genesis 3 (KJV):14** And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The serpent represents Satan. The seed represents Christ, who bruised the head of Satan when He died on the cross for us. We know this now, but believers under the Old Covenant knew nothing about the cross. God wanted them to walk by faith, just as He calls us to do now.

Those under the Old Covenant would have known that all the families of the earth would be blessed in Abraham as we read in **Genesis 12 (KJV):1** Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Looking back we know that the statement, “And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed”, relates first to Christ, for Christ was to come from the seed of Abraham as the redeemer. That is, He would be a descendant of Abraham. The families of the earth would be blessed because the redeemer would save them from their sin if they had faith in Him. Again, we know this now because of the cross.

Then those under the Old Covenant would have read in **Genesis 49 (KJV):10** The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver, from between his feet, until Shiloh come and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Shiloh refers to Christ. The word “Shiloh” refers to the Messiah’s reign, for it is unto Him that the gathering of the people shall be. This is also referred to in the prophecy of **Ezekiel 21 (KJV):27** I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he comes whose right it is, and I will give it him”.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only one, “whose right it is”. When He finishes overturning men’s affairs and thrones, He will take His own throne, and rule over the world from Jerusalem, and he will come from the tribe of Judah. Again, we know this now, but this was only understood dimly under the Old Covenant.

All the laws of sacrifice in the law of Moses pointed to the need for a redeemer who could remove all sin once and for all. The Day of Atonement as we read about in Leviticus 23:27 pointed to the need for a final redemption for sin.

And the word “holy” is found 52 times in the book of Exodus. The garments of the priests were holy, the altar was holy, the tabernacle was holy, the Sabbath was holy, and the anointing oil was holy. The Israelites were being taught that God is holy. The people were to be holy also, for God is holy as we read in **Leviticus 19 (KJV):2** Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.

The word “holy” in Hebrew is קָדוֹשׁ (pronounced qadowsh), and means “pure, clean, free from defilement of crimes, idolatry, and other unclean and profane things”. **Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament, page 722**. Ultimately, to be holy is to be free from sin. This is man’s greatest need.

Holiness is a requirement in order to have relationship with a holy God as we read in **Leviticus 20 (KJV):7** Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God.

The word “holy” is also used 94 times in the book of Leviticus. The holiness of God also pointed to the need for a redeemer. Still, in what way this redemption would actually take place was not revealed yet.

Through the prophecy of Moses, more light is given about a prophet who was to come and would be like him as we read in **Deuteronomy 18 (KJV):15** The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; 16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. 17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. 18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. 19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

The promise of a redeemer was known to Job as we read in **Job 19 (KJV):25** For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

And David calls God his savior as we read in **2 Samuel 22 (KJV):3** The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

David also knew the Lord as redeemer as we read in his **Psalms 19 (KJV):14** Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

And Asaph, a Levite in the court of King David, knew the Lord as his redeemer as we read in **Psalms 78 (KJV):35** And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.

In this Psalm, Asaph was speaking of the time “they remembered” as the time when Israel was in the wilderness in the time of Moses as we see in **Psalms 78 (KJV):40** How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!

And Asaph also reveals in this Psalm that these things were taught to the children of Israel as we read in **Psalms 78 (KJV):1** Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. 2 I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: 3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. 4 We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. 5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: 6 That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: 7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments: 8 And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

And in Isaiah we read in **Isaiah 9 (KJV):6** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.

The idea that God would come in person was hinted at in this Scripture. And we read also that He will be a son of David in **Isaiah 11 (KJV):1** And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; 3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.



God was also known as their savior in **Psalm 106 (KJV):21** They forgot God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;

And we read also that the Lord is the Holy One of Israel, their redeemer, in **Isaiah 41 (KJV):14** Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

And Isaiah reveals this over and over in **Isaiah 43 (KJV):3** For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

And in **Isaiah 43 (KJV):11** I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour.

And the Lord clearly reveals Himself as the Holy One of Israel in **Isaiah 43 (KJV):14** Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships.

And in **Isaiah 44 (KJV):6** Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

And in **Isaiah 44 (KJV):24** Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

And in **Isaiah 45 (KJV):15** Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

And in **Isaiah 45 (KJV):21** Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.

And again, the Lord declares Himself to be the redeemer, the Holy One of Israel in **Isaiah 47 (KJV):4** As for our redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.

And in **Isaiah 48 (KJV):17** Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

And in **Isaiah 49 (KJV):7** Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

And in **Isaiah 49 (KJV):26** And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

And in **Isaiah 54 (KJV):5** For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

And in **Isaiah 54 (KJV):8** In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

And in **Isaiah 59 (KJV):20** And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.

And in **Isaiah 60 (KJV):16** Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

And to the Gentiles He speaks in **Isaiah 63 (KJV):16** Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

And in **Jeremiah 50 (KJV):34** Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

And Hosea the prophet echoes this as well in **Hosea 13 (KJV):4** Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me.

Though this was not clearly understood until Jesus came, He was to be an offering for sin as we read in **Isaiah 53 (KJV):5** But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a

sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. 9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Jeremiah also knew about this promise as we read in **Jeremiah 23 (KJV):5** Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

And again in **Jeremiah 33 (KJV):15** In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

God was their redeemer of old, just as He is our redeemer now. The people of Jesus' time knew that Messiah was coming as we know from **Daniel 9 (KJV):25** Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

This was known even to a woman in Samaria as we read in **John 4 (KJV):25** The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

Some of the people in Jerusalem knew about the Christ who was to come as we read in **John 7 (KJV):25** Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? 26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? 27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. 28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. 29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. 30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. 31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

What the people didn't know was that the Christ would be God Himself. However, they only had to trust in the Holy One, their redeemer, the Lord of Hosts to be saved. This is why Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about being born again. This has always been a requirement in all of the covenants as we read in **John 3 (KJV):1** There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

And after Jesus told Nicodemus that no one could enter the kingdom of God unless they are born again, Nicodemus asks in **John 3 (KJV):9** Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? 10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? 11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? 13 And no

man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

It was the faith in the Holy One who was to come that saved the individual Israelites who believed in Him. Nicodemus had never been there before, but Jesus led him to faith in Him.

### **The Centrality of the Word of God**

Now after the death of Moses, three times in the book of Joshua, chapter 1, the Lord tells Joshua, Moses' successor, to be strong and of good courage as we read in **Joshua 1 (KJV):1** Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, 2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. 5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them. 7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper withersoever thou goest.

Joshua was to meditate on the book of the law, day and night, as we continue in **Joshua 1 (KJV):8** This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. 9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

The Lord gave them the whole book of the law, and not just the Ten Commandments, so that they would have good success, and prosper. They were to "observe to do according to all the law" which Moses commanded in verse 7 above, and again, not just the Ten Commandments. They were to meditate on it day and night. And it was not to leave their mouths. They were also to talk about it as we read in Moses' words to the house of Israel in **Deuteronomy 6 (NIV):4** Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

It is not just the commandments that man lives by, but by every word of God as we read in **Deuteronomy 8 (KJV):3** And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

The book of the law, which held the word of God, was to be central in the life of an Israelite. But the law did not save them. It only pointed them to their need for Christ. All of the tabernacle observance was typical of what was necessary to enter the presence of God. All of the tabernacle laws would eventually be fulfilled by Christ in His sacrifice on the cross. The purpose of the tabernacle and all the law of Moses was to lead them to faith in Christ through the word of God.

Now David praises the word of God in **Psalms 19 (KJV):7** The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are

they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

And in Psalm 119, which is an entire Psalm in praise of the word of God, we read in **Psalm 119 (KJV):**105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

And in **Psalm 119 (KJV):**130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

## **Ritual versus Reality**

What we notice over time is that Israel did not keep the word of God central in their lives and worship. Rather, they became focused on the ritual. The word of God keeps our focus on reality. God wants relationship with us. As we focus on His word, we become more aware of His presence. The performance of ritual keeps us in the same place. When we focus on His word, we grow in our relationship with Him. We understand more of His plans and purposes. We experience more of His love, and our love for Him increases.

The focus on ritual, and not on the word of God, is what caused Israel to go down the rabbit trails of tradition. This is what Isaiah prophesied in **Isaiah 6 (KJV):**9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. 10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

It is with the heart that we understand. But Israel had fallen asleep in Isaiah's day as we read in **Isaiah 29 (KJV):**10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. 11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: 12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. 13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

This is exactly what tradition is, that is, precepts of men. When Jesus began His ministry, He found them so bound by their tradition that they rejected the commandment of God, and even nullified the word of God as we read in **Mark 7 (KJV):**1 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. 3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. 4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. 5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? 6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. 9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. 10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: 11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. 12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; 13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. 14 And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Harken unto me every one of you, and understand: 15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. 16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

When I was growing up, from the time I was about six years old, my family moved to live with my grandfather in his house. Every time I was asked to sweep the floor, if he was around, he would tell me to put a little water on the end of my broom so that I didn't make dust on the walls. I knew, even as a child, that I would make mud on the floor if I put water on the end of my broom, so I just swept very carefully. This did not stop him from telling me to put water on the end of my broom however. I then tried to avoid having to sweep the floor. After my parents were divorced, when I was about nine, it became harder to avoid. Having endured my grandfather's behavior for a long time now, I decided that the next time he told me to put water on the end of my broom, I would do so. Sure enough, when I was sweeping one day, he passed by and told me that I was making dust on the walls, and to put a little water on the end of my broom. I complied, and put water on the end of my broom, and kept sweeping. He then passed by again, and told me I was making mud on the floor. I told him I put a little water on the end of my broom as he had told me. He said, "Well, not that much!" I knew this was a no win situation, even as a child. I then had to clean up the mud on the floor. But I had proven to myself that what he had said would not work. I never put water on the end of my broom again, and ignored his comments from then on.

The ritual was to sweep the floor. Somewhere in the history of our family, dust was getting on the walls, and the solution began to be to put a little water on the end of your broom before you sweep, which added to the ritual of sweeping the floor. By the time I was told to do this, who knows how long it had been a ritual to do so. My grandfather was a professor of thermodynamics and engineering at UCLA. Everyone trusted that he was a brilliant man, and he certainly was. But my question began to be, why would such a brilliant man tell me to do something so foolish?

I have never put water on the end of my broom since that day when my grandfather insisted that I do so. I focused on reality, and realized I did not have to continue this foolishness. Some tradition is fine, but when it goes against reality, we need to let it go.

With this in mind, let us next look at the time of Jesus' ministry, a time between the times as it were.

## Transition from the Old to the New Covenant

We must understand that the period of Jesus' ministry was a time between the times. This was a period of transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant, for the New Covenant would not begin until Jesus had redeemed all mankind by His death on the cross as we read in **Luke 22 (ESV):19** And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 20 And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

Now John the Baptist was the one who would prepare the way of the Lord as was foretold by the prophet Isaiah as we read in **Matthew 3 (KJV):1** In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

John prepared the people for the coming of Jesus by preaching repentance. Israel was not ready for their Messiah. John was helping them get ready as we continue in **Matthew 3 (KJV):4** And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: 12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

What a warning John issued to the people! He will "gather his wheat into the garner", but "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire"!

Now in Luke, we see that the people asked John what they should do as we read in **Luke 3 (KJV):10** And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? 11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. 12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? 13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. 14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

It is very interesting that John came preaching a baptism of repentance as we read also in **Luke 3 (KJV):1** Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, 2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

The word of God came unto John. That is, God gave John a message for the people. Why didn't John prepare them by telling them to keep the law of Moses? Why didn't he tell them to go and offer what the law commanded in terms of a sacrifice for their sin? Instead he told them what God had in mind for them. That is, he told them to repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins. Change was coming.

Now John also preached that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand as we read again in **Matthew 3 (KJV):1** In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Jesus also began His ministry, not only by preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, but also by preaching repentance as we read in **Mark 1 (KJV):14** Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

The kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are really synonymous terms. John kicked off this transition period by calling people to repent, and Jesus continued this. Now the terms “gospel”, and “the kingdom of God”, and “the kingdom of heaven”, at first glance, seem to be new expressions not before heard in the Scriptures. However, as we examine the Scriptures, we see that there is some reference of these things, although not exactly in these words.

The word “gospel” simply means “good news” in the Greek. We find a similar expression in **Isaiah 61 (KJV):1** The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

The words, “good tidings” in verse 1 above, simply means “good news”. Now as it happens, we also have a divine commentary on these very verses in Isaiah, for Jesus fulfilled them as we read in **Luke 4 (KJV):17** And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. 20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Preaching the gospel, or “good tidings”, to the poor, healing the brokenhearted, preaching deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, and the setting at liberty them that are bruised is most certainly good news. The word “gospel” most certainly means “good tidings”. Now what about the expressions, “the kingdom of God”, and “the kingdom of heaven”?

## The Kingdom of God and of Heaven

In 2 Chronicles 13:5 we read that the Lord God of Israel “gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever”, as in **2 Chronicles 13 (KJV):5** Ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?

And David tells us that the kingdom over Israel is the kingdom of the Lord as we read in **1 Chronicles 28 (KJV):5** And of all my sons, (for the Lord hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.

And in the Psalms we read in **Psalms 45 (KJV):6** Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

Since God’s throne is forever and ever, this hints of an everlasting kingdom. And in Chronicles we read again of the kingdom of the Lord in **2 Chronicles 13 (ESV):8** “And now you think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David, because you are a great multitude and have with you the golden calves that Jeroboam made you for gods.

The kingdom of the Lord was in the hands of the sons of David. And we read in **Obadiah 1 (KJV):21** And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's.

And we read also in **Isaiah 9 (KJV):6** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no

end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

This kingdom would be established “with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever”. Again, an everlasting kingdom is revealed. And the Lord is known as the God of heaven as we read in **Daniel 2 (KJV):37** Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

And in **Daniel 2 (KJV):44** And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

And we read of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar’s testimony in **Daniel 4 (KJV):1** Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. 2 I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. 3 How great are his signs! And how mighty are his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

After Daniel had explained to King Nebuchadnezzar his dream in Daniel 4:24-27, and the dream came to pass in Daniel 4:28-33, and Nebuchadnezzar “was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws” in Daniel 4:33, King Nebuchadnezzar then testifies in **Daniel 4 (KJV):34** And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: 35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? 36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counselors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me 37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

And we read of King Darius of the Medes and the Persians in **Daniel 6 (KJV):26** I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.

The point is that if you read the Old Testament, you could not help but learn that God is the God of heaven, and that He is the king of heaven, and that His kingdom rules over all, and that it is an everlasting kingdom as we also read in **Psalms 145 (KJV):13** Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

So when Jesus began His ministry and spoke of the Kingdom of God, the people would have had some inkling of what He was talking about. And when He spoke of the Kingdom of heaven being at hand, that was certainly good news. Now Jesus began His ministry as we read in **Matthew 4 (KJV):17** From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. 21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

If someone came up to you while you were working, and told you to come and follow him, would you have gone? There was an expectation in these men. Something extraordinary was about to happen. John the Baptist had plowed the field. Now Jesus was sowing the seed. We continue to read in **Matthew 4 (KJV):23** And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. 24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and



torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. 25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.

Jesus not only preached the gospel of the kingdom, but He also taught the people. That is, He preached the Gospel, and He told them the good news that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and healing and deliverance were available, and then He taught them. That is, He explained the word of God to them. For some of those who received His words, they became aware of the God who is there. For others who were already awake and aware of the God who is there, and who heard Him and received His words, he added to their knowledge. For still others, His words fell by the wayside as in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:3-23.

## The Purpose of Jesus' Ministry

Jesus came to fulfill all righteousness as Matthew reveals in **Matthew 3 (KJV):**13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The apostle Peter reveals that Jesus did not sin while He was on this earth as we read in **1 Peter 2 (KJV):**21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Jesus lived as a man under the Old Covenant, and He kept all the law, and was sinless. He did so in order to fulfill all righteousness, and by doing so, He became a perfect sacrifice when He died on the cross. This enabled Him to redeem us as Paul reveals in **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):**21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Again we read in **Mathew 5 (KJV):**17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

In 1 Timothy, Paul reveals that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners as we read in **1 Timothy 1 (KJV):**15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

This is what the angel of the Lord revealed to Joseph in **Matthew 1 (KJV):**19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Jesus Himself says that He came to call sinners to repentance in **Matthew 9 (KJV):**13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Again, Jesus reveals that He has come into this world for judgment as we read in **John 9 (KJV):**39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

Jesus also came that we might have life abundantly as we read in **John 10 (KJV):10** The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Jesus also came as a light into the world as we read in **John 12 (KJV):46** I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

Jesus came to give us a way as we read in **John 14 (KJV):6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

The purpose of Jesus' coming was to save the world of mankind as we read in **Luke 2 (KJV):11** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And in **John 4 (KJV):42** And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

And in **Acts 5 (KJV):31** Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

And in **Acts 13 (KJV):23** Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:

And Jesus Himself acknowledged this in **John 3 (KJV):16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

The reason God gave His only begotten Son is so that He might be the propitiation for our sins as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):25** Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

And in **1 John 2 (KJV):2** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

And in **1 John 4 (KJV):10** Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

The Greek word translated "propitiation" is **ἱλαστήριον** (pronounced hilastērion). Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words explains, "It is God who is propitiated by the vindication of His holy and righteous character, whereby through the provision He has made in the vicarious and expiatory sacrifice of Christ, He has so dealt with sin that He can show mercy to the believing sinner in the removal of his guilt and the remission of his sins". **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 223**. Moulton's lexicon also says that the verb form of this word means "to appease, render propitious; in N.T. to expiate, make an atonement or expiation for". **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, Page 201**. Because of our debt of sin, a payment was necessary. This payment was made for us by God Himself, by which He satisfied the demands of His holy and righteous character by giving up His son as a sacrifice for us.

## Jesus' Teaching in the Gospels

Now we notice that there is a difference between teaching and preaching in the Scriptures. The word in the Greek for "to preach" is **κηρύσσω** (pronounced kēryssō). This word signifies "to be a herald, or, in general, to proclaim". **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 111**.

This is the word used in **Matthew 4 (KJV):17** From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

The word "repent" in the Greek is **μετανοέω** (pronounced metanoeō), and means literally "to perceive afterwards (meta, after, implying change, noeō, to perceive; nous, the mind, the seat of moral reflection), in contrast to pronoēō, to perceive beforehand, hence signifies to change one's mind or purpose". **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 279-280**.

Jesus was telling the people to rethink their perception of sin, and have a change of mind about it that would be more real. The word for repent in the Hebrew is נחַם (pronounced nacham) and means “to draw the breath forcibly, to pant, to groan”. It also means “to lament, to grieve”. **Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament, page 544.** By the context in the Old Testament, we know that it relates to turning from something as we read in **Jeremiah 4 (KJV):28** For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken *it*, I have purposed *it*, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.

The thought of turning from sin is also seen in John the Baptist’s word to the Pharisees and Sadducees in **Matthew 3 (KJV):8** Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

So Jesus was telling the people to have a change of mind about their sin, and to turn from it. Now as we follow Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, we next find Jesus going through all Galilee preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and teaching in their synagogues as we read again in **Matthew 4 (KJV):23** And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. 24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. 25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.

So Jesus began His ministry by preaching repentance, and also telling people to believe the gospel as we read in **Mark 1 (KJV):15** And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

The word “gospel” in the Greek is εὐαγγέλιον (pronounced euaggelion, the double ‘g’ is pronounced like an ‘ng’), and “originally denoted a reward for good tidings; later the idea of reward dropped, and the word stood for the good news itself”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 2, page 167.**

The good news is that the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand, and that God has sent His Son to be the redeemer of mankind, and that healing, and deliverance, and forgiveness of sins are available. This is what Jesus was proclaiming to the people.

Now on the other hand, the word for “to teach” in the Greek is διδάσκω (pronounced didaskō). This word means “absolutely, to give instruction”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 201.**

This is the word used in **Matthew 11 (KJV):1** And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

When we preach, we proclaim, or herald something. We are announcing a truth. We do not explain why it is true. We simply encourage others to believe it. We may use our own life experiences, or draw from scriptural principles. However, on the other hand, when we teach or instruct something, we prove with an explanation why it is true. In the case of doctrine, that is, Biblical truth, we state or present a formulation of Scriptures which bear upon a certain theme drawn from the Scriptures. Our preaching should be in line with what we teach, that is, our doctrine, which is the Biblical truth drawn from the Scriptures, for what we believe will be the basis of what we preach. This is what Paul is saying in **1 Timothy 4 (KJV):16** Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

So Jesus taught and preached in their cities as in Matthew 11:1 above, and we have an example of Jesus’ teaching as we continue to follow Jesus in **Matthew 5 (KJV):1** And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: 2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Jesus concludes by speaking here of our “reward in heaven” in verse 12, and He says that the kingdom of heaven will be the possession of those who are poor in spirit in verse 3, and also the possession of those who suffer persecution for righteousness’ sake in verse 10.

Was this idea of a “reward in heaven”, and even heaven itself, new to the people? Not really, for in 1 Kings we read that heaven is God’s dwelling place as in **1 Kings 8 (KJV):30** And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.

Elijah went up in a whirlwind to heaven as we read in **2 Kings 2 (KJV):1** And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.

And in **2 Kings 2 (KJV):11** And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

The Lord is also pictured on a throne in heaven, with the angels standing around Him in **2 Chronicles 18 (KJV):18** Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the Lord; I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left.

Heaven is also where God rules from as we read in **2 Chronicles 20 (KJV):6** And said, O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? And rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? And in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

And again we read that heaven is His dwelling place in **2 Chronicles 30 (KJV):27** Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.

And we read that God sits in the heavens in **Psalms 2 (KJV):4** He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

And again we read in **Psalms 11 (KJV):4** The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

And the hope of heaven is expressed in **Psalms 73 (KJV): 24** Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. **25** Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

And in **Psalms 49 (KJV):15** But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

The English word “heaven” or “heavens” is found 691 times in the King James Bible. But Jesus now tells the people that the kingdom of heaven is at hand in **Matthew 3 (KJV):2** And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And in **Matthew 4 (KJV):17** From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And He commanded His disciples to preach this also in **Matthew 10 (KJV):7** And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

What Jesus was saying is that the kingdom of heaven is within our reach. If you repent and believe in Me, Jesus said, you will have eternal life. That is, you will have life in heaven with Me for eternity. The English words “eternal life” or “life eternal” are mentioned 30 times in the King James Bible as in **John 3 (KJV):15** That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

The English words “everlasting life” or “life everlasting” are mentioned 16 times in the King James Bible as in **John 3 (KJV):16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This term is also found in **Daniel 12 (KJV):2** And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Jesus came from heaven, so His message was from firsthand knowledge as we read in **John 6 (KJV):62** What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

And in **John 17 (KJV):5** And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

The point is that the reward of heaven, and the promise of eternal life, was Jesus’ message to the world of mankind. This reward was for those who believed in Him, as we read above in John 3:15,16. And this was intimated in the Old Testament, but never presented so clearly as in Jesus’ words in the Gospels. Jesus was making known the way to heaven and eternal life in a very clear and easy to understand way that was unheard of before. But God’s timing is perfect as in **Romans 5 (KJV):6** For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Now notice in His teaching in Matthew 5 (KJV):1-12 that Jesus speaks in a more general way. He says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, Blessed are they that mourn, Blessed are the meek, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, Blessed are the merciful, Blessed are the pure in heart, Blessed are the peacemakers”, and “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake”. He does not add anything that would make His teaching specific only to Israel. What He is teaching here could relate to anyone on earth. He was preparing His people, the believing Jews, for the time when the Gospel would be preached to all mankind.

Now as we continue to read in Matthew, chapter 5, we see that Jesus speaks to His disciples, and teaches them that they can influence all men to glorify our Father in heaven as we read in **Matthew 5 (KJV):13** Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Jesus tells His disciples that they are the salt of the earth, and not just the salt for Israel. They are also the light of the world, and they were to let their light shine before all men in order that they also might glorify our Father in heaven. Jesus was opening the possibility of salvation to all men and women, and not just those of Israel. Jesus was telling His disciples to reach out to the world as we read in **John 3 (KJV):16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. That this message was for all the world would not be fully understood by His disciples however, until after He had risen from the dead and ascended into heaven as we shall soon see.

Now as we continue to read in Matthew, chapter 5, we see that Jesus begins to speak of a transition in **Matthew 5 (KJV):17** Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus here teaches His disciples that He did “not come to destroy, but to fulfill” the law and the prophets. In speaking of fulfillment, He is intimating change. He is teaching here that nothing will “pass from the law, till all be fulfilled”, but that our righteousness must at least “exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees”, or we “shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven”. He was teaching them about entering the

kingdom of heaven, and it included a warning about righteousness. Let us read further to understand more about this transition.

Now as we continue in Matthew, chapter 5, Jesus begins to teach His disciples what He means by this warning about righteousness in **Matthew 5 (KJV):21** Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

Jesus was speaking as a man under the law who is fulfilling all righteousness. This is why He speaks of leaving a gift before the altar. And Jesus is saying that righteousness is not just about not committing the really bad sins. It is about not committing any sin at all. Righteousness also has to do with our thoughts and feelings toward our brother or sister. We may have angry feelings toward our brother or sister with good cause. It is not a sin to be angry. But it is what we do with our anger. Holding on to our anger keeps us from reconciliation with those we are angry with. And we are the ones who pay by being kept in the prison of unforgiveness, as it were, until we let it go and forgive. Forgiving does not necessarily mean reconciliation. Forgiving is what we do on our part. Reconciliation will depend on whether the other is willing to forgive, and also let it go.

Again, Jesus warns of the punishment of hell as we continue in **Matthew 5 (KJV):27** Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. 29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Jesus points here to the law against adultery, the sixth commandment, and explains that sin is not just about the act of adultery, but also the thoughts and feelings of the heart. And Jesus speaks not just of losing the reward of heaven, but also of being cast into hell. Jesus is pointing to the inner life of the soul, which is our mind, our will, our heart and emotions, and our conscience. Jesus now reveals that this is where the sin is that needs to be cleansed.

Jesus then warns against divorce as we continue to read in **Matthew 5 (KJV):31** It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: 32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Jesus explains that there are grounds for divorce, such as fornication. I believe that Jesus would also include spousal abuse as grounds for divorce as well, though he does not mention it here. He does not want us to be victims.

Jesus then points out that it is wiser to not make promises you can't keep as we continue in **Matthew 5 (KJV):33** Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: 34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: 35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. 37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

And now we see more of the preparation that Jesus was making to transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant as we continue to read in **Matthew 5 (KJV):38** Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: 39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Now the law of Moses reads in context as in **Exodus 21 (KJV):**22 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, 24 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. 26 And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake. 27 And if he smite out his manservant's tooth, or his maidservant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake. 28 If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. 29 But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.

The man who owned an ox which had a habit of pushing with his horn, and who did not keep the ox contained though he knew about his pushing with his horn, was responsible for anyone who was harmed by the ox, and he would be stoned if the ox killed someone. Under the Old Covenant, it was an “eye for an eye”, a “tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe”. However, Jesus now tells us to “resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also”. Jesus was making a move toward the New Covenant, which would be inaugurated by His death on the cross. And He knew that after His death, the Jews would be punished and scattered throughout the world until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. It would mean a new beginning. It would be a season of grace that would reign through righteousness as Paul reveals in **Romans 5 (KJV):**21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Under these conditions, it would not be possible to enforce the judgments of the law in the Gentile nations. The Ten Commandments would still be the standard of God’s righteousness, giving us knowledge of sin, but the punishments for sin in the judgments would not be enforced, for the governments of the nations are not saved. This would be a time of grace where Jew and Gentile are united as one in the Church, which is His body. When Christ shall reign in the Kingdom age of one thousand years, then the judgments will again be in effect, for He will rule the nations with a rod of iron as in **Psalms 2 (KJV):**9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

And in **Revelation 2 (KJV):**27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

As we continue in the gospel of Matthew, we see that Jesus is adamant about not resisting evil as we read in **Matthew 5 (KJV):**40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. 41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. 42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

After Jesus’ death on the cross, a new way would be made possible.

## A New Way

The apostle John speaks of grace and truth coming by Jesus Christ in **John 1 (KJV):**16 And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Moses gave us the law. Jesus gives us grace and truth, for He embodied the truth as we read in **John 1 (KJV):**14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John saw the real Jesus in **John 1 (KJV):**1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Jesus so personified grace and truth because He is the word. Everything He said and did was in agreement with the word of God because He is God.

Jesus now points us to a new way, a way of grace and truth. We continue to read in **Matthew 5 (KJV)**:43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? 47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? 48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

In times past, Israel was called to destroy their enemies in order to take possession of their land. Now, Jesus was telling His disciples, which were all Jews at this time, to love their enemies in verse 44 above. This new way did not make void the commandments in the law, or annul them, but rather it called for standing with the Father as a witness to His great love, grace, and goodness, for He even makes “his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” in verse 45 above. Jesus was preparing his disciples for the New Covenant, which would be in effect at His death on the cross. This New Covenant would not at first include Israel as a nation, for Israel would be scattered amongst the nations until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled as we read in **Luke 21 (KJV)**:21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter there into. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Individual Jews who accept Christ are included in the New Covenant, but the nation itself is now in unbelief until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Yet all Israel will be saved, and come under the New Covenant when they as a nation accept Christ. This will happen at the end of the tribulation period when they look upon Him whom they have pierced as we read again in **Zechariah 12 (KJV)**:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

God will fulfill His promises to Israel. However, this is still a future event as we read again in **Jeremiah 30 (KJV)**:4 And these are the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. 5 For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. 6 Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? 7 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

And in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV)**:1 At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. 2 Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. 3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. 4 Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

The Lord has emphatically made promise to Israel that they shall enter into the New Covenant in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV)**:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the



greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. 35 Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: 36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. 37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.

The time of Jacob's trouble is not here yet, but it is coming.

Now again, we see Jesus leading us in a new way as we read the apostle John's account of a woman caught in adultery, and Jesus' response in **John 8 (KJV)**: 1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. 2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. 3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? 6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. 7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? 11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

Why did Jesus let her off we might ask? The law specifically said not to commit adultery in **Exodus 20 (NASB)**: 14 "You shall not commit adultery.

And the penalty for such a sin is death as we read again in **Leviticus 20 (KJV)**: 10 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

However, there was a time when David committed the sin of adultery in the matter of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah as recorded in 2 Samuel, chapter 11. David saw Bathsheba bathing and told his servant to go get her for him. Her husband was a Hittite but had joined the army of Israel, and was away with the army. After Bathsheba became pregnant by David, he sent for Uriah to come home so that he could spend time with his wife, thinking that might resolve his little problem. However, Uriah was an honorable man, and would not go home to sleep with his wife, even after David got him drunk with wine. David then commanded his commander Joab to fall back from Uriah in battle so that he would die. This Joab did, but God then sent Nathan the prophet to David as we read in **2 Samuel 12 (KJV)**: 1 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: 3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. 4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. 5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: 6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

The Lord wanted to show David his sin by telling him a parable. David saw the sin of the rich man but did not put two and two together. God then used Nathan to do this for him as we continue to read in **2 Samuel 12 (KJV)**: 7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; 8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. 9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to

be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. 10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. 11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

David had not only committed adultery, but murder. But David confessed his sin immediately as we continue to read in **2 Samuel 12 (KJV)**: 13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. 14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. 15 And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. 16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. 17 And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. 18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? 19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. 20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. 21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. 22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? 23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. 24 And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.

David fasted seven days from all food. After the child died, he went into the house of the LORD and worshipped. We see the surrender of David's heart in these verses. This is what God wants most of all. David trusted in Him who was coming, that is, the one who would put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. This is the reason why David did not suffer the death penalty for his sin, though he was a man who lived under the law. David was a man with many wives because of the tradition of his time. Because of this, God understood his weakness and forgave him when he repented. God looked forward to what His Son would accomplish on the cross, and forgave David because he confessed his sin.

David is an example for us, as is the woman caught in adultery. This is the new way Jesus is pointing us to. The issue is sin, and once sin has been paid for, there is no more debt. Jesus is pointing us here to the New Covenant where sin will have been paid for, and there is no more offering for sin. Jesus told the woman, who called Him Lord, that He did not condemn her, and to sin no more, that is, to continue in returning, or repentance, and rest as in **Isaiah 30 (KJV)**: 15 For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

Now another time, after healing a leper, Jesus told the man to go offer the gift that Moses commanded in **Matthew 8 (KJV)**: 1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. 2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

In this case, Jesus commanded the man to do as the law of Moses commanded, "for a testimony unto them". But in the case of the adulteress, he let her go free. Again, Jesus was preparing his disciples for the New Covenant, which would be in effect at His death on the cross. Jesus could not afford to give the Jews occasion for punishing Him for not keeping the law.

In another case, Jesus tells a man to keep the commandments in **Mark 10 (KJV):17** And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? 18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God. 19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. 20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. 21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. 22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. 23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! 24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. 26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? 27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

It is interesting that in verse 18 above, Jesus said to the man, “Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.” Jesus was telling him that He Himself, as a representative of man, was not good. In effect, that meant that the man was not good either. But Jesus mentioned keeping the commandments because these would lead the man to realize his sinful condition, and his need for Jesus. The man wanted to inherit eternal life, and he was asking what other good thing should he do, for as far as he knew he had kept the commandments. The man did not realize that Jesus wants everything, our complete surrender. We can keep the commandments in a ritualistic sort of way, and yet still not realize our sin. Keeping the law only gives us knowledge of our sin. It does not make us good. It does not give us life as Paul reveals in **Galatians 3 (KJV):21** Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

The law leads us to faith in Christ to be born again, and receive our justification, as Paul also reveals in **Galatians 3 (KJV):24** Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Jesus was taking this man to the next step in discipleship, which is surrender of all that we have to the Lord. It is this surrender which leads us to be born again, and enter into relationship with the living God.

Jesus was preparing His disciples for a time when the middle wall between Jew and Gentile would be abolished in his flesh as Paul reveals in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):11** Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Both Jew and Gentile enter the New Covenant through the same door of Jesus into the Church. But Israel as a nation will enter the New Covenant at the end of the tribulation when Jesus comes in His revelation. The law only gives us knowledge of our sin as Paul reveals in **Romans 3 (KJV):20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Both Jew and Gentile enter the New Covenant by surrender to Him. This is what faith is, a complete trust in another.

## How to Be Perfect

Jesus commands us to be perfect as we read previously in **Matthew 5 (KJV):48** Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

As we continue to read in Matthew, Jesus reveals to us how to be perfect. He begins by teaching us about giving in **Matthew 6 (KJV):1** Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

Jesus now emphasizes a reward in heaven. Under the Old Covenant it was do this and you will live in the land of promise, in the earthly kingdom of Israel. Jesus now emphasizes the big picture, the kingdom of God. We must look past the earthly kingdom to the kingdom of heaven. That is where my true reward is.

Jesus then teaches us about prayer as we continue to read in **Matthew 6 (KJV):5** And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. 7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. 9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Again, Jesus is teaching us to look at the big picture. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. He is not limiting the kingdom to Israel, for the kingdom of heaven rules over all the kingdoms of the earth. And there will come a time when His will, will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Now Jesus explains forgiveness as we continue in **Matthew 6 (KJV):14** For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

We must forgive others, and let it go. Then we will be forgiven by our heavenly Father, and truly be free.

Jesus then teaches us about fasting as we continue in **Matthew 6 (KJV):16** Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

We must always be looking to please our heavenly Father, for our true reward is in heaven as Jesus explains in **Matthew 6 (KJV):19** Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Our true treasure is in heaven where moth and rust do not corrupt. Our eye must be single on the Lord as we continue to read in **Matthew 6 (KJV):22** The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If

therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! 24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

It's one or the other, not both. We must surrender our will to His. There is no other way. We must seek first the kingdom, the kingdom of God, as we continue in **Matthew 6 (KJV):**25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

What a new and living way He has for us! Our heavenly Father is concerned about us, and wants to provide for us if we will only seek Him first. This is the risk of Christ, to seek Him first in all that we do. It is a surrender of our will to His will for us.

Jesus then teaches us not to judge as we continue to read in **Matthew 7 (KJV):**1 Judge not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. 3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Again, we see Jesus preparing them for transition to the New Covenant. In Deuteronomy we read in **Deuteronomy 25 (KJV):**1 If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

Jesus was preparing them for a time when there would be no judges. Israel was to be taken captive into all nations for rejecting their Messiah. Jesus was preparing them for a time when grace would reign through righteousness as we read again in **Romans 5 (KJV):**21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

We must let grace reign. Our reward in heaven is more important than anything in this life. Putting the Lord first in all that we say and do, and making His word central in our lives, will insure that we have grace with wisdom. We must now look at what Jesus accomplished for us on the cross so that we don't try to repeat what He has already done for us.

## The Accomplishments of Jesus' Death on the Cross

When we understand what Jesus has already done for us, we will stop striving to do this for ourselves. We might well ask then, what was accomplished by Jesus' death on the cross? We could list the following:

- 1.) The righteous requirements of the law have been met.
- 2.) The New Covenant has been inaugurated.
- 3.) A propitiation for sin has been made.
- 4.) The way into heaven has been made known.
- 5.) The curse of the law has been lifted.
- 6.) The priesthood has been changed.
- 7.) An advocate with the Father has been provided.
- 8.) Our justification has been made possible.
- 9.) Our sanctification has been made possible.
- 10.) Our adoption has been made possible.
- 11.) Our glorification has been made possible.
- 12.) The redemption of mankind has been accomplished.
- 13.) The devil's power has been destroyed

We will now look at what the Bible says in regards to each point.

### 1. The Righteous Requirements of the Law Have Been Met

Jesus came to fulfill all righteousness as we read again in **Matthew 3 (KJV):13** Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Jesus wanted to fulfill all righteousness. The word "fulfill" in the Greek is **πληρόω** (pronounced plēroō), and means "to fill, make full, fill up, to complete, perfect, to perform fully, discharge". **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised 1978 Edition, Moulton, page 329.**

But what is righteousness? John Piper offers this definition of God's righteousness when he says, "God's righteousness is His unwavering allegiance to do what is right, that is, most ultimately, to uphold the infinite worth of His glory." **The Future of Justification, A Response to N. T. Wright, by John Piper, page 78.**

God has firm boundaries to His character, and an unwavering allegiance to do what is right. That is why He is good. He will not allow anything sinful to enter the boundaries of His character. We must understand that in order to have fellowship with someone with such firm boundaries, we must have those boundaries as well. That is why Jesus came, to give us those boundaries.

Now that we have defined righteousness in terms of God's boundaries, let us read in Exodus of the Lord's Passover, which illustrates what must occur in the process of our redemption in order for us to obtain that righteousness. We begin in **Exodus 12 (KJV):1** And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, 2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. 3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: 4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls;

every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:

The Passover Lamb was to be without blemish, that is, without spot. We continue to read in **Exodus 12 (KJV):6** And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. 8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. 10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. 11 And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD's passover. 12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

This feast was a foreshadowing of what God would have to provide for us so that we might have the firm boundaries that He has. And Paul reveals that, in fact, Christ is our Passover sacrificed for us in **1 Corinthians 5 (KJV):6** Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

And Peter reveals that we were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ in **1 Peter 1 (KJV):18** Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

The reason that Christ was as a lamb without blemish and without spot is because He did no sin as Peter also reveals in **1 Peter 2 (KJV):21** For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Now in James we read that to break the law in one point is to be guilty of all as in **James 2 (KJV):10** For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

In order to redeem us, Christ had to be free from sin. He had to fulfill all righteousness. Now that He has accomplished this, He is now our great high Priest as we read in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):14** Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He has therefore fulfilled all righteousness. He unwaveringly did what was right, and He upheld the infinite worth of His Father's glory. He is our redeemer just the same as Job as we read in **Job 19 (KJV):25** For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

Jesus is the only one who can redeem us because He lived a sinless life, and He fulfilled all righteousness for us. This is why He became one of us as we read in **Hebrews 2 (KJV):14** Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death

he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

## 2. The New Covenant Has Been Inaugurated

Jesus predicted that He would inaugurate the New Covenant with His blood on the cross as we read in **Luke 22 (ESV):20** And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

The word “covenant” in verse 20 above is translated “testament” in the King James Version, as we read in **Luke 22 (KJV):20** Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

And also in **Matthew 26 (KJV):28** For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

The actual words in the Greek in this verse for “new testament” are **καινός διαθήκη** (pronounced *kainos diathēkē*), meaning literally “new covenant”, or “new testament”. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words explains that the word covenant “primarily signifies a disposition of property by will or otherwise. In its use in the Septuagint, it is the rendering of a Hebrew word meaning a covenant or agreement (from a verb signifying to cut or divide, in allusion to a sacrificial custom in connection with covenant making, e.g., Gen. 15:10 “divide” Jer. 34:18,19).” **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 1, page 250.**

Where the King James Version translates this Greek word *diathēkē* in the New Testament by “testament”, the English Standard Version (ESV) translates it by the word “covenant”.

It is not that the word “testament” is wrong, but in our day we think of a “testament” as a will. We should not think of the Old Testament as the “Old Will” and the New Testament as the “New Will”. We should not forget the context of the word “covenant” when it is used in the New Testament. In the plans and purposes of God, the New Covenant should be understood in the context of the other covenants that God has instituted. If we understand the New Covenant in this way, the reality of what Jesus Christ has accomplished will more readily be received.

When Jesus died on the cross, His blood was poured out for us. This inaugurated the New Covenant as we read again in **Matthew 26 (ESV):26** Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” 27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

Note that the ESV does not include the word “new” before covenant in verse 28 as the KJV does above. This is because it is not present in some older Greek manuscripts.

And also note that the bread and wine were not changed into the body and blood of the Lord in verses 26 to 28, for Jesus Himself calls it “this fruit of the vine” in verse 29.

Now the actual death of Jesus Christ finished the work of our redemption as we read in **John 19 (KJV):28** After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. 29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

The New Covenant was inaugurated with Jesus’ death on the cross. Though the New Covenant has been inaugurated, it is still the times of the Gentiles, and Israel as a nation is still in a state of unbelief. Jesus instructed the apostles about this in **Acts 1 (KJV):6** When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in



all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Jews who now accept Christ during the times of the Gentiles enter the New Covenant in the Church with the Gentiles. Israel as a nation will accept Christ at the end of the tribulation at the revelation of Christ. It is then that Jeremiah's prophecy will be fulfilled in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV):31** Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

### 3. A Propitiation for Sin Has Been Made

Jesus is the propitiation for our sins as we read in **1 John 2 (KJV):2** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

And in **1 John 4 (KJV):10** Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Jesus, as a lamb without blemish, was sent to be the propitiation, or the atoning sacrifice, for our sins because of God's love for us. It is through faith in His blood that the remission of sins that are past is granted to us as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

The word for "remission" in verse 25 in the Greek is **πάρεσις** (pronounced paresis). Vine's Expository Dictionary says that this word means "a passing by of debt or sin". **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 275.** The English Standard Version translates the word "remission" as "passing over" as we read in **Romans 3 (ESV):25** whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

The words "passed over" are a translation of the same Greek word **πάρεσις** (pronounced paresis) which is a derivative of the verb *pariemi* in the Greek, which means "to let pass beside, let fall beside; to relax". **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised 1978 Edition, Moulton, page 309.**

God can pass over our sins because of the propitiation by the blood of His son, Jesus Christ. The word "remission" is also found in **Matthew 26 (KJV):28** For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

The word for "remission" in the Greek here is **ἄφεσις** (pronounced aphasis). This word means "a dismissal, release". This same Greek word is translated as "forgiveness" in **Mark 3 (KJV):29** But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

And also in **Acts 5 (KJV):31** Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

And in **Acts 13 (KJV):38** Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:

Now the English definition of the word "remission" means "the cancellation of a debt, charge, or penalty". Another English word closely related is "remit" which means to "cancel or refrain from exacting or inflicting (a debt or punishment)". This word is found once in the King James Version in **John 20 (KJV):23** Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

The word for remit here in verse 23 in Greek is **ἀφίημι** (pronounced aphiēmi) and means "to send away", "forgive". **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 275, and Volume 2, page 122.**

The righteous sacrifice of Jesus Christ has atoned for our sins. Sin as an issue has been dealt with. Jesus made one sacrifice for sins forever as we read in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):27** Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

The Old Covenant sacrifices were only types or figures of the one sacrifice that was really needed as we find explained in **Hebrews 9 (KJV)**:1 Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. 3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid roundabout with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. 6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8 The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Eternal redemption has been obtained for us. The work of Christ on the cross was so effective that He put away sin forever by the sacrifice of Himself, as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV)**:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

By one offering He has perfected forever those who are sanctified. There is now no more offering for sin as we read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV)**:11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. 15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

Remember, because of our debt of sin, a payment was necessary. This payment was made for us by God Himself, by which He satisfied the demands of His holy and righteous character by giving up His son as a sacrifice for us. This was the ransom paid as we read in **Mark 10 (KJV)**:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

There will only ever be one sacrifice for sins, because there is only one sacrifice that could satisfy the righteousness of God. The perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross has paid it all.

#### **4. The Way into Heaven Has Been Made Known**

The way into heaven has been made possible for us as we read in **John 14 (KJV)**:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. 4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Because Jesus was sinless, He satisfied God's righteousness. He is the way. He is the way into the holiest of all, that is, heaven itself. This way was made known by Jesus when He entered heaven itself by His own blood as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV)**:8 The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of

all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Remember that the word “testament” may also be translated “covenant” as it is in the English Standard Version of the Bible, since it is the same Greek word, *diathēkē*, for both versions. So by His death and resurrection in verse 15 above, Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant.

Now from these verses, we see why Jesus preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. He is the way into heaven, and the righteous dead have now been taken by Jesus into heaven. So where were the righteous dead kept before Christ died and rose again? This is explained for us in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Now, under the Old Covenant, the righteous dead went to Abraham’s bosom when they died, as Jesus reveals in **Luke 16 (KJV):** 19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

The word for “hell” in verse 23 is actually the Greek word *ᾗδης* (pronounced *hā'-dās*). Vine’s says, “the region of departed spirits of the lost (but including the blessed dead in periods preceding the ascension of Christ). It has been thought by some that the word etymologically meant “the unseen” (from *a*, negative, and *eido*, “to see”), but this derivation is questionable; a more probable derivation is from *hado*, signifying “all-receiving.” It corresponds to “Sheol” in the OT. In the AV of the OT and NT; it has been unhappily rendered “hell,” e.g., Psalm 16:10; or “the grave,” e.g., Genesis 37:35; or “the pit,” Numbers 16:30, 33; in the NT the revisers have always used the rendering “Hades;” in the OT, they have not been uniform in the translation, e.g. in Isaiah 14:15 “hell” (marg., “Sheol”); usually they have “Sheol” in the text and “the grave” in the margin. It never denotes the grave, nor is the permanent region of the lost; in point of time it is, for such, intermediate between decease and the doom of Gehenna. For the condition, see Luke 16:23-31. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 2, page 187-188.**

Abraham’s bosom was the upper section of Sheol. This is where Jacob, when he thought his son Joseph had been killed, said that he would go down to at his death as we read in **Genesis 37 (ESV):** 35 All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, “No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.” Thus his father wept for him.

Sheol is the Hebrew word *שְׁאוֹל* (pronounced *shē'owl*), which is the place where the righteous dead went to at death, before the death of Christ on the cross. The upper part of Sheol was a holding place in the heart of the earth for the righteous dead, and the wicked dead were in a lower part. But there was a chasm between the righteous and the wicked that could not be crossed by either side. Abraham’s bosom was the place in Sheol

where the righteous dead were kept, and it was a place of comfort until the redemption of mankind should be accomplished by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, and the way into heaven itself had been made known. The wicked dead went to a place of torment, to hell or hades, which was in the lower part of Sheol.

There are no second chances as we continue to read in **Luke 16 (KJV):**27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

When Joseph was in Egypt, before he told his brothers who he really was, he commanded them to bring their brother Benjamin to Egypt. When they returned from Egypt to get their brother Benjamin, Jacob speaks of Sheol again in **Genesis 42 (ESV):**38 But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is the only one left. If harm should happen to him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol."

The King James Version translates Sheol as grave in **Genesis 42 (KJV):**38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

The wicked went there as well as we read of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in **Numbers 16 (ESV):**33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly.

And also in **Psalms 9 (ESV):**17 The wicked shall return to Sheol, all the nations that forget God.

And also in **Psalms 31 (ESV):**17 O Lord, let me not be put to shame, for I call upon you; let the wicked be put to shame; let them go silently to Sheol.

David testifies that he will eventually be free from Sheol in **Psalms 16 (ESV):**10 For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.

Now note that the King James Versions translates Sheol as hell in **Psalms 16 (KJV):**10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Now also when Jesus died on the cross, he told the thief on the cross that he would be with him this day in paradise as we read in **Luke 23 (KJV):**39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Jesus was to be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. Jesus descended into this lower "paradise", that is, Abraham's bosom, and then ascended with them all to heaven after three days and three nights as Paul reveals in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):**8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

The "captivity" spoken of in verse 8 that He led captive were the righteous dead in Abraham's bosom, the upper part of Sheol. That Christ descended there is also mentioned in **1 Peter 3 (KJV):**18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: 19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; 20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. 21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: 22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

When Jesus rose from the dead, He took those captives, Jacob, Noah, Abraham, and the other righteous dead in Abraham's bosom in Sheol to heaven, because now, by His blood, they were all able to enter.

All the righteous, after Jesus' resurrection, do not go to Abraham's bosom in Sheol, but at death are absent from the body, and present with the Lord as Paul reveals in **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):8** We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

The righteous dead no longer all have to go to Abraham's bosom in Sheol because Christ has made a way for us into heaven itself. This is why Paul says that when he departs this life he will be with Christ in **Philippians 1 (KJV):21** For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. 23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. 25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; 26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

Jesus is our forerunner as we read in **Hebrews 6 (KJV):19** Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

The door into heaven has been opened as we read in **Revelation 4 (KJV):1** After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

## 5. The Curse of the Law Has Been Lifted

We must understand the basis in the word of God for the lifting of the curse of the law. Now before accepting Christ, both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin as we shall see. We begin reading in **Romans 3 (KJV):9** What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Paul then explains the purpose of the law in **Romans 3 (KJV):19** Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

It is by the law that we have the knowledge of our sin. We cannot rid ourselves of this sin by keeping the law however. Nor can we attain the righteousness of God by keeping the law, since we already have sin. Our bodies are doomed to die because of the sin nature we possess in our flesh, inherited from Adam, for in Adam we all die as we read in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):22** For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

This death in Adam included physical death and spiritual death, for before Christ we were dead in our trespasses and sins as in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):1** And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Before Christ, we also stand condemned before God as Jesus reveals in **John 3 (KJV):18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Paul then explains how we obtain the righteousness of God without the law in **Romans 3 (KJV):21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by

his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

It is important to note that it is “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ” which is “unto all and upon all them that believe”. It is not some other righteousness as some in our day assert. This is why Paul then asks in **Romans 3 (KJV):27** Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29 Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: 30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. 31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

When Paul says we establish the law, he is saying that we uphold the law's true purpose which is to make known to us our sin. The law could not give us life as Paul reveals in **Galatians 3 (KJV):21** Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

The reason we need life is because we are all dead in sin before we accept Christ as Paul reveals in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):1** And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

He made us alive together with Him in verse 5, and raised us up in a spiritual resurrection with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus in verse 6. Paul continues in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):8** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Paul says the same in **Colossians 2 (NASB):13** When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

The law was a certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us in verse 14 above. It is this that has been nailed to the cross, and it is this that He has taken out of the way. Now, because of our spiritual resurrection when we accept Christ, our new life, which is eternal, is hidden with Christ in God as Paul reveals in **Colossians 3 (KJV):1** If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Christ is now the life of our spirit. Because we were spiritually dead in sin before coming to Christ, we could not attain the righteousness of God by keeping the law. We must then have a new birth in our spirit as Jesus described to Nicodemus in **John 3 (KJV):1** There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind

bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, Jesus says. It is our spirit which is born again, and it is in our spirit where the Holy Spirit witnesses that we are the children of God as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):16** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

As we have no power over the wind, so we have no power over the new birth. It is totally a work of God as we read in **John 1 (KJV):12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

This is why the apostle John says that we who have believed now have eternal life in **1 John 5 (KJV):11** And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Our righteousness now comes from God, for it is God who justifies us as we read again in **Romans 3 (KJV):30** Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

This justification comes then after the new birth in our spirit, and the righteousness of God which comes to us as a result of our justification is a gift as Paul reveals in **Romans 5 (KJV):17** For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

The Greek word for justification in verse 18 above is **δικαίωσις** (pronounced dikaiōsis). This word denotes the act of pronouncing righteous, justification, acquittal; its precise meaning is determined by that of the verb dikaiōō, to justify (see B); it is used twice in the Ep. to the Romans, and there alone in the N.T., signifying the establishment of a person as just by acquittal from guilt.” **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 2, page 284.** Note that I did not include B in this quote.

The word “justification” is a legal term. The judges in Israel justified the righteous and condemned the guilty as we read in **Deuteronomy 25 (KJV):1** If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

So when God justifies us, the righteousness of God is put down to our account, and we then have a standing before God as righteous. It does not mean we are perfect yet in our character. We still have a sin nature in our flesh. This will not change until we are changed and resurrected at the rapture. Nevertheless, because of our standing before God, we are not condemned as Paul reveals in **Romans 8 (KJV):33** Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Again, it is the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ which is unto all and upon all them that believe as we read in Romans 3:22. We receive the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ. This forms the basis in the word of God for our standing as righteous ones. Because of this standing, Paul can then say as in **Romans 6 (KJV):14** For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

We are not under the law but under grace. And since sin does not have dominion over us, and we are not under sin, we are therefore not under the curse of the law as Paul also reveals in **Galatians 3 (KJV):13** Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

We are no longer under the law's condemnation as Paul also reveals in **Romans 3 (KJV):19** Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

And in **Galatians 3 (KJV):22** But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

And in **Galatians 4 (KJV):4** But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

And in **Galatians 4 (KJV):21** Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

And in **Galatians 5 (KJV):18** But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

And again in **John 3 (KJV):18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Again, it is not that we don't have sin after we have faith in Christ, but we are not under the control of sin. We still have a sin nature in our flesh as Paul explains in **Romans 7 (KJV):16** If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

There is a law of sin in our members, our flesh. Until we are born again, sin rules by this law. When we are born again, we have a new spirit, being born again of the Spirit of God as in **Ezekiel 36 (KJV):26** A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

This spirit of ours is the inner man who now delights in the law of God in verse 22 above. The reason why we delight in the law of God after the inward man is because the inward man has a new nature because of the new birth by the Spirit of God. That is, being born again by the Spirit of God, we share His attributes in our spirits. This is what Peter is talking about in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):4** Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Before Christ, this inward man, our spirit, was dead in trespasses and sins. We had no control over our nature to sin in our flesh. But now that we have been made alive by the new birth, and made partakers of the divine nature by the Spirit of God, we are new creations as we read in **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):17** Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Our debt of sin has been cancelled out. The certificate of death, consisting of decrees against us has been taken out of the way, and has been nailed to the cross as we read again in **Colossians 2 (NASB):13** When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

The decrees against us comprising the certificate of debt is the law, but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ as we read in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):55** O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sin has no more strength because the law, "The certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us", has been taken out of the way, having been nailed to the cross. We are not under the curse of the law after we have accepted Christ.

## 6. The Priesthood Has Been Changed

Another accomplishment of Jesus' death on the cross was the changing of the priesthood. The priesthood under the Old Covenant was the Levitical priesthood, the sons of Aaron. The priesthood has now been changed as we read in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):11** If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for



under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. 13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

It is true that Moses spoke nothing concerning the tribe of Judah and priesthood. It was a requirement of the Mosaic Law, the Old Covenant, that one could only be a priest if he was a son of Aaron who was of the tribe of Levi. Other Levites could not be priests, but only the sons of Aaron, for God commanded Moses that the priesthood should be given to Aaron and his sons exclusively as we read again in **Exodus 28 (KJV)**:1 And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. 2 And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. 3 And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. 4 And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

The law gave the Levitical priesthood only to Aaron and his sons as we read again in **Numbers 18 (KJV)**:1 And the LORD said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. 2 And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou with thee, that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee: but thou and thy sons with thee shall minister before the tabernacle of witness. 3 And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor ye also, die. 4 And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the service of the tabernacle: and a stranger shall not come nigh unto you. 5 And ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar: that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel. 6 And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the LORD, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. 7 Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for everything of the altar, and within the veil; and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

If those Levites who were not sons of Aaron, but of the tribe of Levi, came near to “the furnishings of the sanctuary and the altar”, both they and Aaron and his sons would die. Aaron and his sons were to “bear the iniquity” in connection with their priesthood. The Levitical priesthood was therefore not given to all the Levites but only to the sons of Aaron. This was a perpetual statute as stated in **Exodus 29 (KJV)**:4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water. 5 And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: 6 And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. 7 Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him. 8 And thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them. 9 And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the bonnets on them: and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute: and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.

The fact that the priesthood was exclusively Aaron and his son's and not the other Levites is proven also by the rebellion of Korah who was a Levite but not a son of Aaron. The account of Korah's rebellion is in **Numbers 16 (KJV)**:1 Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: 2 And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: 3 And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?

Korah was a son of Levi but he was not a son of Aaron. He and the sons of Reuben, another tribe in Israel, and others of the tribe of Levi, wanted the priesthood as we read in **Numbers 16 (KJV):8** And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: 9 Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? 10 And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?

Moses commanded Korah and all his company to take censors and to put fire and incense in them and appear before the Lord. There were 250 men with censors offering incense, and Aaron was present as well. They stood in front of Moses when Moses pronounced judgment on them as we read in **Numbers 16 (KJV):26** And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. 27 So they got up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. 28 And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. 29 If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. 30 But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD. 31 And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: 32 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.

And fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men offering incense as we see in **Numbers 16 (KJV):35** And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

The censors of these men were gathered up and hammered out as a covering for the altar so that the people of Israel would not forget that the priesthood belonged to the sons of Aaron exclusively as we read in **Numbers 16 (KJV):39** And Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad plates for a covering of the altar: 40 To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses.

Again the Levites were to assist the sons of Aaron as we read in **1 Chronicles 23 (KJV):27** For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above: 28 Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God; 29 Both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour for meat offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size; 30 And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even: 31 And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD: 32 And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy place, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the LORD.

The division of the priests was strictly within the families of the sons of Aaron as recorded in **1 Chronicles 24 (KJV):1** Now these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron. The sons of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 2 But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children: therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office. 3 And David distributed them, both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service.

The point is that the priesthood of Aaron is not transferrable from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. The priesthood has been changed from the order of Aaron to the order of Melchisedec as we read again in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):11** If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. 13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave

attendance at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

A change in the law, mentioned in verse 12, is a necessity now because of the change in the priesthood. Jesus is now our great high priest after the order of Melchisedec as it is revealed in **Hebrews 5 (KJV):5** So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; 10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

This does not mean that the Ten Commandments have changed, for they are the standard of God's righteousness. It only means that the ceremonial law of the priesthood has been fulfilled, and is no longer necessary because of Jesus' work on the cross. Sin is still sin, and the law still tells us what sin is. But we are not under the law's curse because Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law.

Now, Jesus is made an high priest forever, having entered heaven itself for us as we read in **Hebrews 6 (KJV):16** For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

The veil in verse 19 speaks of the veil which divided the tabernacle under the Old Covenant. This veil signified that the way into the Holy Place, that is heaven, had not been made known yet while the first tabernacle was standing as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):6** Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8 The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Christ "entered in once into the holy place" in verse 12, and "the holiest of all" in verse 8, that is heaven itself. He has "passed into the heavens" as we read also in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):14** Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Now, we have in place an unchangeable priesthood "after the power of an endless life", as we continue to read in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):15** And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, 16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. 17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. 18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

The word "disannulling" in the Greek is **ἀθέτησις** (pronounced athetēsis). This word means "abolition, disannulling, put away, rejection". This relates to the change in the law. The laws concerning the priesthood and which commanded sacrifices to be offered of bulls and goats are no longer necessary.

We continue to read in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):19** For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. 20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: 21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The

Lord swear and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec:) 22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

Again, the word for “testament” in verse 22 is the same Greek word translated “testament” in **Matthew 26 (KJV):28** For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

And this is the same Greek word that is translated “covenant” in the English Standard Version as we read in **Matthew 26 (ESV):28** for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Jesus is a surety or guarantee of a better testament or covenant, because He is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. He also ever lives to make intercession for us as we continue in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):23** And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: 24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

If we sin after we believe in Him, He does not need to be crucified for us again as we read in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):26** For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; 27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. 28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

He “offered up himself once” and was “consecrated for evermore”. The writer of Hebrews summarizes all that has been said in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):1** For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. 5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

The Old Covenant, the first, has been taken away, having been replaced by the second, the New Covenant. We continue in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):10** By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. 15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

There is now no more offering for sin. Sin as an issue has been dealt with. It is not just the sins before we accept Christ that are remitted, but all sin has been remitted. This is why there is no more offering for sin. We continue in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):19** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

So the change in the priesthood necessitated the change in the laws of the Old Covenant regarding the priesthood of Aaron. The priesthood of the Old Covenant, or the Mosaic Law, has been fulfilled. There has been a change in the priesthood now that the New Covenant has been inaugurated. There is no more need for a priest to offer sacrifice for sin because this has been done once and for all by Christ who has entered into heaven itself, the most holy place, for us, by His own blood. In doing so, He has made a way for us to enter as well, and has accomplished eternal redemption for us.

## 7. An Advocate with the Father Has Been Provided

We also have an advocate with the Father as John reveals in **1 John 2 (KJV):1** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

The word in the Greek for “advocate” is **παράκλητος** (pronounced *paraklētos*), meaning “literally, called to one’s side, i.e., to one’s aid, is primarily a verbal adjective, and suggests the capability or adaptability for giving aid. It was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, counsel for the defense, an advocate; then, generally, one who pleads another’s cause, an intercessor, advocate, as in 1 John 2:1, of the Lord Jesus. In the widest sense, it signifies a succourer, comforter. Christ was this to His disciples, by the implication of His word “another (*allos*, another of the same sort, not *heteros*, different) Comforter,” when speaking of the Holy Spirit, John 14:16. In 14:26; 15:26; 16:7 He calls Him “the Comforter.” “Comforter” or “Consoler” corresponds to the name “Menahem,” given by the Hebrews to the Messiah”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 1, page 208.**

There is one mediator between God and man as we read in **1 Timothy 2 (KJV):5** For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

Jesus is our only mediator between God and man. The word “mediator” in the Greek is **μεσίτης** (pronounced *mesitēs*), “literally, a go-between (from *mesos*, middle, and *eimi*, to go), is used in two ways in the N.T., (a) one who mediates between two parties with a view to producing peace, as in 1 Timothy 2:5, though more than mere mediatorship is in view, for the salvation of men necessitated that the Mediator should Himself possess the nature and attributes of Him towards whom He acts, and should likewise participate in the nature of those for whom He acts (sin apart); only by being possessed both of Deity and humanity could He comprehend the claims of the one and the needs of the other; further, the claims and the needs could be met only by One who, himself being proved sinless, would offer Himself an expiatory sacrifice on behalf of men; (b) one who acts as a guarantee so as to secure something which otherwise would not be obtained. Thus in Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24 Christ is the Surety of “the better covenant,” “the new covenant,” guaranteeing its terms for His people.” **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 54-55.**

Jesus is able to save us because He ever lives to make intercession for us as we read in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):23** And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: 24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Sin as an issue has been dealt with as we read in **1 John 2 (KJV):2** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

There will only ever be one sacrifice for sin. Jesus paid it all. It is then, on the basis of what Jesus has done for us, our responsibility to walk in the light as we read in **1 John (KJV):6** If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 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 cleanseth us from all sin.

The light that we are to walk in is the word of God as we know from **Psalms 119 (KJV):105** Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

It is in our soul area that we are progressively cleansed. In our past, we may have acquired many unhealthy habits, ways of thinking, and feeling. The light of the word of God will help us correct these unhealthy things in our lives. As the light of the word of God reveals sin in our lives, it is then our responsibility to confess our sins as we read in **1 John 1 (KJV):8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the

truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Our body is death doomed and still has a sin nature. But God in His love for us has made provision for this. It is not His will that we sin, but if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father who ever lives to make intercession for us as we read again in **1 John 2 (KJV):1** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

We are not perfect yet, but when we see Him, we will be like Him as we read in **1 John 3 (KJV):2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Because He is our advocate, and because He is the only mediator between God and man, we are not dependent on any man for the truth of God as we read in **1 John 2 (NASB):26** These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you. 27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

We must all depend on the anointing of the Spirit of God to help us to discern the truth of God. By doing so, we will abide in Him.

## 8. Our Justification Has Been Made Possible

The word “justify” means to declare righteous. We have an example of justification in the Old Testament in **Deuteronomy 25 (KJV):1** If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

The person or persons being judged are declared to be righteous, that is, in a right standing before the law. Those justified are not made perfect in their character by being justified. But as they stand before the court of law, they are now declared to be innocent of all legal offenses, and in a right standing before the law. This is similar to our justification in the New Testament.

When we have faith in Christ, we then come before the court of God, who is our judge as it were, and He, seeing our faith in Jesus Christ, declares us to be righteous. That is, the one who has faith in Jesus Christ is now declared to be free from all blame under the law. He or she is not condemned, and they now have a right standing in God’s eyes, a standing as righteous ones. This is what is referred to in **John 3 (KJV):17** For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Now the grounds of our justification is the blood of Christ. We are now justified by His blood as we read in **Romans 5 (KJV):9** Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Our redemption is through His blood as we read in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):7** In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Justification is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, as the Scripture points out in **Romans 3 (KJV):24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:”

The blood of Christ is the price paid for our redemption, and all those who are bought by the blood of Christ are justified by the Father.

In order to receive this justification, God requires us to believe in Jesus Christ, His Son. It is the acceptance of Christ that makes it possible for God to justify us. Faith in Jesus Christ brings us into a state of righteousness that changes our standing with God as we read in **Galatians 2 (KJV):16** Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ...

We have passed from a standing of condemnation to a standing of righteousness as we read again in **John 3 (KJV):18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

And in **Romans 3 (KJV):26** To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Our justification is not by our works, but because of our faith as we read in **Romans 4 (KJV):5** But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

It is important to note that it is the righteousness of God which is counted for righteousness. It is the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ which is unto all and upon all them that believe. Again, it is not some other righteousness as some in our day assert. This is what Paul is saying in **Romans 3 (KJV):20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Once we have faith in Jesus Christ, God then justifies us. That is, He imputes, or puts His righteousness down to our account as we read in **Romans 4 (KJV):6** Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

The word “imputeth” in the Greek is λογίζομαι (pronounced logizomai), and means “to reckon, take into account, or metaphorically, to put down to a person’s account”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 2, page 252.** Moulton says that this word means “to count, calculate; to count, enumerate, Mark 15:28, Luke 22:37; to set down as a matter of account, 1 Corinthians 13:5, 2 Corinthians 3:5, 12:6; to impute, Romans 4:3, 2 Corinthians 5:19, 2 Timothy 4:16, et al;” **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, page 249.**

The word “impute” is also used in **Romans 4 (KJV):8** Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

And in **Romans 4 (KJV):11** And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

And in **Romans 4 (KJV):22** And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

And in **James 2 (KJV):23** And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

Again, to illustrate how this imputation would work, imagine that we are in a court of law, and the judge pronounces a verdict of not guilty on the one facing judgment. This one would then have a standing before the law as a righteous person. This standing would not make this one perfect in his character, but would exonerate him from all blame before the law. In just the same way, the one who believes in Jesus Christ then comes before the judgment seat of God, and when the Lord sees our faith, on the basis of the blood of Christ the gavel comes down, and He declares us righteous and free from blame before Him. The judgment does not make us perfect in our character, but declares us to be righteous, that is, on the right side of the law as it were.

And not only so, but the righteousness of God is unto all and upon all them that believe as we read again **Romans 3 (KJV):22** Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

The Greek for this verse is as follows:

δικαιοσύνη δὲ θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς πάντας  
a righteousness and of God through faith of(in) Jesus Christ to all

τοὺς πιστεύοντας οὐ γάρ ἐστιν διαστολή  
the [ones] believing not for there is difference

Or we could say, “A righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all the ones who believe for there is no difference”.

This is from **The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, Marshall's literal English translation with the Nestle Greek text, page 611, third edition 1974.**

The righteousness of God is to all who believe in Jesus Christ. And after our justification, we then have peace with Him, and stand in grace as Paul reveals in **Romans 5 (KJV):1** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

In verse 1, the word "peace" in the Greek is εἰρήνη (pronounced eirēnē). This word comes from the verb eiro and means "to bind together that which has been separated". **Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, Kenneth S. Wuest, Volume One, Romans in the Greek New Testament, page 75-77.**

Thus, the word "peace" in the Greek in this context means "to be set at one with". Our justification by faith makes this possible. After we have been justified by God, we are set at one with Him and we stand in grace, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

## 9. Our Sanctification Has Been Made Possible

When Paul addressed the Corinthians, he called them the ones "that are sanctified in Christ Jesus" as we read in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):2** Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

The word "sanctified" in the Greek is ἁγιάζω (pronounced hagiāzō), and means "to separate, consecrate; cleanse, purify, sanctify; regard or reverence as holy. LXX." **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised 1978 Edition, Moulton, page 3.**

Paul also called the Ephesian believers saints in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):1** Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Then we read also of the saints in Philippi in **Philippians 1 (KJV):1** Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then also Paul addresses the saints in Colosse in **Colossians 1 (KJV):1** Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, 2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Greek for "saints" in all of these verses is ἅγιος (pronounced hä'-gē-os), meaning holy ones.

He then explains in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):30** But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Now before they came to believe in Jesus Christ, many of them were as we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (KJV):9** Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

The King James Version translates the words "are washed", "are sanctified", and "are justified" as in the present tense. The correct translation shows these words in the past tense as we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (ESV):11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

The washing, sanctifying, and justifying happened when they believed in Jesus Christ. They "were washed", they "were sanctified", and they "were justified" in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. That is, they had already obtained a standing before God as cleansed and righteous ones after they had believed in Jesus Christ. This did not mean they were perfect yet in their character. On the contrary, Paul described them as carnal in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):1** And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is



among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

Yet the Corinthians were saved, and they had the Spirit of God dwelling in them as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV)**:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Their bodies were the members of Christ, and they were temples of the Holy Spirit who was in them, and they had been bought with a price as we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (KJV)**:15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. 16 What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh. 17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

When we have faith in Jesus Christ, and we are born again, we become members of Christ, and we are not our own. And we are sovereignly baptized into the body of Christ as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV)**:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

And in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV)**:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

Being in Christ Jesus and in His body, Jesus Christ has been made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption by God as we read again in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV)**:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

So in one sense, we are sanctified when we accept Christ as savior. That is, He is our sanctification since we are in Christ, and in His body.

And His body is the Church as we read in **Ephesians 1 (KJV)**:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

And in **Colossians 1 (KJV)**:24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

Though we are in Christ Jesus, and in His body, which is the Church, and though we have a standing of righteousness, and though we have a new divine nature in our spirits as a result of being born again of the Spirit of God, we still, in our flesh, have the old Adamic sin nature because we are all descended from Adam. Yet God has made provision for us in this state. This provision is what Jesus is referring to in **John 13 (KJV)**:6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

In verses 10, Jesus said that He that is washed only needs to wash his feet and he is all clean. Or we could say that the one who has had a bath only needs to wash his feet, and he is all clean as we read in the New American Standard Bible in **John 13 (NASB)**:10 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean."

The idea is that once we have believed in Jesus and we are born again, we have been bathed or washed, or we have been sanctified. This is referred to as the washing of regeneration in **Titus 3 (KJV)**:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

The washing of regeneration is the bath that we take when we are born again. After that, we only need to wash our feet. This is why we have an advocate. We simply must confess our sins as they are brought to light by the Spirit of God, and He is then faithful to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness as we read again in **1 John 1 (KJV):9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

So in another sense, we are progressively sanctified. This cleansing happens in our soul area, which is our mind, our will, our heart, our emotions, and our conscience. Our spirits are already cleansed, being born again of the Spirit of God. Once we are born again, having had faith in Christ, we are as babes in Christ. We rejoice in our savior and sins forgiven, but as babes, we are not aware of the sinful lifestyle that we have lived in all of our lives. As we read His word, or receive teaching in His word, He gives us more light, and the light will reveal areas in our lives that need to be cleansed of sin. This is why we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. We do not have to get saved all over again, or have a bath all over again. We simply wash our feet by confessing our sin as it is brought to light, and move on. In this way we grow in grace and knowledge, and we are progressively sanctified in our souls, and our path shines brighter and brighter as we read in **Proverbs 4 (NASB):18** But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day.

### **10. Our Adoption Has Been Made Possible**

Regeneration begins the new life in our spirit. We are born again. A miracle of life has taken place in our spirit. A new nature or man is born in us. So regeneration deals with a change in our nature in our spirit. With a change in our nature comes a change in our standing which takes place because of our justification. Then we stand in God's presence guiltless and uncondemned and righteous, in a righteousness which God accepts because of what Christ has done. We are then sanctified, or set apart to God. And then a progressive sanctification takes place which deals with a change in our character. We are being conformed to His image in our soul, which is the area of our mind, will, heart, emotions, and conscience. This is a progressive experience.

Adoption deals with a change in our position. We were, in our unregenerated state, children of the devil with his nature, as in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):3**...and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Through adoption by Jesus Christ we are now sons of God, as in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):5** Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

Also in **1 John 3 (KJV):2**, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God..."

The word "adoption" in Ephesians 1:5 in the Greek is **υιοθεσία**, "from *huios*, "a son," and *thesis*, "a placing," akin to *tithemi*, "to place," signifies the place and condition of a son given to one to whom it does not naturally belong. The word is used by the Apostle Paul only." **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 1, page 31-32.**

So we could say that adoption means "the placing of a son". It is speaking about the Roman practice of legally adopting a child, and not only making him an heir of all his material possessions, but also giving him his civil position of an adult son. The same can be said of us. God takes a believing sinner, regenerates him, and makes him a child of God. Then He takes this born one, or child, and he becomes a joint heir with Christ, and an adult son in the family of God. So Adoption means the taking of one who is the son of another to be his son, so that this son has the same position and all the advantages of a son by birth. An illustration of this kind of adoption is brought out in Scripture, in **Exodus 2 (KJV):10** And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son...

Then in **Hebrews 11 (KJV):24** By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

## 11. Our Glorification Has Been Made Possible

This is already a completed act in the mind of God as we read in **Romans 8 (NASB):29** For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

As Christ was raised from the dead in a glorified body, so shall we by the same Spirit as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):11** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

We who believe will be glorified. That is, our bodies will be redeemed at the resurrection as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):18** For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. 20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, 21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

The redemption of our body relates to our glorification as we read in **Philippians 3 (KJV):20** For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

This is what Paul is referring to in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):50** Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Our bodies are mortal while we are here on this earth. But at the resurrection, our bodies will be changed to be immortal like the body of the Lord Jesus. The apostle John also refers to this in **1 John 3 (KJV):2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

## 12. The Redemption of Mankind Has Been Accomplished

Just before Jesus died on the cross, His last words were as we read in **John 19 (KJV):30** When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

The work that God the Father had given Jesus to accomplish is finished. Jesus is now seated at the right hand of the Father exalted in heaven as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV):32** This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Christ entered the holy place, that is, heaven itself, and has obtained eternal redemption for us as we read again in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):11** But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

We who have believed receive the promise of eternal inheritance as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):15** And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the

transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

We have been redeemed from all of the transgressions that were under the first testament. That is, we have been redeemed from all of the transgressions that were under the Mosaic law, the Old Covenant, which condemned us to death. Now, Christ has entered heaven itself to appear before God for us as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):22** And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. 23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Christ offered Himself only once as we continue to read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):25** Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

As we read further, we see that the sacrifices according to the law could never make those who offer them perfect in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):1** For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

The whole reason why Christ had to come was because the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins. This is why He offered Himself as we continue in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):5** Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

It is the will of God that we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all as we continue to read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):10** By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

There will only ever be one sacrifice for sins, and that is the offering that Jesus Christ made on the cross. We are now in the New Covenant as we continue in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):15** Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

Now in the New Covenant, there is no more offering for sin to be made. There is no need for other mediators or priests. The law of the Aaronic priesthood has been fulfilled. All who are believers have a new and living way which He has consecrated for us as we continue in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):19** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

### 13. The Devil's Power Has Been Destroyed

The devil's power has been destroyed as we read in **Hebrews 2 (KJV):14** Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The devil's head has been bruised as was prophesied in **Genesis 3 (KJV):14** And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The identity of the serpent is revealed in **Revelation 12 (KJV):9** And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Though this event in Revelation 12 is still a future event, Jesus has given us power over the enemy as we read in **Luke 10 (KJV):19** Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

All power is given to Jesus in heaven and in earth, and we go therefore in His authority in **Matthew 28 (KJV):18** And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The prince of this world has been judged as we read in **John 17 (KJV):7** Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

And the Holy Spirit in believers is greater than the prince of this world as we read in **1 John 4 (KJV):4** Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Everlasting fire is prepared for the devil and his angels as Jesus reveals in **Matthew 25 (KJV):41** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

And in the book of Revelation, the everlasting fire is to be the lake of fire as we read in **Revelation 20 (KJV):10** And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

When we consider all that Jesus has accomplished by His death on the cross, that the righteous requirements of the law have been met, that the New Covenant has been inaugurated, that a propitiation for sin has been made, that the way into heaven has been made known, that the curse of the law has been lifted, that the priesthood has been changed, that the provision of an advocate with the Father has been made, that our justification has been made possible, that our sanctification has been made possible, that our adoption has been made possible, that our glorification has been made possible, that the redemption of mankind has been accomplished, and the devil's power has been destroyed, what else can we say but, Hallelujah!

## The Doorway into the New Covenant

Jesus said, "I am the door..." in **John 10 (KJV):7** Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Jesus also said that He was the way in **John 14 (KJV):6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

In order to enter through the doorway of Jesus into the New Covenant, we must be born again as Jesus reveals in his dialog with Nicodemus as we read in **John 3 (KJV):1** There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus was not talking here about being born again by water baptism. When He says, "Except a man be born of water", He is speaking of the natural birth of flesh as we see in the very next verse as we continue in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

We must be born a natural birth, that is to say of water surrounding the fetus, and we must be born of the Spirit. This new birth then is in our spirit, as Jesus says in verse 6, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit". This is why the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God in **Romans 8 (KJV):16** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Man has three parts to his being, which are body, soul, and spirit as Paul reveals in **1 Thessalonians 5 (KJV):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.

Our spirit is where we have contact with the Lord. Our soul is composed of our mind, will, heart, emotions, and conscience. These are the unseen parts of us. Our spirit communicates with the physical realm via the soul.

Even as a teacher of Israel, Nicodemus did not understand these things as we continue to read in **John 3 (KJV):9** Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? 10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? 11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

The earthly things Jesus spoke of relate to the natural birth. We see that Jesus expected Nicodemus to be born again, and to know these things. It has always been a requirement to be born again, even in the other covenant times. Previous to the New Covenant, all of the Old Testament saints believed in the one who was to come. We believe in the one who came, Jesus Christ. Nicodemus had not gone there yet, but he did go there after Jesus explained this to him. We continue to read in **John 3 (KJV):13** And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light,

neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

The reason that the one who does not believe is condemned already in verse 18 above is because, before we come to Christ, we are spiritually dead in sin as we read again in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):1** And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

It was in our spirit that we were dead in sin. It is in our spirit that we have communion and fellowship with God. It was in this condition of being dead in sin that we were alienated from the life of God as Paul describes in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):17** This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Being dead in sin, we were alienated from the life of God, and we had no relationship with our Creator. But we received new birth in our spirit when we accepted Christ as we read further in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Our spirit was made alive to God by the Spirit of God, and it was then that we received eternal life in our spirits. This is why John assures those who have believed that they have eternal life in **1 John 5 (KJV):13** These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

## The New Man

Being born of the Spirit, the Spirit is now the life of our spirits as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):1** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

The law of sin and death is still in our flesh since we are descendants of Adam, but we have a new nature in our spirit by the new birth. This is what Peter reveals in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):4** Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

This is why our inner man, our spirit, delights to do the will of God as we read in **Romans 7 (KJV):22** For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

Before Christ, we were alienated from the life of God because of our blind ignorance as we read again in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):17** This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

But after accepting Christ, our new man is renewed in knowledge, the knowledge of God, as we read in **Colossians 3 (KJV):10** And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Our new man is created in righteousness and true holiness as we read in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):24** And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

And this is why we can honestly say that we who have believed in Jesus Christ are new creations as we read again in **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):17** Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

We have now been raised with Christ, who is now our life, that is, the life of our spirits, as we read in **Colossians 3 (KJV):**1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

## The Old Man

Though we who have believed are new creations, and we have a new divine nature in our spirits because of the new birth by the Spirit of God, we still have the old Adamic sin nature in our flesh. This is why our bodies are mortal, that is, doomed to die, and are yet to be redeemed at the resurrection. So we must “put off” and “put on” as Paul reveals in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):**22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The old man is all that we were before Christ, the old ways of thinking, feeling, and the standards of our conscience. The new man is our inner spirit which has been born again by the Spirit of God. When Paul tells the Colossians in Colossians 3:3 above that they are dead, and their life is hid with Christ in God, he means that they are dead to the law and to sin. Paul explains this relationship of new man to old man in **Romans 7 (KJV):**1 Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. 4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

So we who have believed in Jesus Christ have become dead to the law because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross. This has freed us to be married to another who is raised from the dead. Jesus made it possible for our sin to be wiped away, and for us to be one with our Father in heaven so that we should bring forth fruit unto God as in verse 4 above.

Paul now explains our sin nature as we continue to read in **Romans 7 (KJV):**5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. 9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

That is, Paul was “alive” in his thinking before Christ because he was unaware that he was really dead in his sin, and condemned by the law. But after he heard the Gospel, and believed in Jesus Christ, he realized that the law only condemned him as we continue to read in **Romans 7 (KJV):**10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. 11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. 12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. 13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. 14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Paul realized that he was sinful because the commandment made him aware of his sin. This is what led him to believe in Jesus Christ.

Paul then explains our plight after we have believed in Jesus Christ in **Romans 7 (KJV):**15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in



me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

After he believed in Jesus Christ, Paul realized that sin dwells in our members as a nature as we know from **Ephesians 2 (KJV):3** Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

This sinful nature absolutely controls us before Christ. However, it is not eradicated from our flesh when we believe in Jesus Christ and we are born again. The new birth takes place in our spirits. Our flesh is still doomed to die because of the sinful nature. In addition, before Christ, we were carnally minded in the flesh, and could not please God as Paul reveals in **Romans 8 (KJV):5** For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

But after we have believed in Jesus Christ, we have victory by the Spirit of God, who has delivered us from the body of this death as we read in **Romans 7 (KJV):24** O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Paul sees a dual nature in man. The one who has been born again in his inner man, his spirit, is serving God, but in his flesh, he still serves sin. Our soul is the faculty by which our spirits connect with the natural world. In our heart we must decide what our minds will dwell on. Our flesh is constantly with us, and we hear its voice in our soul suggesting that we do sin. If we reject the voice of our flesh, and yield to the voice of the Spirit, we will have life and peace. The voice of our flesh is what we must put off.

Now, if we have been born again, we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit as Paul reveals in **Romans 8 (KJV):9** But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

The Spirit of God is in those who have believed, and have been born again by the Spirit of God. This is what Paul means by "Christ be in you" as we continue in **Romans 8 (KJV):10** And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

The Spirit is now the life of our spirit because we have been born again by the Spirit of God. That is, the Spirit of God imparts His life to our spirits when we are born again. And this same Spirit of God has given us power over our flesh, and will raise us from the dead at the resurrection as we continue in **Romans 8 (KJV):11** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

We are heirs with Christ if we suffer with him. That is, we will be rewarded for suffering with him in this life. If we do not suffer with him, but only produce wood, hay, or stubble, we will lose our rewards, but our spirit, which has been born again, will still be saved, yet as by the fire in this life as a result of our bad choices. This is what Paul is saying in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):13** Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

We know from 1 Corinthians 5:1-4 that there was fornication among them, and one of them even had his father's wife. This was dealt with by Paul in **1 Corinthians 5 (KJV):4** In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

After we have believed in Jesus Christ, and have been born again, our will is set free and we no longer have to perform the deeds of our flesh. But the choice is ours. Do we want to have rewards when we see Him and we are like Him, or do we want to be saved by fire?

We must agree with Paul in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):25** Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Have you ever noticed that this putting away of lying, and this letting no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouths that Paul talks about, does not happen automatically. When we decide put off the old man or woman, we are going through the process of progressive sanctification in our soul area. Our soul is composed of our mind, will, heart, emotions, and conscience. This is where the baggage of our past resides. All of the old ways, the old tapes, are here in the soul area. As we fill ourselves with the word of God, our minds are renewed. As we walk in the light of the word of God, we are cleansed in the area of our soul. This is what the apostle John is teaching us in **1 John 1 (KJV):7** If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 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 cleanseth us from all sin.

We become a child of God when we are born again, but the new birth does not take away our sin nature in our flesh, nor does it cleanse our souls. This is what the apostle John is saying in **1 John 3 (KJV):1** Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Having the hope of being like Him one day purifies our souls, even as He is pure. We are also cleansed by His word as we read in **John 15 (KJV):3** Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. And in **John 17 (KJV):17** Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

We must be in the word if we are to truly be His disciples as Jesus spoke in **John 8 (KJV):31** Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

## The Washing of Regeneration

Now, if we have been born again, we have a standing of righteousness as we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (KJV):11** And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

When we are justified, God declares us righteous, and imputes or puts righteousness down to our account. Being washed here in verse 11 does not refer to water baptism, but to the washing of regeneration as we read in **Titus 3 (KJV):5** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

We are washed when we are born again. This is the washing of regeneration. This is what Jesus was referring to in John 13, when He was washing the disciples feet as we read in **John 13 (KJV):10** Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

This washing, or cleansing, has to do with the forgiveness of sins that happens when we are born again as we read in **Colossians 2 (NASB):13** When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

If “the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us”, which is the law, has been cancelled, we are free. We are not condemned. We are saved!

Once we have believed from our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, and we have confessed Him as Lord, we are born again. This is revealed in **Romans 10 (KJV):9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Jesus also teaches this in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

The moment we believe from our heart that Jesus was raised from the dead, and confess Him as our Lord, we pass from death unto life. We are only baptized in water because we believe. It is not a condition of salvation, but an evidence of our saving faith when we take this step of obedience to Jesus, and we are water baptized.

So when we were born again, we were washed, sanctified, and justified by God, as we read again in **1 Corinthians 6 (NASB):11** Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

This is a past event in our lives after we have believed in Jesus Christ. The verbs in the NASB translation above are all correctly translated in the past tense, whereas in the King James translation above, the verbs are in the present tense which is incorrect according to the literal Greek. Here is 1 Corinthians 6:11 in the Greek with the English underneath:

καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε ἀλλὰ ἡγιάσθητε ἀλλ' ἐδικαιώθητε  
and these things some (of you) were but you were washed but you were sanctified but you were justified

ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν  
in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the spirit of God our

This is from **The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, Marshall's literal English translation with the Nestle Greek text, page 669-670, third edition 1974.**

Now just so we are clear, here is what **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised 1978 Edition by Moulton** says about how the verbs should be parsed in 1 Corinthians 6:11:

You were washed: **ἀπελούσασθε** (pronounced apeloosastheh) – 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural, aorist 1, indicative middle of the verb **ἀπολούω** (pronounced apolouō), and meaning to cleanse by bathing; middle, to cleanse one's self; to procure one's self to be cleansed; metaphorically, of sin.

You were sanctified: **ἡγιάσθητε** (pronounced hegiasthete) – 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural, aorist 1, indicative passive of the verb **ἁγιάζω** (pronounced hagiázō), and meaning to separate, to consecrate; cleanse, purify, sanctify; regard or reverence as holy.

You were justified: **ἐδικαιώθητε** (pronounce edekaiotheteh) – 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural, aorist 1, indicative passive of the verb **δικαίω** (pronounce dikaioō), and meaning to make or render right or just; passive, to be held acquitted, to be cleared, to be approved, to stand approved, to stand accepted.

For you non-Greek scholars, the aorist 1, in Greek, is the past tense. So what 1 Corinthians 6:11 is saying is that we were washed, we were sanctified, and we were justified when we accepted Christ as our Savior. We now, having been justified by faith, have a standing of righteousness, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God as we read in **Romans 5 (NASB):1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

The word for “having been justified” in Greek is **δικαιοθέντες** (pronounced dikaiothentes). It is in the nominative, plural, masculine, participle, aorist 1, passive tense. **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised 1978 Edition, Moulton, page 101.** In Greek, the participle indicates continuous action, but the aorist indicates completed action. That is why it is translated “having been justified” in the New American Standard Bible. Our justification happened when we had faith in Jesus Christ, just like our regeneration, or new birth.

Now it is God who justifies as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):33** Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Paul did not even want his own righteousness as we read in **Philippians 3 (KJV):9** And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

When God justifies someone, He declares them to be righteous, that is, to be cleared of wrongdoing. He then imputes His own righteousness, the righteousness which is of God by faith, to our account as He did to Abraham as Paul reveals in **Romans 4 (KJV):1** What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

The word “counted” in the Greek is **ἐλογίσθη** (pronounced elogistheh), and “is properly used (a) of numerical calculation, e.g., Luke 22:37”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 258.**

In Luke 22:37 this Greek word is translated “reckoned” as in **Luke 22 (KJV):37** For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

The word “reckoned” is the same word in Greek as the word “counted” in Romans 4:3 above. This same Greek word is translated “imputed” in Romans 4:11 as we read in context in **Romans 4 (KJV):11** And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

Abraham allowed himself to be circumcised because he believed God, that is, because he had faith in God's promise. And the word “imputed” in verse 11 above is also used here in context in **Romans 4 (KJV):19** And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

The word “impute” relates to a decision by a court of law. One is either guilty or not guilty as we read in **Deuteronomy 25 (KJV):1** If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

When we believe in Jesus Christ, and confess Him as our Lord, it is as if we come before the court of God, and when He sees our faith, He brings the gavel down, and declares us to be righteous in His sight as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

When God justifies the believing sinner, He imputes, counts, reckons, or credits “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all” who believe. Let us be clear. The “righteousness of God” is the “righteousness of God”, or God’s own righteousness. It is God’s own righteousness that is imputed to all who believe. His own righteousness therefore is put down to the account of the believing sinner, even though this one still has a sin nature in his or her flesh, and is therefore not perfect yet. The believing sinner is perfect in his or her spirit, being born of the Spirit of God, but we all must wait to be perfected in our bodies as we read again in **Romans 8 (KJV):22** For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. 24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

This redemption of our body in verse 23 will happen at the resurrection. When we see Him we will be like Him as in **Philippians 3 (KJV):20** For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

And in **1 John 3 (KJV):2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

So the washing of regeneration relates to the bath of forgiveness of sins that the Lord gives us when we believe in Jesus Christ, and that God raised Him from the dead, and we confess Him as our Lord. This is when we are born again, or regenerated. We also then receive a standing of righteous in God’s sight, even though we still have a sin nature in our flesh. But because of our standing as righteous in God’s sight, we need only to wash our feet and we are all clean again. This is what the apostle John is saying in **1 John 2 (KJV):1** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Because Jesus is the propitiation for our sins, we now have an advocate with the Father, being His children. We do not have to have a bath all over again, that is, to be born again a second time, or regenerated again, if we sin. We simply have to confess our sins, and He will be faithful and just to forgive us our sins because Jesus is our advocate, and He is the propitiation for our sin, and He ever lives to make intercession for us since He is already in heaven.

Some may still have a question. What about unconfessed sin at death? The apostle John speaks of a sin unto death in **1 John 5 (KJV):16** If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

John is not speaking of spiritual death here. What John is speaking of here is physical death as a discipline of the Lord. That the Lord disciplines every child of God He receives is revealed in **Hebrews 12 (KJV):1** Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that

endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

All are partakers of the Lord's discipline as we continue to read in **Hebrews (KJV):**8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

An example of the Lord's discipline is found in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):**26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

The Lord's discipline may include weakness, sickness, and sleep, or physical death. An example of the discipline of physical death is found in the case of Ananias and Sapphira in **Acts 5 (KJV):**1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. 5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. 6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

Ananias' sin was lying to the Holy Spirit who is God. His wife also was part of the same charade as we continue in **Acts 5 (KJV):**7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. 8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. 9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. 10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. 11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

We must understand that this was a time of great signs and wonders being done by the apostles as we continue to read in **Acts 5 (KJV):**12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. 13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. 14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) 15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

But Paul's admonition to the Corinthians still stands in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):**15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Let us rather "rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live", for He chastens us "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness".

## The New Covenant – a New and Living Way

The New Covenant is now a new and living way for us because of what Jesus has accomplished on the cross. Jesus has removed our transgressions as far as the east is from the west as in **Psalm 103 (KJV):12** As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

God made provision for our sin before the foundation of the world as we read in **Revelation 13 (KJV):8** And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

This is what God determined to do for us before time began as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV):23** Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

Jesus Christ will only offer up Himself once for our sins as we read in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):27** Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

He will only enter into the holy place, that is heaven itself, once because He has obtained eternal redemption for us as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):11** But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Jesus' last words on the cross were, "It is finished". He has now put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):24** For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Jesus offered one sacrifice for sins forever as we read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):10** By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

There will only ever be one offering for sin. This has been done by Jesus Christ once and for all. There is no more offering for sin as we continue in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):15** Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

We are now in the New Covenant, and we now have a new and living way because of what Jesus has done for us as we continue in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):19** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

## A New Commandment

The Gospel of Matthew mentions the greatest commandments in **Matthew 22 (KJV):36** Master, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy

heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Jesus emphasized this as we read in **John 13 (KJV):**34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

That is, they will know we are Christians by our love. Now Jesus also gave several commands that we are to follow in the New Covenant, in addition to loving one another.

For example, we are to celebrate the Lord's Supper as in **Luke 22 (KJV):**19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. 20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

And Paul also records this in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):**24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

This was done in remembrance of Jesus. It was not a reenactment of His sacrifice where the bread actually becomes His body, and the wine becomes His blood, for after Jesus had blessed the cup, He then refers to it as the fruit of the vine in **Matthew 26 (KJV):**27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

He offered one sacrifice for sins forever. The work of atonement for our sins is finished. And Jesus did not set a definite time when we should remember Him in this way. He only said to do it in remembrance of Him as often as you would do it.

We are also to make disciples in all nations as we read in **Matthew 28 (KJV):**19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit who would guide His disciples into even more truth which He could not tell them while He was with them because they would not understand as we read in **John 16 (KJV):**12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

All of Jesus' teaching, whether in the Gospels, or through the apostles' epistles, is to be observed. We are not to just teach some things, or most things, but "all things whatsoever" He has commanded.

Jesus pictured Himself as a vine, and we who believe as the branches in **John 15 (KJV):**1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

We are cleansed by His word. When we come to Christ, there may be much in our life that is not pleasing to the Lord. As we walk in the light of His word, we are cleansed.

We are to abide in Him as in **John 15 (KJV):**4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.



Now Jesus is not teaching here in verse 6 that we can lose our salvation. What He is saying is that if, after we have truly believed, we don't abide in Him, we will become unfruitful as a branch that has withered, which men gather and cast into the fire. The fire refers to suffering in this life. That is, we will suffer in this life for the choices we have made. This is what Paul is talking about in the case of the one who committed incest in **1 Corinthians 5 (KJV)**:1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

By turning this one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, Paul was allowing him to suffer the consequences of his choices, and to go through the fire, as it were, of the destruction of his flesh. Paul did not want the Corinthian church to enable him by continuing any fellowship with him. By excluding him from their fellowship, he would bear the full weight of his choices. The hope was that he would repent, which in this case, he did as Paul records in **2 Corinthians 2 (KJV)**:6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. 7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. 8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

Now if we don't abide in Him, we will be unfruitful. We will only produce wood, hay, and stubble as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV)**:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

His desire is for us to bear much fruit as we continue in **John 15 (KJV)**: 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. 9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

His words are to abide in us, and we are to continue in His word. We must be doers of His word and not hearers only. By continuing in His word, in as much as we know of it, the truth that we find in His word will make us free as we read in **John 8 (KJV)**:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Jesus came that we might have life more abundantly as we read in **John 10 (KJV)**:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

## The Two Ordinances

In the New Covenant there are two ordinances, that is, Baptism, and The Lord's Supper, or Communion. Baptism was commanded by Jesus in **Matthew 28 (KJV)**:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Baptism does not save us. We are only baptized after we believe, and because we believe. It is a testimony of our faith in Jesus Christ, and it is done in obedience to His word.

The Lord's Supper was commanded in **Luke 22 (KJV):13** And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. 14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. 15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. 17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: 18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. 19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. 20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

And when Paul corrects the Corinthians, he reveals the order of The Lord's Supper in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):20** When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. 21 For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. 22 What? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. 23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

The word "shew" in the Greek is *καταγγέλλω* (pronounced katangellō), and means "to declare, proclaim". This word is also used in **1 Corinthians 2 (KJV):1** And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

So when we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we show or declare or proclaim His death and all it implies until He returns.

This same Greek word is also translated "they which preach" in **1 Corinthians 9 (KJV):14** Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

And this same Greek word is translated "preach" in Philippians 1:16,18, and Colossians 1:28. The idea is that as often as you celebrate the Lord's Supper, you proclaim His death until He comes.

Now we must eat the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner as Paul instructs in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):27** Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

We celebrate The Lord's Supper in remembrance of what Jesus accomplished on the cross. And we must remember what it means in order to eat it in a worthy manner, or we will come under the discipline of the Lord as we read again in **Hebrews 12 (KJV):6** For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

## The Place of the Law in the New Covenant

We are not saved by keeping the law, but by grace as Paul reveals in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Boasting in our works, that is, boasting in anything that we do according to the law, is excluded as Paul also says in **Romans 3 (KJV):27** Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

The law is not of faith as we read in **Galatians 3 (KJV):12** And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

Paul himself did not trust in his works, that is, what he had done in order to keep the law. Even as a Jew, he had faith in Christ, as we read in **Galatians 2 (KJV):16** We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

We need to be justified, or declared righteous, in order to have fellowship with God. Since it is God who justifies us, it is the righteousness of God that is imputed to us. And, "God's righteousness is His unwavering allegiance to do what is right, that is, most ultimately, to uphold the infinite worth of His glory." **The Future of Justification, A Response to N. T. Wright, by John Piper, page 78.**

Let us be absolutely clear. God's righteousness is a boundary that He has in Himself, and that He will not allow anyone to cross who does not possess the same righteousness. This is why we must be justified in order to enter His presence. We must have His righteousness in order to have fellowship with Him. And Paul says that this righteousness is a gift as we read in **Romans 4 (KJV):17** For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Our justification is the grounds for us to possess eternal life. The mistake the Jews made was that they thought they could obtain the righteousness of God by just performing the ritual of the law, without faith in Him who had given them the law, as we read in **Romans 9 (KJV):31** But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; 33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

The word for "believeth" in the Greek is πιστεύω (pronounced pisteuō), and means "to believe, give credit to". **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, Pages 326, 314.**

The Greek word for "faith" in verse 32 is πίστις (pronounced pistis), and "means "faith, belief, firm persuasion". **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, Pages 326, 314.**

The words "faith" and "believe" in the Greek are thus very closely related. Now Paul counted all his righteous deeds which were according to the law as a loss as we read in **Philippians 3 (KJV):6** Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

It is the "righteousness which is of God" that he received by faith. It was this that Paul wanted more than his own righteousness which he had obtained by keeping the law. And the "righteousness of God" is not some other righteousness obtained by belonging to a covenant, or keeping certain rituals of the law, or by keeping any part of the law.

Faith is about relationship. To believe in someone is to give credit to them, and to have faith in them, and to be firmly persuaded as to who they are, and what they stand for. To perform a ritual without believing in

the one who gave us the ritual is to exclude the relationship part. God wants relationship with us. That is why He sent His son to die for us. The ritual was only temporary until the real was accomplished. If we now were to perform the ritual of the law, this would be a denial of what Jesus has accomplished for us by dying on the cross and rising again from the dead. The message of the New Covenant is that sin as an issue has been dealt with, and that we are now freed from sinning, and we are empowered to live in a new and living way through faith in Jesus Christ.

## **The Struggle in the Early Church**

Finding the place of the law in the New Covenant was a struggle for the early church to grasp. Since the first converts were mostly Jewish, keeping the law was a part of their daily lives, as we see when Paul was at the church in Antioch in **Acts 15 (KJV):1** And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

The question was whether or not they had to keep the law of Moses as we continue in **Acts 15 (KJV):4** And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. 5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. 6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

After there had been much arguing, Peter explained how the Lord purified the Gentiles' hearts by faith in **Acts 15 (KJV):7** And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

In verse 10 Peter refers to the law as “a yoke” upon the neck “which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear”. The outcome of this disputation was that it pleased “the apostles and elders with the whole church” to send a letter clarifying their teaching about the place of the law under the New Covenant as we continue in **Acts 15 (KJV):22** Then pleased it the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren: 23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia. 24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

The apostles and elders with the whole church in Jerusalem, in verse 24 above, gave no such commandment “to be circumcised, and keep the law”. We continue to read in **Acts 15 (KJV):25** It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. 30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle.

The early church had to be taught the principles of the New Covenant. The apostles and elders were not telling them that it was ok to sin. The apostles and elders were instructing the churches about the place of the

law in the New Covenant. We are not under the law, being saved by grace, but we are not free to sin. But isn't disobedience to the law, or breaking the law, sin we may ask?

### What Is Sin?

The apostle John says in **1 John 3 (KJV):4** Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

Then the apostle Paul says in **Romans 14 (KJV):23** Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

And Jesus spoke as in **Matthew 5 (KJV):21** Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

And in **Matthew 5 (KJV):27** Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

So we could say that sin is anything that does not agree with the holiness of God as it is revealed in the word of God. It was not just about obeying the law. Jesus was pointing out that the holiness of God takes into account the very thoughts of our heart.

Sin is disobedience to the truth in the word of God. The word of God is a light to our path as we read again in **Psalms 119 (KJV):105** Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

As we walk in the light, we confess our sins, and we receive more light, and our path becomes as in **Proverbs 4 (KJV):18** But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day.

### More Struggle in the Early Church

Now we see that this struggle about the place of the law in the New Covenant also occurred in the Galatian churches. If we then try to go back under the law, and keep the law, we are not obeying the truth as Paul reveals in **Galatians 3 (KJV):1** O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? 2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain. 5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Paul is saying that we receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith. Miracles also are accomplished among us by the hearing of faith. That is, when we hear His voice, and we yield and obey, He works miracles among us. So how do we know His voice? We know His voice by the word which He has already spoken to us in the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament.

The law is only a part of the 39 books of the Old Testament. Our focus in the New Covenant is now on all of the word of God, and not just the part of the word which contains the law.

By keeping the law, Paul is referring to the observance of days, and months, and times, and years as we read in **Galatians 4 (KJV):9** But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? 10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. 11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

And if we endeavor to keep part of the law, we must keep it all as Paul warns in **Galatians 5 (KJV):3** For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

And James also warns in **James 2 (KJV):10** For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Finding the place of the law in the New Covenant was also a struggle in the church at Colossae. In his epistle to the Colossians, Paul reveals that they had been born again, and forgiven all trespasses as we read in **Colossians 2 (KJV):13** And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

The word for “Blotting out” in the Greek is ἐξαλείφω (pronounced exaleiphō), and is “from ek, out, used intensively, aleiphō, to wipe, signifies to wash, or to smear completely. Hence, metaphorically, in the sense of removal, to wipe away, wipe off, obliterate”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 1, page 135.**

So “the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us” has been wiped away, wiped off, and obliterated! And the “handwriting of ordinances that was against us” is clearly referring to the law as we see in the very next verses as we continue in **Colossians 2 (KJV):15** And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

The sabbath days refer to any of the sabbaths mentioned in the law, such as the end of the week sabbath mentioned in **Exodus 20 (KJV):9** Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: 11 For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Even though this sabbath day is one of the ten commandments, it is not required to be observed as a special day in the New Covenant. Instead, there is a sabbath rest in the New Covenant that is to be kept as a continuous rest from day to day, and moment to moment. This is explained in the word of God in the book of Hebrews.

If we turn to Hebrews, chapter 3, we begin reading that some of the Israelites did not enter His rest because of unbelief as we read in **Hebrews 3 (ESV):15** While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. 16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. 17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

The promise of entering His rest still stands as we continue to read in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):1** Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. 3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

God finished the work of creation in six days, and rested from His creative works ever after that. In other words, His creative works were finished after the six days were up. So just as God has rested from His works of creation, there remains a sabbath rest for the people of God as we continue in **Hebrews 4 (ESV):4** For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” 5 And again in this passage he said, “They shall not enter my rest.” 6 Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, 7 again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. 9 So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of

God, 10 for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. 11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

To say it again, we read in verse 3, above, that “His works were finished from the foundation of the world”. And then in verse 4 that “God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” So, we are to understand that “today” there “remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God”, for “whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his”.

In the New Covenant, we are to cease from our own works in order that we may enter God's rest. Our own works are what we do to try to please God. When we do it our way, we are walking in our own understanding. When we believe in Jesus Christ, we begin to walk in His ways. We enter into His rest by faith, and we keep walking in His rest by faith as we read in **Colossians 2 (KJV):6** As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

We must be careful how we hear as we continue in **Colossians 2 (KJV):18** Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

There are many today who are building little kingdoms of their own which divide the body of Christ. We need to follow those who are “holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God”. By their fruits you will know them.

God is building one Church, in one body. We are not to follow the “commandments and doctrines of men” as we continue in **Colossians 2 (KJV):20** Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body: not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

Will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body appear as wisdom, but they only satisfy our flesh. Following the traditions of men may satisfy our flesh, but it does not please God. Now James encourages us how to speak and do as in **James 2 (KJV):12** So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

## The Law of Liberty

James explains what he means by the law of liberty as we read in **James 1 (KJV):22** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

James is speaking of hearing and doing the word of God in verses 23-24. The law of liberty is the entire word of God, rightly divided, consisting of the 39 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of the New Testament. It is by this word that we were given new birth as James reveals in **James 1 (KJV):18** Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

The word “begat” is ἀποκυέω (pronounced apokyeō), and means “to give birth to, to bring forth (from kueo, to be pregnant)”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 1, page 110.**

In other words, we were born again by the word of God, or God gave us new birth in our spirit by His word. That is, it was the word preached, and the Spirit working in the word, that God used to bring forth the new birth in our spirits by the Spirit of God. This was wholly a work of God as we read in **John 1 (KJV):12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

It was not by keeping the law that we are born again, but by hearing the word of God, and surrendering to it. Now the Old Testament contains 39 books of God's word. The New Testament, or New Covenant, contains 27 books of God's word. The New Testament is "enfolded" in the Old Testament, and the Old Testament is "unfolded" in the New. Or as St. Augustine puts it, "The New is in the Old contained; the Old is by the New explained." If we just live as though there are only the 39 books of the Old Testament, we will not have the light that is revealed in the 27 books of the New Testament. Jesus' inauguration of the New Covenant brought change, but He also brought about more light so that we would understand how we are to walk with Him in the New Covenant. We see God's plan and purpose more clearly with the light of the knowledge contained in the 27 books of the New Testament. In view of all that Jesus has already accomplished for us, let us walk in the light of His word, and be set free from our traditions, in order that we may walk in the freedom, and the rest, that God has for us.

Now it does not do us any good if we don't read these 27 books of the New Testament. And reading won't help us if we don't walk in the light of these 27 books. And we will not be able to walk in the light of these 27 books if we do not rightly divide them. So, understanding the place of the law is very important if we are to rightly divide these 27 books of the New Testament, or New Covenant.

### **Why the Law?**

Under the New Covenant, as under the Old Covenant, the law is not a test that we must pass to see if we will make it into the Kingdom of God. Paul reveals the reason for the law as we read in **Galatians 3 (KJV):19** Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

The words "serveth the", in verse 19 above, are not in the Greek, but were added by the translators. The literal reading would then be, "Why then a law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator".

The only purpose of the law is to reveal sin as we read again in **Romans 3 (KJV):20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

We are proved guilty by the law as we read again in **Romans 3 (KJV):19** Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

All the law does is reveal our guilt before God. Keeping the law will not justify us in the sight of God because we already have sin as a nature in our flesh. The only way we would know our need for a redeemer is if we are able to perceive our sin. The law gives us this awareness. Then this knowledge leads us to Christ as we read again in **Galatians 3 (KJV):24** Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

The awareness of our sin by the law makes us consider Christ's promise by faith in Him as we read in **Galatians 3 (KJV):22** But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

The promise by faith of Jesus Christ is forgiveness of sin, and eternal life with Him. The law "concluded all under sin", in order "that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe".

So, righteousness does not come by keeping the law since we are already dead in sin as we read in **Galatians 3 (KJV):21** Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.

Being dead in sin, we need to be born again spiritually so that we can be justified and receive His righteousness. And we do not receive His righteous by the law, but by faith of Jesus Christ as we read again in **Romans 3 (KJV):21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:



And we receive the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ when we are born again, and we are born again when we believe in our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead and confess Him as Lord as we read in **Romans 10 (KJV):9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Jesus said the same in **John 3 (KJV):36** He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

And in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

We pass from spiritual death to spiritual life when we believe in Him and we are born again. The life that is then in our spirits when we are born again is not a temporal life, but an eternal life because it is the Spirit of God who gave us birth by the word.

In the New Covenant, sin no longer has dominion over us as we read in **Romans 6 (KJV):14** For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

That is, we are not under the curse of the law or the condemnation of the law as we read again in **John 3 (KJV):18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Jesus came to redeem us and make us his sons and daughters as we read in **Galatians 4 (KJV):4** But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

When we are born again, we are adopted into the family of God, and given full rights of sonship, and a standing as sons and daughters of God with His righteousness imputed to us, just as it was to Abraham as we read in **Romans 4 (KJV):20** He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

The word “imputed” in the Greek is λογίζομαι (pronounced logizomai), and means “to count, calculate; to count, enumerate, Mark 15:28; Luke 27:37; to set down as a matter of account, 1 Corinthians 13:51, 2 Corinthians 3:5; 12:6; to impute, Romans 4:3; 2 Colossians 5:19; 2 Timothy 4:16”. **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, Pages 249.**

Though our spirits have been made perfect being born of the Spirit, and though we have a standing of righteous sons and daughters, we still have a sin nature in our flesh. Our flesh still groans waiting for the redemption of our bodies as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):22** For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

We have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise as we read in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):13** In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

The word “earnest” in the Greek is ἀρραβών (pronounced arrabōn), and means “originally, earnest-money deposited by the purchaser and forfeited if the purchase was not completed, was probably a Phoenician word, introduced into Greece. In general usage it came to denote a pledge or earnest of any sort”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 2, page 11.**

We are the purchased possessions of God when we are born again, and we are born again when we believe in our hearts that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead, and we confess Him as our Lord. The “earnest” of the Spirit is God’s pledge that we are His, and that He will never leave us or forsake us as we read in **Hebrews 13 (KJV):5** Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

The construction in the Greek in this verse is actually a triple negative, and could be translated, “for he hath said, I will never, no never, not under any circumstances leave you or forsake you”.

## How to Deal with Sin in the New Covenant

In the New Covenant, those who are born again are God’s purchased possession, and they are not their own being bought with a price as we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (KJV):19** What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ as we read in **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

And Paul also mentions this judgment in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):12** Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

If we have been born again, we are saved, and our will has been made free. We then have a choice as to what we will build on the foundation of Jesus Christ as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):10** According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

We must take heed how we build on the foundation of Jesus Christ. If we build wood, hay, or stubble, we will still be saved, yet we will have trouble in this life because of our bad choices. We must keep short accounts with the Lord in order that He may do the works He has ordained for us to do as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

And we will be rewarded for what He does through us. Now we must keep short accounts with the Lord by walking in the light as we read in **1 John 1 (KJV):5** This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 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 cleanseth us from all sin.

God is light and in him is no darkness at all. If are to have fellowship with Him, we must walk in the light of His word as we read in **Psalms 119 (KJV):105** Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

The New Covenant is about real relationship with the Lord. That is, it is about fellowship or intimacy with our Lord. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we are lying, and not doing the truth. Our job in the New Covenant is to present ourselves a living sacrifice as we read in **Romans 12 (KJV):1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

As we present ourselves a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service in view of what Christ has done for us, He will transform us by the renewing of our minds to be more and more like Him. As our minds are renewed by the knowledge of God through His word, things that separate us from Him will be revealed. As we then surrender these things to the Lord, He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us as we continue to read in **1 John 1 (KJV):8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Man is a tripartite being as we know from **1 Thessalonians 5 (KJV):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.

That there is a division between our soul and spirit is evident in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):12** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Our spirit is made perfect when we are born again, since we are born of the Spirit of God, and whatever is born of the spirit is spirit as we read in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

But in our soul there may be much that is not pleasing to the Lord. Our soul is composed of our mind, will, heart, emotions, and conscience. In our spirit we have God consciousness, and awareness of the spiritual realm. Our soul is the intermediary between our spirit and the spiritual realm, and our flesh and the physical realm. It is in our soul that we must be cleansed of our old ways of thinking, and our emotional wounding as Paul reveals in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):31** Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

It takes time for us to deal with our old ways, our old man if you will. It is in this area that we are progressively cleansed by the Spirit of God working in the word of God. As the word of God is illuminated to our minds by the Spirit, we become aware of sin in our soul area. As we walk in the light and confess our sins, He is faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Now someone may ask, "What happens then when we sin?" Do we have to be born again all over again? In **Against Heresies, Book 5: Chapter IX, paragraph 4**, Irenaeus writes that if we live "frivolously and carelessly" we could "lose life by losing that Spirit which possesses us" as he asserts, "In order that we may not lose life by losing that Spirit which possesses us, the apostle, exhorting us to the communion of the Spirit, has said, according to reason, in those words already quoted, "That flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God". Just as if he were to say, "Do not err; for unless the Word of God dwell with, and the Spirit of the Father be in you, and if ye shall live frivolously and carelessly as if ye were this only, viz., mere flesh and blood, ye cannot inherit the kingdom of God,". **Ante-Nicene Fathers, Edited by Alexander Roberts, D.D. & James Donaldson, LL.D., Hendrickson Publishers.**

However, when we believe on the name of the Son of God, and we are born again, we receive eternal life in our spirit. Eternal life is an attribute of the Spirit of God, and since we are born again of the Spirit of God, we receive eternal life at that moment in our spirit. This is why the apostle John writes in **1 John 5 (KJV):13** These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

We must not be weary and faint in our minds, but consider Him who endured so much to save us as we read in **Hebrews 12 (KJV):3** For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

The Lord chastens or disciplines every child He receives. We must listen to the correction of our Father as we continue to read in **Hebrews 12 (KJV):7** If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

The discipline of the Lord may be painful and even include sickness and physical death as we read in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):**27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

The word “damnation” in the Greek is κρίμα (pronounced krima), and “denotes the result of the action signified by the verb krino, to judge”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 2, page 281.**

We must judge ourselves, or keep short accounts with the Lord to maintain our fellowship with Him as we continue in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):**31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. 33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. 34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

The word “condemnation” in the Greek in verse 34 is the same word κρίμα (pronounced krima) as the word “damnation” in 1 Corinthians 11:29 above. It is translated as “judgment” in the English Standard Version as in **1 Corinthians 11 (ESV):**29 if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. About the other things I will give directions when I come.

If we sin, we must confess it in order to maintain our fellowship with the Lord as we read in **1 John 2 (KJV):**1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Sin as an issue has been dealt with for He is the propitiation for our sins, and it is the children who have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. We do not lose our standing as sons and daughters, and have to be born again all over again, when we sin. We have an advocate with the Father. That is, we have one who intercedes for us continually as Paul reveals in **Romans 8 (KJV):**31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

And in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):**25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

He is always at the right hand of God now, and we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us as we continue in **Romans 8 (KJV):**35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nothing in death or life is now able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We have been freed from sin, though we still have a sin nature in our flesh. But provision has been made for us so that if we sin, we do not lose our salvation or the Spirit who indwells us. We have a great high priest who ever lives to make intercession for us so that if we sin, He is our advocate, and if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness. If we don't confess our sins, we will feel distant from the Lord. If we persist in our sinful ways, we can only look forward to His judgment and discipline.

## Works in the New Covenant

There are two types of works mentioned in the New Testament. The first is the “works of the law” in **Romans 9 (KJV):32** Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

The “works of the law” is also mentioned in **Galatians 2 (KJV):16** Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

And in **Galatians 3 (KJV):2** This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

And in **Galatians 3 (KJV):5** He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

And in **Galatians 3 (KJV):10** For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

The second type of works mentioned in the New Testament is the “work of faith” in **1 Thessalonians 1 (KJV):3** Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

And in **2 Thessalonians 1 (KJV):11** Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:

The word “work” in the Greek is ἔργον (pronounced ergon), and denotes “action or active zeal in contrast to idleness”. **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Edited by G. Kittel, Volume II, Page 635.**

A Google search on the word “work” in English finds it to mean to “be engaged in physical or mental activity in order to achieve a purpose or result, especially in one's job; do work”.

The works of the law then relate to anything done in obedience to the law. The work of faith would then be anything done in obedience to the requirements of faith as we read in **Romans 16 (KJV):26** But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

We might then ask what is “the obedience of faith”? It has something to do with obeying the truth as Paul writes in **Galatians 3 (KJV):1** O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? **2** This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

The truth was defined by Jesus in His prayer in **John 17 (KJV):17** Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

As we then hear with faith the truth of the Gospel, we are saved. It is the Holy Spirit, acting in the word of the truth of the Gospel message, who opens our ears and gives us faith to believe. This is how we get the “hearing of faith”. It is then through this beginning of surrender to God that we move forward by faith into more of the truth in the word of God, and as we obey it, we are exercising the obedience of faith, and we are cleansing our souls as Peter reveals in **1 Peter 1 (KJV):22** Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

And as we have begun, so we are to continue as Paul encourages in **Colossians 2 (KJV):6** As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

It is then very important to know the word of God, and to rightly divide it. So, we read in **James 2 (KJV):14** What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

And yet we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: **9** Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Paul uses the word “works” here in verse 9 in a very general way. We could conclude from this verse that we are not saved by any kind of works whatsoever. But what then does James mean when he asks, “though a man say he hath faith, and have not works, can faith save him?” We must look at the context of James’

thoughts as we continue to read in **James 2 (KJV):15** If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? 17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

The evidence of life is some sort of movement. So, the evidence of a real genuine faith will be found in the exercise of our faith in a compassion for the poor and needy. We continue to read in **James 2 (KJV):18** Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. 19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

That is, the obedience of our faith will be evident in how we treat others. And Paul encourages us to examine ourselves as in **2 Corinthians 13 (KJV):5** Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Jesus Christ is in us by the new life of the Spirit of God which is given to our spirits when we are born again. We are then new creations in Christ. We are new men and women with a new nature in our inner man. This is why we delight to do the will of God.

Now James then points to Abraham as we continue in **James 2 (KJV):21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

James points to Abraham who obeyed the word of the Lord. Let's look at Abraham's obedience of faith as we read in **Genesis 22 (KJV):1** And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

The word "tempt" in the Hebrew is **נָסָה** (pronounced nasaw), and means to test. We continue in **Genesis 22 (KJV):2** And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Abraham did not hesitate but obeyed the voice of the Lord as we continue in **Genesis 22 (KJV):3** And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. 4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

We see Abraham's faith at work here as we continue in **Genesis 22 (KJV):7** And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. 9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

We see that God was only testing Abraham, and Abraham continued to walk by faith as we then read in **Genesis 22 (KJV):13** And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. 14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

The name "Jehovahjireh" means "the Lord will provide". By this event in Abraham's life we see the evidence of Abraham's faith as he was obedient to the word of the Lord. This was not evidence of child sacrifice, when it was in the process of being discontinued, as some today assert. Rather, this was God

demonstrating for us through Abraham and his son what God Himself would have to do to save us from our sins. God would have to offer up His Son in our place, as a lamb without spot, so that we could be redeemed. So when James asks in James 2:21, “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?”, he means that Abraham walked in a just way, and in a way which is walking in obedience to the word of the Lord.

And so, when James then says in James 2:23, “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God”, he is quoting from **Genesis 15 (KJV):6** And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

This event occurred before Isaac was born, for Isaac was not born until **Genesis 21 (KJV):1** And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

Righteousness had already been imputed or put down to Abraham’s account in Genesis 15:6, before Isaac was born. So, we might say that Abraham continued to believe God, and walked in a just way, giving evidence of the genuineness of his faith in Genesis 15:6.

James is affirming that Abraham exercised the obedience of faith and proved he had the righteousness of God imputed or put down to his account. So, when James says in James 2:24, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only”, he means that a genuine faith will be accompanied by works of faith which are works that are in obedience to the word of the Lord.

James then also mentions Rahab as we continue in **James 2 (KJV):25** Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

What work of Rahab was James pointing to here? James is pointing to the work of faith that Rahab exercised when she hid the messengers from the King of Jericho as we read in **Joshua 2 (KJV):3** And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country. 4 And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: 5 And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. 6 But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. 7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

Listen to Rahab’s testimony of faith **Joshua 2 (KJV):8** And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; 9 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

Rahab was not acting in obedience to anything in the law of Moses for the book of the law had not been written yet. Rahab was simply trusting in the God in heaven above that He would save her. The work of faith is absolute trust in the God in heaven above. This faith will manifest itself in our obedience to the word of God.

Our works are only the evidence of the genuineness of our faith.

## Things to Remember in the New Covenant

To the Colossians Paul writes as in **Colossians 2 (KJV):5** For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. 6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

We received Him by faith, so we are to continue to walk in Him by faith. And let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering as we read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):**19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

We are to assemble together and encourage each other as we continue to read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):**24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

It is not a matter of keeping certain days, but meeting together as we remember that where two or more are gathered together, there He is in our midst. We also must remember that our God is a God of discipline. There is the hard way, and then there is the harder way as we read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):**32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; 33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. 34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. 35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

### **How to Please Him in the New Covenant**

Without faith, it is impossible to please Him as we continue in **Hebrews 11 (KJV):**1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good report. 3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. 4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. 5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

It is by faith in the God who is there that all these things were done. Our walk in the New Covenant is not unlike those in the Old Covenant as we read still further of examples of faith in **Hebrews 11 (KJV):**7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. 8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.



In all of these examples, they believed God. We in the New Covenant also believe God, and we walk by faith, and not by sight, just like those under the Old Covenant, as we read in **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):6** Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

Those under the Old Covenant sought a heavenly country just as we do as we continue in **Hebrews 11 (KJV):14** For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

The offering up of Isaac by Abraham was a figure or type of what would be necessary for God to do for us so that we might have fellowship with Him. God has never required us to sacrifice one of our children to Him, before or after Abraham, for we read in Jeremiah that this never even entered His mind as in **Jeremiah 32 (KJV):35** And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto **Molech**; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

The reason God told Abraham to perform this offering up of his son, Isaac, was to test him, so that he and us might know what it would take for Him to restore us to fellowship with Him. God also stopped him in the middle of the offering so that Isaac was unharmed. God had Abraham go through this so we would know what God Himself would have to do, that is offer up His perfect Son, in order to save us.

We continue to read of still more examples of walking by faith in prophecy in **Hebrews 11 (KJV):20** By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. 21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. 22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

We also see the courage of faith as we continue in **Hebrews 11 (KJV):23** By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. 24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

We also see how we are to walk by faith and not by sight, as we continue in **Hebrews 11 (KJV):27** By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

And we see the risk of faith in **Hebrews 11 (KJV):28** Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. 29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. 31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. 32 And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: 33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions. 34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And these all, having obtained a

good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Exercising our faith is taking a risk to trust God. All of the above took the risk of faith and trusted in God. Faith sees Him who is invisible. Faith esteems the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, or the world. The pleasures of sin only last for a season. By trusting in God, we will obtain a good report through faith. We must consider the reward that is set before us.

### **Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus**

I have found that the most important thing in life is fixing my eyes on Jesus. And so we read in **Hebrews 12 (KJV)**:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

In verse 2, the word “looking” in the Greek is ἀφοράω (pronounced aphoraō), meaning “to look away from one thing so as to see another”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 337.**

These verses are also translated as in **Hebrews 12 (NASB)**:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus. The harder way is to be conformed to this world, and please our flesh, and to suffer the consequences. The way of the flesh and this world only leads to pain and death. The hard way is to walk by faith, running the race with endurance, and fixing our eyes on Jesus, in order that we may please the Lord.

We must endure chastening as we continue to read again in **Hebrews 12 (KJV)**:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

The Lord has promised to be with us always as we read in context in **Matthew 28 (NASB)**:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

We must look out for others as we continue to read in **Hebrews 12 (KJV)**:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17 For ye know how

that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Behold, as Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven is at hand as we continue in **Hebrews 12 (KJV):18** For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, 19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: 20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: 21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) 22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

We are now in the New Covenant. Remember, Jesus sits at the right hand of God waiting for His enemies to be made His footstool. We must listen to His voice as we continue in **Hebrews 12 (NASB):25** See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned *them* on earth, much less *will we escape* who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven. 26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, “YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN.” 27 This *expression*, “Yet once more,” denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

### **Continue in the Word**

If we continue in His word, we are truly His disciples as Jesus spoke in **John 8 (KJV):31** Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

If we continue in His word, and His words abide in us, we will learn to know His voice. We need the water of the word to grow as in **Psalms 1 (KJV):1** Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

We need the water of the word to bring forth fruit. The word of the Lord converts the soul, makes wise the simple, rejoices the heart, and enlightens the eyes as we read in **Psalms 19 (KJV):7** The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

### **Ritual Versus Reality**

It is not about rituals any more in the New Covenant. It's about being real with God. He wants to have fellowship with us. This is the reason He encourages all of us to present ourselves as living sacrifices as in **Romans (KJV):1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world:

but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

We are the living sacrifice that we are to offer to God. And this is reasonable in light of what Jesus has accomplished for us. And we are to offer up a sacrifice of praise continually as in **Hebrews 13 (ESV):15** Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

We must put away lying and speak the truth as in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):25** Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

We are not to be conformed to this world as Paul said in Romans 12:2 above, nor to the former lusts which were ours in our ignorance as Peter reveals in **1 Peter 1 (NASB):14** As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

We are to do good and to share as in **Hebrews 13 (ESV):16** Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

It is now our responsibility to walk in the light of His word as the apostle John reveals in **1 John 1 (KJV):6** If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 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 cleanseth us from all sin.

We must let the word of God richly dwell with in us as Paul reveals in **Colossians 3 (KJV):16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

We are to seek the things which are above as in **Colossians 3 (KJV):1** If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

We are to put off the old and put on the new as in **Colossians 3 (KJV):8** But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

And in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):22** That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

We are not to yield to sin as Paul warns in **Romans 6 (KJV):13** Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

And in **Romans 6 (KJV):16** Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

And in **Romans 6 (KJV):19** I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

Remember we are progressively sanctified in our soul area, that is, our mind, will, heart, emotions, and conscience.

We must submit ourselves to God as we read in **James 4 (KJV):7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

We must submit ourselves one to another as we read in **Ephesians 5 (KJV):21** Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

We must submit ourselves to every ordinance of man as we read in **1 Peter 2 (KJV):13** Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

We must submit ourselves to those who are older, not in physical age, but who are more mature in the Lord as we read in **1 Peter 5 (KJV):5** Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

We must submit to those who have been shepherds in our life as we read in **Hebrews 13 (KJV):17** Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

If we do these things, we will be fruitful as we read in **Proverbs 12 (ESV):12** Whoever is wicked covets the spoil of evildoers, but the root of the righteous bears fruit.

And in **Mark 4 (KJV):8** And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

We must be strong and courageous as the Lord told Joshua in **Joshua 1 (KJV):7** Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. 8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. 9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Every word of God is important as the Lord told Israel in **Deuteronomy 8 (KJV):3** And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

## **The Four Rests of the Believer**

In his **Book 7: The Security of the Believer, Lesson 4: The Four Rests of the Believer**, Dr. Albert Grimes writes, “The Christian experience is an experience of growth, a growth into rest. Some picture the Christian experience as a continuous battle, an experience in which we never find rest until we meet Christ. It is true that there will always be opposition and conflict, but it is also true that the child of God can find rest and security. Rest and blessing is God’s inheritance for the child of God.”

The Bible speaks of different rests, which God has for us. There is the rest of salvation, the rest of service, and the rest of inheritance. Then there is the rest of perfection, which relates to our future glorification with Christ. The first three rests are experiences which the believer can enter into as he goes on with God. The fourth rest will await our resurrection. When we see Him we will be like Him.

Dr. Grimes also writes in the same Book 7, “There are also plains of experience which the believer will go through. There are also stages of development which he will pass through. Where we are in respect to these experiences will point out to us where we are in our Christian experience in regards to our growth. In regards to our going on with God, we can be in either one of these rests, or we could have found two of these rests, or we could have found all three, and be living in the blessing of God.”

### **The Rest of Salvation**

Jesus speaks of this rest in **Matthew 11 (KJV):28** Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The word of God points out the fact that people labor in order to save themselves. They go through all kinds of ritual, observing days, and different religious rituals. They punish themselves. They are laboring to obtain salvation. They are heavy laden with sin. They find no rest. But the scripture points out the fact that

salvation is not to be labored for as we read in **Titus 3 (KJV):5** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

And in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Works speak of anything that we do. So, the first sovereign move towards the sinner is made by God, and the sinner comes to Christ by faith alone, without any works on his part, as we read in **1 John 4 (KJV):19** We love him, because he first loved us.

And in **Romans 4 (KJV):16** Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.

Faith is an absolute trust in another. There is no merit in faith. Grace is the unmerited favor of God, and the result is peace with God, and we stand in grace, as we read in **Romans 5 (KJV):1** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

My standing before God is changed because of what Christ has done for me. So, after the sinner puts to one side his laboring for salvation, and completely surrenders, and by faith comes to Christ, he finds the rest of salvation, as we read again in **Matthew 11 (KJV):28** Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Rest in this sense is repose, take ease, refresh, pause, to stop, come to an end. This is the meaning of the word. After one has accepted Christ, this rest becomes a rest of experience. It cannot be maintained by just having the experience alone. The Word of God must be applied in order to bring the assurance. It's the assurance of what Christ has done that will bring a continued rest in regards to our salvation.

There is a danger, because of legalistic teaching, of the believer losing the rest of salvation and coming again under bondage, the same kind of bondage that he was in before he was saved. The only difference is that before he was saved, he was trying to find salvation through works. Now he is trying to keep it through works. This is brought about by legalistic teaching. He is taught that he must do certain things in order to keep his salvation. He finds himself laboring to keep that which he received absolutely on the grounds of faith. Paul speaks of this state in **Galatians 4 (KJV):9** But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? 10 Ye observe days, and months, and 31 times, and years.

Their salvation was wrought through the Spirit, and they were trying to keep it through the flesh, or by works, and so Paul asks in **Galatians 3 (KJV):3** Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Our salvation was brought about by faith in Christ, without works. And it is a finished, completed work, according to Romans 8:29-30 that cannot be maintained by works.

It is not, as many do today, kept by wearing long hair, or long skirts. It's not because we do not wear makeup. It's not because we do not go to shows. It's not because we eat meat, or what we eat or drink. It's not because we keep Saturday, or Sunday, or any day. It's not because we watch television, or we do not watch television. What we do, or what we don't do, does not keep us saved. We are saved by faith in the finished work of Christ, and when we rest in that finished work, we will then and only then, find the rest of salvation.

And when I find that rest through faith, God through the Word, the Spirit, and the blood, takes care of all the other things in my life that are not His will for me. Some Christians have been saved, but have never found the rest of salvation. They are still laboring and are heavy laden, laboring to keep themselves saved, heavy laden by the condemnation of their failures to do the things by which they feel they are kept saved. This is a perverted gospel, and Paul puts a curse upon all who teach it in **Galatians 1 (KJV):7** Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Preachers by the thousands are of this type. They bring God's people under bondage and they are never able to enter into the rest of salvation. They are like Israel in Egypt. No wonder the burden of the Spirit in these days is "let my people go".

## The Rest of Service

Now, it is well understood that if a Christian has not found the rest of salvation, he will never be able to enter into the rest of service, for he is in confusion, and all his efforts are toward keeping himself saved. So, all his energy is wasted in his efforts to keep himself saved. He has no time to do any service for God. He is out of Egypt, and its bondage, but he is now under a different kind of bondage, which keeps him from any kind of service.

In order for us to find the rest of service, there must be a complete surrender in regards to becoming yoked together with Christ. Romans 12:1-2, "...present your bodies a living sacrifice...which is your reasonable service..." **Matthew 11 (KJV):29** Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

The soul is the seat of our emotions, our intellect, our self-conscious life, and when we have found the rest of service, there will be rest in our soul life, our emotional life.

We have an illustration of this rest in Matthew 11:29. In order to break in a young oxen to work, they yoke him with an older oxen, one who is well broken, and submitted to the one who is plowing the field. The younger oxen, in this way, is gradually broken to become a good worker for the one who owned him. In regards to service, the same principle of self-effort is to be found in the child of God. He, in most cases, has his own ideas and plans in regards to what he thinks is service for the Lord. We are much like Moses. He knew he was a deliverer in Israel, but he was entirely wrong about the way it should be done as we read in **Acts 7 (KJV):23** And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: 25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not. 26 And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? 27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou didest the Egyptian yesterday? 29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons. 30 And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.

Moses tried to deliver Israel in his own way, and in his own strength. He killed an Egyptian, but had to flee from Egypt and learn for the next forty years what is meant by submissiveness.

As God has ordained a complete finished salvation for us, so He has ordained a complete service for us. The secret of finding this rest of service is to find out what he wants me to do, my place in the plan of God, as in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):11** In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

We are predestinated for a purpose, and if we surrender ourselves to that purpose, and to God, He will work it out, for he has ordained those works for us to do as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Now these works are not performed by self-effort, but by the Holy Spirit that dwells in us as we know from **Philippians 2 (KJV):13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

There must be a complete committing of our ways to God in order that God may guide us into these ordained works. It is hard sometimes to give up altogether our own planning and commit our ways entirely to God so that He might guide us, but we are expected to do so as we know from **Proverbs 3 (KJV):5** Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

The same principle of surrender, which brought salvation, must become the principle in regards to service as we read in **Colossians 2 (KJV):6** As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

I receive him by faith, and I walk with him in faith. I am yoked together with him. He is the one who leads me. He is the one who has ordained what I am to do. He is the one who, through the Holy Spirit in me,

will perform the works. When I learn these facts, I will enter into the rest of service. Some children of God are still trying to do the things of God in their own strength. They are still trying to plan their own paths. Their service is one of self-effort, and self-planning, and the blessing of God is not upon it. They are confused in regards to service. When we have found the rest of service, we then will be able to enter into the rest of the inheritance.

## **The Rest of the Inheritance**

In order to fully understand what is meant here, it would be wise to go back to Israel in this regard. The inheritance for Israel was a section of property in the land of Canaan, as in **Joshua 1 (KJV)**:1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, 2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. 5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

And in **Joshua 1 (KJV)**:10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, 11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it. 12 And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, 13 Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, The Lord your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them; 15 Until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising.

It was theirs by right, given them by God. But they had to fight a foe, who contested all their rights and privileges. But Israel under God claimed the inheritance, fought and overcame the enemy, and each man personally shared his inheritance, and they lived in the blessing of God, as God's chosen people. And while in this condition, they became witnesses to the surrounding nations of the one God who had so blessed them. They had entered into rest, the rest of the inheritance.

Now even some of Israel did not enter into that rest as we read in **Hebrews 3 (KJV)**:18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Now as Israel in the past entered into rest, so the children of God can also. This is spoken of in **Hebrews 4 (KJV)**:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Being an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ, entitles me to certain rights, and an inheritance as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV)**:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ...

There are many things that I have become an heir to in this life, which, when fully entered into, will bring me into the rest of the inheritance. There is sonship, belonging to the family of God, and all it implies. I have the right of access into God's presence, freedom from the power of sin, an advocate in heaven, health through the indwelling Spirit of God, who preserves me and sanctifies me through the Word and by the blood. I have overcome the world. I have power over Satan. I can, through the Spirit, perform the ordained works of God. Christ is being produced in me by the fruit of the Spirit. That is, I am becoming Christ-like in my soul area. I can witness and influence others to Christ, and experience all these things and the blessing of God in



spiritual Canaan. As I live in the blessing of God, and live in the rest of my inheritance, others will be attracted. Others will want to know why I am able to live in such a state of blessing and rest.

It's after I have entered into this rest that I can really become a true witness for the Lord. Having entered into the rest of salvation, and the rest of service, then the rest of the inheritance, I will have found that abundant life in Christ as Jesus promised in **John 10 (KJV):10** The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

### **The Rest of Perfection**

Dr. Grimes concludes, "This is the final rest of the child of God, when he or she shall enter into that glorified state as in **1 Corinthians 13 (KJV):10** But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

All of earth's experiences will pass away, and all will become new. We will have entered into that eternal rest spoken of in **Revelation 21 (KJV):5** And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

And in **1 John 3 (KJV):2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

We can, in this life, enter into the rest of salvation, the rest of service, and the rest of the inheritance, and then, the rest of perfection in the life to come. Thus, we see that the Sons of God can have security in his service, security in his inheritance, and security in the rest of perfection.

The child of God is secure." **Book 7: The Security of the Believer, Lesson 4: The Four Rests of the Believer, Dr. Albert Grimes.**

## God's Plan and Purpose

Under the Old Covenant, God's plan and purpose was to make Israel a kingdom of priests as we read in **Exodus 19 (KJV):5** Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Now, under the New Covenant, God's plan and purpose for Israel has been put to one side until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in as we know from **Luke 21 (KJV):23** But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

When the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, God will again deal with Israel as we know from **Romans 11 (KJV):25** For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

Israel is still to come under the New Covenant as we know from Jeremiah's prophecy in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV):31** Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

## The Church

We also know from Jesus' words that He is building His church as the Gospel of Matthew reveals in **Matthew 16 (KJV):13** When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

Jesus' question in verse 13 was, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" He did not ask the disciples who Peter was. But Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God". Jesus then told Peter that he was right, that He Himself is the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus then told Peter that this was revealed to him by His Father in heaven. In other words, Peter did not have this knowledge on his own. And Jesus then also said, "That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" in verse 18. The word "Peter" in the Greek is Πέτρος (pronounced Petros), but when Jesus said, "and upon this rock", He used a different word for rock. The word He used here for rock in the Greek is πέτρα (pronounced petra). Vine says this about these words, "PETRA (πέτρα) denotes a mass of rock, as distinct from petros, a detached stone or boulder, or a stone that might be thrown or easily moved".

**Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 302.**

When Jesus used the word petra, He was referring to Peter's testimony that He is the Christ. That is, He, the Christ, the Son of the Living God, is the petra, the bedrock upon which He will build His church. Then, in verse 20, Jesus charged "his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ". The whole point of Jesus' question was not to refer to Peter, but to Himself as the petra, the mass of rock upon which He would build His church.

Jesus is the foundation upon which we are building, as Paul explains in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):9** For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

This was also Peter's testimony in **Acts 4 (KJV):10** Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

The point of Jesus being the head of the corner, or the cornerstone, is that the whole building rests on Him. There is salvation in no one else. He alone is the way, the truth, and the life as in John 14:6. Without Him there is no salvation.

Peter himself also again testifies that Jesus is the chief cornerstone in **1 Peter 2 (KJV):4** To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

There was no confusion in Peter's mind about who Jesus was referring to in Matthew 16:18. Peter here is referring to **Psalms 118 (KJV):22** The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. 23 This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

When Jesus was speaking to the chief priests and elders of the people, He also refers to Himself as the fulfillment of Psalm 118:22 in **Matthew 21 (KJV):42** Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? 43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. 44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

Jesus spoke these words after He had told the chief priests and elders a parable about the householder as we read in **Matthew 21 (KJV):33** Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: 34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. 35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. 36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. 37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. 38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. 39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. 40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? 41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

Can there be any doubt that Jesus prophesied of rejection by the chief priests and elders here? There is no other cornerstone, visible or invisible, in the word of God or in the Church. Jesus is the stone the builders rejected, and He has become the head of the corner. And He is the *petra*, the bedrock, the foundation upon which the Church is built. And we as living stones are all built upon Him as a spiritual house of praise and worship.

Both Jew and Gentile are made one in this building as Paul reveals in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):11** Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens

from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

And the only ones who become living stones in this building are those who enter through the door of faith in Jesus Christ. Though there are many who call themselves Christians, only those who have gone through the door of faith in Jesus Christ are in the true Church. In Christendom, there is wheat and there are tares. We need to see what God is building, and work together with Him. The only way we can see what God's plan is for the Church He is building is by studying His word. It will not come by tradition. Where does it say in the word of God that tradition is inspired? This is an invention of man. All of the divisions we see in the Church today are man's doing, and man's building. As we study the word of God, we begin to have a vision of what God is building. Tradition only makes us want to give up. When we let go of our tradition, we can then receive from the Holy Spirit a vision of what God is building, and it is not about us, but about Him. Remember, it is the truth that sets us free.

## The Head of the Church

Now God's building is the church, and the church is the body of Christ as we read in **Colossians 1 (KJV)**:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;

As Jesus Christ is the bedrock of foundation that the church is built upon, so He also is the head of the body, the church. And as there is only body, so there is only one head of the church, which is His body, as we read in **Ephesians 1 (KJV)**:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

This headship of Christ in the church is seen most clearly in the marriage relationship as Paul explains in **Ephesians 5 (KJV)**:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

## The Individuality of Believers

Now that we know who the head of the Church is, we need to know that we are members individually of His body. We were all baptized into one body by the Spirit of God when we were born again after we believed in Jesus Christ as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):**12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

This is not speaking of water baptism, but a sovereign baptism by the Spirit of God of all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior into the body of Christ. Paul then explains that the body is not just one member as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):**14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

Where we are set by God in the body determines what our function will be. We must remember that it is God who sovereignly sets the members every one of them in the body as it has pleased Him as we continue in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):**18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. 24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.

God knows what He is doing. Just as He has made our bodies, so God has so composed the body of Christ that everyone should be a part, and that there should be no division as we continue in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):**25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

God, in His wisdom, has set the members in the body of Christ so that the members have the same care or value of one another. Now God has also made it possible for us to keep our individuality in His body as we continue in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):**27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

This individuality will manifest itself in the different ministry gifts which God gives each one as we continue in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):**28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

We don't get to choose our ministry gift, but our ministry gift is given to us in the wisdom of God according to our individuality, and will fit us perfectly. Our individuality, I have found, is something that I discover as I allow myself to feel, and to process my feelings with God's help. My feelings send me messages about who I am. If I ignore or push down my feelings, I will never get the message. As I allow myself to feel what I feel, I am acknowledging who I am, for they are my feelings. With God's help, I do not have to react because of my feelings, but I can discern His voice, and act according to what He shows me is the truth about what I am feeling. This is why the knowledge of His word is so important. He will never go against His word. As I process my feelings in the light of His word, I then can walk in the light, and I am able to hear His voice, and discern the wisdom of God as we read in **James 3 (KJV):**17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

We have a good, good Father who knows not just our thoughts, but also our feelings. He wants our hearts. We don't give Him our hearts by choosing not to feel. Rather, we must feel with Him, and discover who He made us to be as we walk in His light. We must not be afraid of finding out that we are imperfect. We are all imperfect. Realizing our imperfections will only help us to think soberly of ourselves, and to not pretend we are

something when we are not. If we have a question, we can ask the Lord and let His peace rule as Paul encourages in **Philippians 4 (KJV):6** Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

And the mind stayed on Him is at peace in **Isaiah 26 (KJV):3** Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

And Paul helps us in this regard as we read in **Philippians 4 (KJV):8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Disciplining our mind will help us remain in perfect peace.

Now again, we are all individuals in the body of Christ, and we all have a unique place where God has set us in His body. And so we do not all have the same office or function as we read in **Romans 12 (KJV):3** For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

These verses also read as in **Romans 12 (NASB):3** For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. 4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function.

All the members do not have the same office, or function. God has allotted to each a measure of faith. We must think soberly, with sound judgment, about ourselves and consider the measure of faith God has allotted to us as we continue in **Romans 12 (KJV):5** So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

To put it another way, the body is not one minister, but many ministers. Now remember, God has given to every one of us grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ as we read in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):7** But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

The gift of Christ mentioned here is the ministry gift that we are given when we are saved, relating to where we are set in His body. Our placement in the body will determine what function we are to perform, that is, what ministry gift we have been given.

We all have the same grace to be saved as Jesus explains in the parable of the householder hiring laborers into his vineyard in Matthew 20 (KJV):1-16. The last laborers who were hired and worked only one hour received the same pay as the first who had worked only 11 hours as we read in **Matthew 20 (KJV):9** And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. 11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, 12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? 16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

We all receive the same grace to be chosen and saved, but we have ministry gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us for that particular ministry gift, which is according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

We are not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, but we must not think more lowly of ourselves either. Each one in the body of Christ has been given grace to perform a specific function. If the body were only a foot, where would the body be? As we walk in fellowship with the Lord, we will discover our

place in His body, and we will fulfill the ministry we have been given by the Lord. Let us seek His glory with all that we have been given.

## Ministry Gifts

Under the Old Covenant, the ministry was confined to the Levites. The priests had to be, not just Levites, but sons of Aaron, who was also a Levite. If you tried to be a priest, but you were only a Levite and not a son of Aaron, you could receive the death penalty as happened to Korah in Numbers, chapter 16. Korah was not a son of Aaron, but he sought the priesthood and paid for it with his life.

Moses pointed out that the Levites, of whom Korah was one, had the service of the tabernacle. But Korah and his men were not sons of Aaron, and were therefore not eligible to be priests under the Old Covenant. These men paid the ultimate price for their willfulness. Korah and his followers, all 250, perished for their disobedience. The priesthood belonged exclusively to Aaron and his sons by a perpetual statute.

The law gave the Levitical priesthood to Aaron and his sons exclusively, and not to the Levites who were sons of Levi, but who were not also sons of Aaron. If those Levites who were not sons of Aaron, but of the tribe of Levi, came “nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar,” both they and Aaron and his sons would die. Aaron and his sons were to “bear the iniquity of” their priesthood. The Levitical priesthood was therefore not given to all the Levites but only to the sons of Aaron.

However, under the New Covenant, we are all believer priests as Peter reveals in **1 Peter 2 (KJV):9** But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; **10** Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

We are now, as believer priests, to offer up ourselves as living sacrifices as we read again in **Romans 12 (KJV):1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

We are to offer up a sacrifice of praise as we read again in **Hebrews 13 (NASB):15** Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

And we are to do good and to share as we read again in **Hebrews 13 (NASB):16** And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

## The Empowering in the New Covenant

Now after Jesus rose from the dead, and before He ascended into heaven, He commanded the disciples to wait for the promise of the Father as we read in **Acts 1 (KJV):4** And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. **5** For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

This baptism was to be an empowering as we continue to read in **Acts (KJV):6** When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? **7** And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. **8** But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. **9** And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Jesus also spoke of this empowering in **Luke 24 (KJV):49** And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

After Jesus ascended into heaven, they all went back to wait in an upper room as we read in **Acts 1 (KJV):13** And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon

Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. 15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty...

These 120 disciples were all waiting in one accord as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV):1** And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

There were people outside who were actual witnesses to this event as we continue in **Acts 2 (KJV):5** And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. 12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

When the 120 disciples in the upper room were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and outsiders heard them, some thought they were drunk as we continue in **Acts 2 (KJV):13** Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. 14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. 16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Peter reveals that this baptism of the Holy Spirit was a fulfillment of **Joel 2 (KJV):28** And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

The Holy Spirit has now been poured out upon all believers, both men and women in the New Covenant. This baptism of the Holy Spirit is still to be poured out on Israel as the prophet Joel reveals in **Joel 2 (KJV):23** Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. 24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. 25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. 26 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. 27 And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

The prophet Joel did not see the times of the Gentiles which would happen before the Lord restores Israel. And Peter reveals that the gift of the Spirit was not just for the first disciples, but the promise is for all who are afar off as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV):38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.

Jesus had already explained to them that this baptism is an empowering for service as we read in Acts 1:5-8, and Luke 24:49.

So, when the New Covenant was inaugurated by Jesus' death and resurrection, there was to be an empowering of all believers by the Spirit of God for service in the Kingdom of God.



## Our Ministry

Now in addition to the gift of the Holy Spirit, to every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. The gift of Christ spoken of here is our ministry gift as we read again in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):7** But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

The gifts he is talking about here are ministry gifts as we continue to read in **Ephesians 4 KJV):11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

That is, He gave gifted men to the Church. These ministry gifts are given for the purpose of the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the building up the body of Christ. These gifts are to continue until the Church is complete as we continue in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):13** Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

The body increases in stature as each part works effectively in its measure. The body is not complete yet. These ministry gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastors and teachers are still needed in the body of Christ today, for we are not all “in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God”, nor are we, as a body, “a perfect man”, nor have we grown to “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”. But that is where we are going. That is what Christ is building as He reveals in **Matthew 16 (KJV):18** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Jesus is building His Church through these ministry gifts, as He ordained works for each one to do. Other ministry gifts are also mentioned in **Romans 12 (KJV):3** For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

The word “office” in verse 4 relates to a function in the body of Christ, a ministry gift. We don’t all have the same ministry gift as Paul reveals also in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):29** Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

## The Difference Between Ministries Gifts, Spiritual Gifts, and the Fruit of the Spirit

The purpose of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is not fully understood by many who receive it. They are never taught regarding its purpose, and so, many who receive it become disappointed in their experience. Receiving the experience will enable me as a Spirit filled believer to enter into a fuller experience, if I am further taught in regards to my place in the body of Christ, and the bringing forth of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and the producing of the fruit of the Spirit, and also the producing of fruit unto eternal life.

Now there are two kinds of gifts, first the ministry gifts, which relate to my place in the body of Christ, and then, spiritual gifts which are the tools which go with my ministry. These two forms of gifts are pointed out

in scripture in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):4** Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

“Now there are diversities of gifts...,” relating to spiritual gifts, and in verse 5, “...there are differences of administrations...”, relating to ministries.

Then in **Romans 12 (KJV):6** Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

We have gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us. Now the word “gifts” is also mentioned in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):8** Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

The word “gifts” used here is not “charisma” which refers to the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:4,7-11, but “doma”. This word “doma” is a general word in Greek for that which is given.

These gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4:8 refer then to the gifted men of **Ephesians 4 (KJV):11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Christ gave these gifted men to the church, and also the list related to in **Romans 12 (KJV):8** Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Then the list of sign gift ministries which we will explain more about later in this study in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

We will also talk about helps and governments later in this study. Now, from what we have in the above scriptures, this is the list of gifted men and women: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Exhorters, Givers, Shewers of Mercy, those with Miracle ministries, those with Healing ministries, and those with a ministry in Tongues.

Then we are to understand that all of these ministries which we have stated relate to persons who are further gifted by the Holy Spirit with gifts of the Spirit. These spiritual gifts, or the “pneumatika” in the Greek, are different from the ministry gifts.

We could describe the difference in this sense. As the person has eyes, ears, a nose, a mouth, and feeling, which enable us to see, hear, taste and touch, in the physical realm, so we, as ministries in the body of Christ, have spiritual faculties given to us by the Spirit of God which enable us to see, hear, taste, and touch in a spiritual sense. Or in others words, we can see supernaturally, utter supernaturally, and act supernaturally, as ministries in the body of Christ, because of the faculties or gifts of the Spirit.

Now the list of spiritual gifts, or the “pneumatika”, is given in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):8** For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

These gifts are spiritual enablements. They are not something we can do in the natural. When a believer becomes operational in, or the power of the “pneumatika” operates through him, then he has the “charisma” of the Spirit. Every Spirit-filled believer has these two kinds of gifts, that is, a ministry gift and spiritual gifts. Then he, himself, is given as a gift to the church.

We must accept our God given place in the Body of Christ. The sovereignty of God in this matter of setting members must be accepted.

Now these Spirit-filled believers, as members, are set in the body of Christ, according to our ministry, or function in the body of Christ. Our ministry gives us our special place, or part, in the church, or body of Christ. We are then as eyes, ears, legs and hands are to our bodies. So we are, as members in the body of Christ, the church, set in place, not by man, but by God.

With our ministries we have gifts to go with, or supplement our ministries. And it is the working together of every member that makes the body grow, as stated in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):16** From whom the whole

body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Now then also the fruit of the Spirit is mentioned in **Galatians 5 (KJV):22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

The fruit of the Spirit relates to qualities of character in the believer. It is called fruit because it is something that grows in the believer's life as he or she walks in the light of the word of God. We don't receive the fruit of the Spirit by the laying on of hands, as a spiritual gift might be received as Paul mentions in **Romans 1 (KJV):14** For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

And in **1 Timothy 4 (KJV):14** Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

The word for gift in this verse is χάρισμα (pronounced charisma). As the Holy Spirit illuminates the word of God to us, and we are then obedient to the light we have received in the word of God, the Spirit's presence grows in our lives, and the fruit of His presence will be seen in the love, joy, and peace that we experience, along with the other fruits of the Spirit.

## Apostolic Vision

The apostles were given a command to reach the world for Christ as we read in **Matthew 28 (KJV):18** And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The apostolic vision is worldwide. The apostle's ministry is to the big "C" Church, that is, the whole church worldwide, and not just the local church. And Paul reveals that the ministry of the apostle has been set in the Church by God as first in order of authority as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

That is, the apostle is first in order of authority in Church doctrine and government. The apostle plants as Paul says in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):16** I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

Planting has to do with starting a church in an area where Christ is not named. Paul planted the church in Corinth, and Apollos watered. That is, Apollos' function was to water the saints, or to teach them the word of God. This would cause the saints at Corinth to grow in grace and knowledge as Peter encourages in **2 Peter 3 (KJV):18** But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.

Paul laid the foundation in Corinth as we continue to read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):10** According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Being a wise masterbuilder, the apostle is the "go to" in matters of doctrine. Doctrine, or Biblical truth, is not an invention of the apostle. Doctrine was received from the Lord by the first foundational apostles, and

delivered to the saints in the Gospels and in the epistles of the New Testament. These documents were collected by the early church, and they formed the canon of the New Testament. These first foundational apostles were eyewitnesses of His glory. We must esteem their writings as they are in truth, the word of God, the scripture. Being the word of God, they are inspired by God as Paul reveals in **2 Timothy 3 (KJV):16** All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The word of God must be central in all the ministry gifts. Knowledge of the teaching of the word of God is not obtained by the laying on of hands, or by the appointment to an office such as overseer or bishop or pastor. Biblical truth is obtained by only one way, and that is by reading and studying the word of God with a heart attitude of surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ as Paul commands in **2 Timothy 2 (KJV):15** Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We are to study to show ourselves “approved unto God”. Without this heart attitude of surrender to Him, it is impossible to receive Biblical truth. This is why there is so much division in the body of Christ. We do not have a heart attitude of surrender to Him. We are trying to please each other, and to not offend each other. But if we had this heart attitude of surrender to Him, we would all become one in a very short time. Our doctrinal differences would soon fade away as we surrendered to Him, and received the Biblical truth in His word, for we read in **John 14 (KJV):6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

As there is only one Jesus, so there is only one way, one truth, and one life. We must surrender to Him to receive His truth in the word of God. This will unite us with a vision of what He is building, and then we can work with Him, and He will use us to build His Church.

Now the ministry of the apostle is one of the building and instructing ministries in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

The apostle is looking to complete the whole Church, and to bring it to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. This is the vision of the apostle. Now we might ask why is this ministry not recognized in the Church today, for the scriptures say that the ministry gifts of Ephesians 4:11 are until we all come in the unity of the faith, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. There are several reasons.

## **Why Do Churches Reject the Ministry of the Apostle**

### ***Apostolic Succession***

The first reason why many of the present day churches do not accept the ministry of the apostle today is because of their reliance on tradition. Why is this loyalty to tradition so strong we might ask? Tradition has deep roots in some churches. As we look back at the history of the early Church, we see their struggle to survive. They came under intense persecution by the Roman empire. We have only to read about the reign of the emperor Nero in the 60’s and his lighting up of Christians as torches in the city of Rome to realize the struggle of the early Church in the first century to survive.

Then in the book of Revelation, the messages to the seven churches tell us much about the state of the early Church at the close of the first century when this revelation was given to John the apostle. Listen to what the Spirit of God said to the church at Ephesus in the first message in **Revelation 2 (KJV)**:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. 4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. 7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

The Lord says He has somewhat against those in the church at Ephesus, because they had left their first love. That is, they had left the love they had at first when they accepted Christ as their savior. And the Lord tells them to remember “from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works”. How did they get off track we might ask?

We then read of the suffering of the church at Smyrna in Revelation 2:8-11. Then at Pergamos, Satan’s seat is said to be where they dwell, yet they had not denied the faith and had held fast to His name. But they held the false doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes as we read in Revelation 2:12-17. They were also told to repent.

And we then read of the spiritual fornication of the church at Thyatira in Revelation 2:18-29. They had allowed the prophetess Jezebel to teach and seduce the Lord’s servants to commit fornication and eat things sacrificed to idols. But there were a few in this church who had “not known the depths of Satan, as they speak”. This church had come under the influence of Satan, but some still held fast to their Lord.

And the church at Sardis was not watchful to continue in what they had received of the Lord. They were also told to repent as we read in Revelation 3:1-6. There were a few in this church also who had not “defiled their garments”.

And Christ is pictured as outside the church of the Laodiceans, knocking on the door to come in, to those who were said to be spiritually wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked in Revelation 3:14-22. If anyone in this church would open the door of their own heart, the Lord promised that He would “come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” in verse 20.

Only the church at Philadelphia, as we read in Revelation 3:7-13, was commended because they had a little strength and had kept His word and not denied His name. Every church except for Smyrna and Philadelphia were told to repent. These churches were real churches, and in the plan and purpose of God, and in His foreknowledge, are also representative of the state of the early church, and the Church as it will progress over time until Christ comes for we read in **Revelation 3 (KJV)**:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

The “hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth”, is speaking of the tribulation period which is still to come to pass. This then is a prophetic statement which spoke to the church at Philadelphia, which was a real church, but which also represents a specific period of time in the history of the Church, just before Christ will come again.

So as the Church grew out of the apostolic age, and was struggling to survive because of the intense persecution, and the false doctrines, and the sinfulness of many of its early converts, a tradition developed and was believed by the early church that the apostles were the foundation of the Church, and that they had given their ministry and their place of government over to the bishops. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, wrote his book, **Against Heresies**, in the late second century from about 175 to 202 A.D. In this book, which is really five books in one volume, Irenaeus was combating the current gnostic heresy of his time. In the course of his writing, he gives us a telescopic view into the thinking of the early Church. In **Against Heresies, Book 3**,

**Chapter 3**, he writes, “It is within the power of all, therefore, in every Church, who may wish to see the truth, to contemplate clearly the tradition of the apostles manifested throughout the whole world; and we are in a position to reckon up those who were by the apostles instituted bishops in the Churches, and [to demonstrate] the succession of these men to our own times; those who neither taught nor knew of anything like what these [heretics] rave about. For if the apostles had known hidden mysteries, which they were in the habit of imparting to “the perfect” apart and privily from the rest, they would have delivered them especially to those to whom they were also committing the Churches themselves. For they were desirous that these men should be very perfect and blameless in all things, whom also they were leaving behind as their successors, delivering up their own place of government to these men; which men, if they discharged their functions honestly, would be a great boon [to the Church], but if they should fall away, the direst calamity.” **Ante-Nicene Fathers, Edited by Alexander Roberts, D.D. & James Donaldson, LL.D., Hendrickson Publishers.**

Again Irenaeus writes in **Against Heresies, Book 5, Chapter 20**, “Now all these [heretics] are of much later date than the bishops to whom the apostles committed the Churches; which fact I have in the third book taken all pains to demonstrate.” **Ante-Nicene Fathers, Edited by Alexander Roberts, D.D. & James Donaldson, LL.D., Hendrickson Publishers.**

The heretics he is speaking of are the Gnostics, who believed that Jesus Christ did not really come in the flesh, but that He only appeared to be in the flesh. So Jesus, the man, and the Christ, were two different beings according to the Gnostics. Irenaeus is trying to defend the church against the Gnostic teaching by arguing in Book 3, Chapter 3 above, that the tradition of the apostles manifested throughout the whole world was maintained by the bishops that they had appointed. Irenaeus believed that if a church could demonstrate the succession of its bishops back to the appointment by an apostle, that this was a guarantee that the doctrine of that local church was genuine. This belief is what we call the doctrine of apostolic succession.

Not only so, but the bishops had, according to Irenaeus, received a certain gift of truth from the apostles, as Irenaeus says in **Against Heresies, Book 4: Chapter XXVI, paragraph 2**, “Wherefore it is incumbent to obey the presbyters who are in the Church,—those who, as I have shown, possess the succession from the apostles; those who, together with the succession of the episcopate, have received the certain gift of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father”. **Ante-Nicene Fathers, Edited by Alexander Roberts, D.D. & James Donaldson, LL.D., Hendrickson Publishers.**

Irenaeus believed that this “gift of truth” was passed down through the succession of bishops who could trace their appointment to an apostle. If a church did not have a record of the succession of their bishops from an apostle, that church’s tradition was not to be trusted. This teaching of apostolic succession continues to this day in the Roman Catholic Church, and in a modified form in many Protestant churches.

So, what we see in the development of the early church is the elevation of the bishops, who were originally overseers of local churches, to the de facto place of the apostles. Irenaeus himself was a bishop of Lyons, and he is writing in defense of the whole Church.

But Irenaeus goes yet further as he also states in **Against Heresies, Book 3: Chapter III, Paragraph 2**, “Since, however, it would be very tedious, in such a volume as this, to reckon up the successions of all the Churches, we do put to confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil self-pleasing, by vainglory, or by blindness and perverse opinion, assemble in unauthorized meetings; [we do this, I say,] by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; as also [by pointing out] the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time by means of the successions of the bishops. For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its preeminent authority that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the apostolical tradition has been preserved continuously by those [faithful men] who exist everywhere.” **Ante-Nicene Fathers, Edited by Alexander Roberts, D.D. & James Donaldson, LL.D., Hendrickson Publishers.**

Irenaeus here reveals his reliance on “that tradition derived from the apostles”. Irenaeus here also makes it illegal to “assemble in unauthorized meetings” unless you are in agreement with and authorized by the “universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul”.

Now it is doubtful however that Peter was ever in Rome, for to this day there is no current historical evidence to this effect. Nevertheless, Irenaeus upholds the tradition of the church of his time.

With just these statements we have looked at, Irenaeus has summarized his belief in apostolic succession. This was the belief of much of the Church in Irenaeus' time, and continued to be so until the Reformation. That is, the early Church, by in large, believed that the apostles "delivered up their own place of government" to the bishops whom they had appointed over the churches that they had planted, and that these bishops must agree with the bishop of Rome because of its preeminent authority, being "founded and organized by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul". And that these bishops, who could show their succession to an apostle, possessed a certain gift of truth which was handed down from bishop to bishop, and they must therefore be adhered to.

Now as a result of the Reformation, much of the Church no longer believes in this theory of apostolic succession, but rather adheres to a modified version of this theory. Much of the Church today believes that the apostles did hand their place of government over to the bishops, but they deny that the bishops must agree or submit to the bishop of Rome. This has been the belief of most of the non-Catholic churches from the Reformation up to the present time.

As a result of the acceptance of this doctrine, many reject the ministry of the apostle.

### ***The Fear of False Apostles***

A second reason why the present day Church does not accept the ministry of the apostle today is because of the fear of false apostles. These false apostles were around even in the days of the early Church as Paul records in **2 Corinthians 11 (KJV):13** For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

And in **Revelation 2 (KJV):1** Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

We know that fear is not of God as we read in **1 John 4 (KJV):18** There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

Nevertheless, we must guard against false apostles, just as we must guard against false pastors and teachers. We must hold all ministry in the Church accountable to the word of God. The same risk of submitting to an apostle today is present with the pastors of the churches today, who have assumed the place of the apostolic ministry. We have tried to secure the churches with seminary trained pastors, but the seminaries do not guarantee the spirituality of their students or their teachers. In most cases, the students wind up with a lot of head knowledge, and very little Biblical truth, or doctrine. The seminaries for the most part do not teach with conviction because they do not want to offend anyone. In order to include as many students as they can, they teach a lot of different viewpoints, and the student is left to choose his or her belief. They want to keep their classes full in order to pay their professors, and keep the seminary going.

This is a very secular method of preparing the leaders of our churches, and it is not trusting in God to build His Church, and to train His leaders. God is able to raise up true apostles, who are able to walk in the light of His word. Paul tells us the signs of a true apostle in **2 Corinthians 12 (KJV):10** Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. 11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

One of the signs of a true apostle is his humility and his servant heart as we see here in Paul. Paul then continues in **2 Corinthians 12 (KJV):12** Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. 13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it

be that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong. 14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. 15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

Paul would not even accept financial support from the Corinthians. They were his children in the Lord, and he was their parent in the Lord, so to speak. This was the servant heart of Paul.

### ***Carnality in the Church***

A third reason why the ministry of the apostle is not generally accepted by the Church today may be because of carnality. Looking at the big “C” Church today, because of the many divisions in the Church today, we know that much of the Church is yet carnal. Paul called the Corinthians in such a state babes in Christ as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV)**: 1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

We need to remember that we are God's building, and we are working together with Him. And there is only one foundation upon which the Church rests as we continue in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV)**: 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

We must remember that the foundation that the apostles laid is Jesus Christ. The apostles are not the foundation, but they laid the foundation of Jesus Christ. And we all build upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. The apostle plants and the teacher waters, but God gives the increase. It is not about us, but about Him.

We must be willing to let go of our divisions in order that we may become spiritual. And this does not have to be a group decision. Each one of us must make up our mind to submit to God, and to His word. As each one of us does this individually, God will reveal the truth of His word to us, and we ourselves will become spiritual, and we will see with spiritual eyes as the Church grows in unity.

A fourth reason is that some are simply ignorant of the scriptures. Some believe that there were only twelve apostles. But this is proven false by the scriptures as we shall soon see.

### **The Place of the Apostle**

Certainly, there is a great need in the present day Church for apostolic leadership, for we see that the Church is greatly divided in its doctrine and practice. Apostolic government is God's chosen leadership for the Church. We must be spiritually minded in order to discern those who are truly apostles today. And we must understand what the word of God says about the place of apostles.

Now the Scripture says that we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV)**: 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.



And Paul says that he has laid the foundation of Jesus Christ, and others build upon it as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):**10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

We must recognize that there were foundational apostles who were eyewitnesses of His majesty as Peter says in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):**16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. 19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

And Luke recorded this eyewitness testimony in **Luke 1 (KJV):**1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

And the wall of the new Jerusalem will have the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb in each of the twelve foundations as we read in **Revelation 21 (KJV):**14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

So, these eyewitnesses of His glory have a more sure word of prophecy that we do well to take heed to, as it is in truth, the word of God.

But there were also other apostles than the twelve as we see in **Acts 14 (KJV):**14 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out...

And in **Galatians 1 (KJV):**19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

And we read in **1 Thessalonians 1 (KJV):**1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul includes Silvanus and Timothy in his address to the Thessalonians. Then he includes Silvanus and Timothy as fellow apostles in **1 Thessalonians 2 (KJV):**6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

And we read of Epaphroditus in **Philippians 2 (KJV):**25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

The word "messenger" in the Greek is *ἀπόστολος* (pronounced apostolos). The word "your" is in the Greek, so the verse should read, "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your apostle, and he that ministered to my wants".

It would also be necessary to include Luke and Mark as apostles since they travelled with the apostle Paul, and wrote the gospel of Luke, and the book of Acts, and the gospel of Mark respectively. And of course, the apostle Paul who wrote the epistles of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Timothy, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Titus, and Philemon, and probably Hebrews since the writer refers to Timothy in Hebrews 13:23, and mentions that they "had compassion of me in my bonds" in Hebrews 10:34. And also, the book of Hebrews is of such a depth of knowledge that no one, other than Paul, would have had such depth among the writers of the New Testament.

And we could include Andronicus and Junia, although Junia is the name of a woman, in **Romans 16 (KJV):7** Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

These other apostles were not of the twelve, but they had firsthand knowledge of the eye witness testimony of the twelve.

And Peter lays no claim to be the corner as we see in **1 Peter 2 (KJV):4** To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Peter is just another stone in the building. Jesus is the chief corner stone, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, and he who believes in Him will not be confounded. In the Greek, the word confounded is **καταισχύνω** (pronounced kataischunō). This word is from two Greek words **κατά** (pronounced kata), meaning “down from”, and **αἰσχύνω** (pronounced aiskuno), meaning to shame. Thus the word kataischunō means “to shame, put to shame, put to the blush...to dishonor, disgrace”. **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, Pages 213, 10, 215.** Thus the one who believes in Jesus, the chief corner stone, will not be put to shame.

But Peter is a foundation stone as we read again in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):19** Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

The place of the apostle is then first in order of the authority of ministry in the Church as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Now after giving instructions to the Corinthians about marriage, Paul concludes in **1 Corinthians 7 (KJV):17** But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.

The word “ordain” in the Greek is **διατάσσω** (pronounced diatassō), and is formed of two words, dia, and tasso. Tasso means “to place in order, arrange, signifies to appoint”. Dia means “through”, and diatasso thus is “a strengthened form” and “frequently denotes to arrange, appoint, prescribe”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 1, page 68.**

So, we see that Paul’s vision of his apostolic authority extended to all the churches, with the power to set in order. And he adds in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV):37** If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

And in **1 Thessalonians 2 (KJV):13** For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

Now when there was a question of doctrine, or Biblical truth, the local churches resorted to apostolic authority as we read in **Acts 15 (KJV):1** And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

When believers in the early Church had a question, they resorted to the apostles and elders who had the most seniority to help them discern the truth. We continue in **Acts 15 (KJV):3** And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. 4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the

church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. 5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. 6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

We see that the legalism of circumcision was not just a problem for the church in Antioch, but also for the church in Jerusalem. And legalism is still a problem in the Church today. We continue to read in **Acts 15 (KJV)**:7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. 12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

Peter declares that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then James the Lord's brother, also an apostle, agrees as we continue in **Acts 15 (KJV)**:13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

James, the Lord's brother, and not one of the twelve, presided in this conference in Jerusalem. He was also an apostle as we know from **Galatians 1 (KJV)**:19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

The whole church in Jerusalem had a witness in the Spirit to the truth of James' words, and so there was much agreement as we continue in **Acts 15 (KJV)**:22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren: 23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia. 24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

It was not just circumcision that was an issue, but keeping the law was an issue as well. We continue in **Acts 15 (KJV)**:25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. 30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle: 31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

And it was not just the word of the apostles for we see that the whole church had a witness in the Spirit, and James himself acknowledged his reliance on the witness of the Spirit as he says in verse 28 that "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things".

Then the church at Antioch also had a witness in the Spirit to the truth, "which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation" in verse 31 above.

We conclude in **Acts 15 (KJV):32** And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. 33 And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles. 34 Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still. 35 Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

Now we see that the place of the apostle was as one of the brethren. When he is in a local church, he functions as a fellow elder as Peter notes in **1 Peter 5 (KJV):1** The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

The words “also an elder” in the Greek are one word, **συμπρεσβύτερος** (pronounced sumpresbuteros), which is a compound word composed of the Greek word “sum”, meaning “with”, and “presbuteros” meaning “elder”. So the word could be translated “fellow elder”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 2, page 21.**

Peter continues with instructions to the elders in **1 Peter 5 (KJV):2** Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

The elders, or overseers, are to be examples to the flock, not dictators or lords over God's heritage. We must submit to God first and foremost of all. Peter continues with instructions to those who are not elders in **1 Peter 5 (KJV):5** Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

The “younger” is not necessarily speaking of age, but of maturity in the Lord. And so, the elders are not just old men, but men who are mature in the Lord. That is, they know the Biblical truth of the word of God.

So, the place of the apostle is one of humility as we read in **1 Corinthians 4 (KJV):9** For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. 11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; 12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: 13 Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. 14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

And Jesus also admonished His disciples as well in **Luke 22 (KJV):24** And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. 25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. 26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. 27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth.

And in **Matthew 20 (KJV):24** And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. 25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

The word for minister in verse 26 in the Greek is **διάκονος** (pronounced diakonos), which “primarily denotes a servant, whether as doing servile work, or as an attendant rendering free service, without particular reference to its character. The word is probably connected with the verb dioko, to hasten after, pursue (perhaps originally said of a runner).” **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 1, page 272.**

But in verse 27, the word for servant in the Greek is **δοῦλος** (pronounced doulos), is “an adjective, signifying “in bondage” Rom. 6:19”, and “is used as a noun, and as the most common and general word for

“servant”, frequently indicating subjection without the idea of bondage.” **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 347.**

Jesus also spoke of this in **Mark 9 (KJV):35** And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

And in **Mark 10 (KJV):44** And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

The idea is that in the Church, those in leadership are in servant roles. They are not to fleece the sheep, but give their lives to protect the sheep and help the sheep grow in the Lord. Paul considered himself in this way as we read in **Philippians 1 (KJV):1** Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Now Paul also reveals that apostles who have matured in their ministry become spiritual fathers as we read in **1 Corinthians 4 (KJV):15** For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. 17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

Paul was a spiritual father in the Lord. Spiritual fatherhood is described in **1 John 2 (KJV):12** I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

When we come to Christ, we are as little children knowing little more than that our sins are forgiven us for his name's sake. As we grow in grace and knowledge as Peter encourages in 2 Peter 3:18, we begin to know our authority over our flesh, the world, and the devil, and we are then said to have overcome the wicked one. A spiritual father is one who has grown in relationship with the Lord to know him that is from the beginning. In other words, a spiritual father is able, because of his knowledge of the word of God, to know and practice true humility, and to know by experience that he is only a man created by God who is the creator from the beginning.

Now another reason why apostles are not accepted by the Church today is that we have set the bar too high. We expect signs and wonders to flow from an apostolic ministry for Paul says this is truly a sign of an apostle in **2 Corinthians 12 (KJV):12** Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

But even Jesus could do no mighty work in His home town because of their unbelief. This is not to say that signs and wonders will not be evident in a true apostolic ministry. But apostles must grow in grace and knowledge just like everyone else.

We must be strong and courageous if we are to grow up into Him in all things. When we understand the place of the apostle, we will be more discerning for the Spirit of God is able to show us who is truly an apostle and who is not.

## **The Ministry of the Prophet**

The same verse that speaks of the ministry of the apostle also speaks of the ministry of the prophet in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

The prophet is second in the order of ministries as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Some examples of New Testament prophets are given in **Acts 15 (KJV):32** And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

The prophet exhorts and confirms the brethren. The word confirm in the Greek is ἐπιστηρίζω (pronounced epistērízō), and means “to cause to rest or lean on, to settle upon; metaphorically, To confirm, strengthen, establish”. **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, Page 160.**

This word is also used in **Acts 14 (KJV):22** Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

And in **Acts 15 (KJV):40** And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

And it is translated as “strengthening” in **Acts 18 (KJV):23** And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

The prophet is by individuality primarily an inspirational speaker. This ministry will assist the apostles in laying foundations as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):20** And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

Prophets helped the apostles complete the revelation of the Church as we read in **Ephesians 3 (KJV):5** Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. 6 That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Then in **Acts 11 (KJV):27** And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

And in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV):29** Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. 30 If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. 31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. 32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

All the ministry gifts will have some inspiration and the gift of prophecy, but for the prophet this is the major part of his ministry. The gift of prophecy and the gifts of the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge and the discerning of spirits will be strong in the prophetic ministry. The gift of prophecy is for edification, exhortation, and comfort as Paul reveals in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV):3** But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

Since the canon of the New Testament was closed when the last of the foundational apostles passed away, the present day New Testament prophet does not get new revelation in addition to Scripture. All prophecy must be judged by the word of God in the Old and New Testaments. Prophets in the present day Church may get revelation such as a word of wisdom like Agabus received about the famine throughout all the world, which warned the saints, and who were then able to respond accordingly and prepare. But as far as doctrine is concerned, the present day New Testament prophet will not receive new doctrine, but their prophecy must be judged by the word of God as it stands in the Old and New Testaments. This is also true for the apostle. He will not receive new doctrine either. All prophecy today, no matter what the ministry, must be judged by the word of God.

## **The Ministry of the Teacher**

The ministry of the teacher is third in the order of ministries as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

The ministry of a teacher is also mentioned in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

The words “pastors and teachers” are “in a construction called Granville Sharp’s rule which indicates that they refer to one individual. The one who shepherds God’s flock is also a teacher of the Word, having both the gifts of shepherding and teaching the flock. God’s ideal pastor is one who engages in a didactic ministry, feeding the saints on expository preaching, giving them the rich food of the Word”. **Word Studies in the**

**Greek New Testament, Kenneth S. Wuest, Volume One, Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament, page 101.**

An example of the ministry of the teacher is in **Acts 18 (KJV):24** And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. 26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. 27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: 28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

The ministry of the teacher is primarily to water the flock as Apollos did, as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):6** I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

The watering relating to the teacher would relate to doctrine, that is, to the Biblical truth of the word of God. The knowledge of Biblical truth does not come by the laying on of hands, or by gaining the position of pastor of a church, or by obtaining a theological degree from a seminary. Biblical truth, or doctrine, only comes by studying the word of God as Paul encourages Timothy in **2 Timothy 2 (KJV):15** Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The teacher cannot be a man pleaser. He must study to show himself approved unto God, for it is God who will judge him. This is the warning James gives us in **James 3 (NASB):1** Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

Teachers must rightly divide the word of God. In our day and age, when there are so many resources available, there is just no excuse. As we surrender our hearts to the Lord, the Spirit of God will illuminate His word to our minds, and we will know the truth. As we walk in the light of His word, the fruit of the Spirit will grow in our lives. We must be good trees as Jesus warns in **Matthew 7 (KJV):15** Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

### **The Ministry of the Evangelist**

The word “evangelist” is mentioned three times in the New Testament. First in **Acts 21 (KJV):8** And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.

Philip was one of the first seven deacons appointed at the church at Jerusalem in Acts 6:5 to handle the daily ministration of the widows, among other tasks. Then the word “evangelist” is mentioned in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

And again in **2 Timothy 4 (KJV):15** But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

An example of Philip's ministry is given in **Acts 8 (KJV):5** Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. 6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. 8 And there was great joy in that city.

The evangelist is a reaper as we read in **John 4 (KJV):35** Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. 36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. 37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. 38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

The primary function then of the evangelist is to win souls. He preaches the gospel.

## **The Ministry of the Pastor**

The word “Pastors” is only found once in the New Testament directly stated in Ephesians 4:11, but a number of times in the Old Testament. The meaning in the Hebrew and in the Greek is much the same, so in order to define the word, we can examine both terms. The word “pastor” or “shepherd” in the Hebrew is רֹעֵה (pronounced ra`ah), and means “to feed a flock”, “to pasture”, “to tend”, “to look after” “to govern”, “to rule”. **Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament, page 773.** The word for “pastors” in the Greek is ποιμήν (pronounced poimēn), and means “a shepherd, one who tends herds or flocks (not merely one who feeds them). **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 167.** So, the Pastor is given to the church according to **Ephesians 4 (KJV):11** And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.

And Dr. Albert Grimes points out, “And as a ministry, it tends flocks of believers, it pastures, or feeds these flocks, associates with it as its shepherd and friend. It rules over the flock as its supervisor. It gives direction, and guidance to the flock. There is a two-fold area of ministry that the Pastor works in. In the first sense he is connected as we see, with the Building and Instructive Ministries of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, and Teacher. This gives him a body function. And what the Apostle plants and establishes, and what the Prophet stirs into the moving of the Spirit, and charismatic truth, what the Evangelist adds to, and what the Teacher waters, the Pastor has to mold into a working church. Although the Pastor labors in the local church, this does not make him just a local elder. He belongs to the Building and Instructive Ministries of Ephesians 4:11. This enables him to have a larger sphere of service. He has both a Body Ministry, that means that he is connected with the whole Body in ministry, and not just to the local church, and he has a local church ministry. It is the ministry of the Pastor that connects the local church with the Body.” **Book 3: Ministry Gifts, Lesson 7: The Ministry of the Pastor, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 38.**

Dr. Grimes also writes, “In regards to position, we stated that he belongs to the Body Ministries of Ephesians 4:11. But in the local sense, he is the first ministry. He can be qualified, as the Pastor, Head Elder, or Shepherd, and he is directly responsible to the Lord who is the chief Shepherd, 1 Peter 5:4, “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear”...The flock over which the Holy Ghost has made the Pastor the shepherd over, was purchased by the Lord Himself. It is God’s heritage as stated in 1 Peter 5:3, “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock”. Too many who are not Pastors by ministry use God’s flock to build little kingdoms of their own.” **Book 3: Ministry Gifts, Lesson 7: The Ministry of the Pastor, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 39-40.**

In regards to the responsibility of the pastor, Dr. Grimes also writes, “The principle duty of the Pastor is to feed the flock of God. Too many men today are nothing more than promoters who expect the sheep to support what they themselves promote. A Pastor is first, and foremost, a feeder as we read in the instructions to the collective eldership, Acts 20:28, “Feed the flock of God”. Then in 1 Peter 5:2, “Feed the flock of God...” Then the Pastor is an overseer, as is stated in Acts 20:28, “over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers”. We have already stated that the Pastor is responsible for the oversight and direction of the spiritual life of the local church, and its relationship to the Body of Christ. Every sphere of church life is to be directed by the Pastor, for it is he who is responsible before God for the flock. It must be understood that this is an impossible task for the Pastor alone. This is the reason why in local churches God has ordained the office of Eldership. These Elders are the under shepherds of the flock, working under the Pastor who is the chief



shepherd. The flock is divided amongst these under shepherds, this is related to in 1 Peter 5:2,3, “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock.” The word “heritage” relates to the “lots” or “charges” given to the Elders. The portions entrusted to them. It could be translated, “Instead of lording it over those portions of the flock assigned to them, these under shepherds were exhorted to be examples to the entire flock.” **Book 3: Ministry Gifts, Lesson 7: The Ministry of the Pastor, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 40.**

The qualifications of an elder are as in **1 Timothy 3 (KJV):1** This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

### **Sign Gift Ministries**

Paul states in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

In speaking of this verse, Dr. Grimes states, “Now there is one ministry that stands out alone from all other ministries and that is the Sign Gift Ministry in 1 Corinthians 12:28. We have mentioned the three basic teaching ministries of Apostle, Prophet, and Teacher, as being set in the Body of Christ, then the statement “after that”, then the three gifts of miracles, then notice the term “gifts of healings” in 1 Corinthians 12:9, “the gift of healing”. So, the term “gifts of healings” must relate to the whole range of all the gifts of healing, making it more extensive than the gifts of healing in 1 Corinthians 12:9. Then diversities of tongues. Then there is the mention of the related offices of Eldership and Deaconship related in the words, “Helps” and “Governments”. In making the statements, I am giving my own opinion, for in the years of study on the subject of ministries I have noticed a ministry that cannot be classified in the Building and Instructive group, nor can it be classified in the Support groups. It is as I have said a ministry that stands out alone as something special. And I call it the Sign Gift Ministry. That is the reason for the statement in 1 Corinthians 12:28, “after that miracles, then gifts of healings, diversities of tongues”. I believe that God sometimes takes perhaps a Prophet, or an Evangelist, and gives them an outstanding gift. We must understand that their ministry does not change. They remain the same in profession. But God gives them a gift such as that of “The working of miracles”, or the full range of “gifts of healings”, or “diversities of tongues”. The three principle elements in the ministry would then be outstanding, miracles, healing, and the ability to preach or utter in diverse languages. For an example of this ministry we could mention the late Dr. Price, Smith Wigglesworth, and the present Kathryn Kuhlman. Dr. Price and Smith Wigglesworth ministries could be related to the Gifts of Healings. The Kathryn Kuhlman one relates to the Working of Miracles. The Catholic Encyclopedia relates the facts of Francis Xavier and St. Dominic and Jean of St. Frances preaching in languages, which were gifts of the Holy Spirit.” **Book 3: Ministry Gifts, Lesson 8: The Sign Gift and Support Ministries, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 45.**

In speaking of the purpose of this ministry, Dr. Grimes states, “What then is the purpose of such an outstanding ministry as this? From studying the above mentioned ministries, those we believe that had this Sign Gift Ministry, first it helps believers to accept the principles of Miracles, and Healing and Tongues, and increases their faith in the supernatural. Every Spirit filled believer and those who are not should attend these kinds of meetings. Second, there is a great increase in the Body of Christ because of the souls that are saved because of the supernatural seen through these ministries. Through the supernatural signs, opposition to the Gospel Message is broken down by the signs and wonders. It is a wonderful ministry and some wonder why

God does not set more of these ministries in the Body. He will if believers would be willing to pay the price. It is a costly ministry for those who exercise it in the power of the Spirit. Their life is that of separation, fasting, and prayer, not an ordinary ministry. Let us pray much for those who minister in this way for much sacrifice is required in order to fulfill such a ministry.” **Book 3: Ministry Gifts, Lesson 8: The Sign Gift and Support Ministries, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 45.**

### **The Ministry of Exhortation**

Dr. Grimes states in regards to this ministry, that “The word “exhortation” is found in a few passages such as Romans 12:8, “or he that exhorteth on exhortation”. Then the same word relates to Prophets as in Acts 15:32, “And Judas and Silas being prophets also themselves exhorted the brethren”. Then it is also found relating to Apostles, as in 1 Timothy 4:13, “Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine”. Then it is found related to the Gift of Prophecy. It is one of the elements of prophecy as stated in 1 Corinthians 14:3, “But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort”. The meaning of the word “exhortation” is the same in all these three verses. It means “a calling near”, “encouragement”, “to incite”, “invoke”, “entreat”. An Exhorter then is one who has the ministry of being concerned for saints and sinners with the ability and discernment and revelation to know of the needs in people’s lives, and is able because of his own individuality, and ministry, to call near those away from the Lord, to encourage, incite, invoke, entreat the children of God, and also the unsaved to come to God.” **Book 3: Ministry Gifts, Lesson 8: The Sign Gift and Support Ministries, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 45.**

### **The Ministry of Giving**

The ministry of giving is mentioned in **Romans 12 (KJV):8** Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

In regards to this ministry, Dr. Grimes writes, “To see this ministry in operation we must look to those who are in a business of some kind, and whom God has blessed above the average in material things. Now this is not always because they have paid their tithes, as some would have us to believe, in order to encourage others to give in the same manner, in order that God might bless them also. Much wrong teaching has gone forth in these areas. We are taught much in these days concerning tithes, and blessing pacts and seed faith. All these are principles taught in order to take advantage of people. Most of this kind of teaching is entirely unscriptural. However, members of churches, that feed the Children of God and allow them to minister, should be supported. Thus the needs of the church are taken care of. The principles of New Testament giving are set forth in 2 Corinthians 9:7, “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful give”. The blessing of such giving is also stated in 2 Corinthians 9:6, “But this I say he which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully”. But apart then, from the giving of the members, we have this Ministry of Giving set in the church. Some have this ministry, others have other ministries.” **Book 3: Ministry Gifts, Lesson 8: The Sign Gift and Support Ministries, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 45-46.**

### **The Ministry of Shewing of Mercy**

Dr. Grimes also includes showers of mercy as a ministry gift as he then writes, “This ministry is also brought to our attention in Romans 12:8, “he that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness”. After studying this ministry for a number of years, we have come to the conclusion that it has a far greater range of operation than most support ministries. And as there are different kinds of Prophets, so there are different kinds of Shewers of Mercy. As we have taught that ministry relates to individualism, we now describe a person according to the

word “mercy”, that is compassionate, and of a tender and a cheerful disposition. They are people who have compassion for those in need. They have a great desire to help those who are sick or discouraged, and away from God, and those who are unsaved. Now as we have said, there are many types of “Mercy Shewers”. Some have a burden to visit those who are sick, and discouraged and away from God. God, in wonderful ways, seems to lead them to these kinds of people. Some have a burden for children, working with them in many different ways, praying for them, teaching them. Others work with delinquents, teenagers, those on drugs or with other troubles. Others have more of a burden for the older people, teaching them, praying for them in old folks homes and hospitals, preparing them to meet the Lord. Some have a special ministry of compassion to those who have fallen into immorality. Other Shewers of Mercy feel lead to nurse those who are sick, and we find them working in hospitals, counseling and shewing mercy in that way. In the early church, often those who travelled and ministered the Word of God found this ministry a great comfort to them, as in Acts 16:15, “And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.” Here the ministry began to work at once after being saved. These Shewers of Mercy which are in most cases women, are capable of holding the office of a deaconess in the local church, and it is possible that Phebe had this ministry as stated in Romans 16:1-2, “I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: 2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.” **Book 3: Ministry Gifts, Lesson 8: The Sign Gift and Support Ministries, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 46-47.**

## The Bishops and Deacons

Paul addresses the church in Philippi in **Philippians 1 (KJV):1** Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

This verse in the Greek with the English pronunciation and translation underneath is the following:

**Παῦλος καὶ Τιμόθεος δούλοι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ**

Paulos kai timoteos douloi Yesou Christou pasin toys hageois en Christo Yesou (Greek Pronunciation)

Paul and Timothy servants of Jesus Christ to all the saints in Christ Jesus

**τοῖς οὔσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις;**

toys ooseen en Philipoys soon episkopois kai diakonois (Greek Pronunciation)  
the ones who are in Philippi with bishops and deacons

So, what is a bishop, and what is a deacon? To answer this question, we must turn to the word of God. The word “bishop” is found 6 times in the King James Version of the Bible.

The word in the Greek is **ἐπίσκοπος** (pronounced episkopos), and it is a noun, and is “literally, an overseer (epi, over, skopeo, to look or watch), whence Eng. “bishop,” which has precisely the same meaning”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. I, page 128.** This Greek word is found also in the following 5 scriptures:

**Acts 20 (KJV):28** Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

The word “overseers” is the same Greek word, episkopos, as in Philippians 1:1, which is translated bishops.

**Philippians 1 (KJV):**1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

**1 Timothy 3 (KJV):**2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

**Titus 1 (KJV):**7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

The word “steward” in Titus 1:7 is the Greek word **οἰκονόμος** (pronounced oikonomos), which “primarily denoted the manager of a household or estate (oikos, a house, nemo, to arrange), a steward (such were usually slaves or freedmen), Luke 12:42”, **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. IV, page 74**. This is basically what the overseer, or bishop or elder, was to do. He was to manage God’s household, the local church.

**1 Peter 2 (KJV):**25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

A derivative of this same Greek word, episkopos, is **ἐπισκοπή** (pronounced episkopē), and means “inspection, oversight, visitation; of God, visitation, interposition, whether in mercy or judgment”. **The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, 1978 Edition, Harold K. Moulton, Page 160**. This Greek word is used in the following scriptures:

**1 Peter 2 (KJV):**12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

**Luke 19 (KJV):**44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

In Acts 1:20 this Greek word, **ἐπισκοπή** (pronounced episkopē), is translated as “bishopruck” as we read in **Acts 1 (KJV):**20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopruck let another take.

And this Greek word, episkopē, is translated as “office of a bishop” in **1 Timothy 3 (KJV):**1 This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

The qualifications for the office of bishop are given in **1 Timothy 3 (KJV):**1 This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

And in **Titus 1 (KJV):**5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: 6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; 8 But a lover of

hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; 9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

In verse 5 Paul commands Titus to ordain elders in every city, and in verse seven he then gives the qualifications of a bishop. Elders were the bishops in the early Church as we also know from Paul's farewell address to the elders in Ephesus in **Acts 20 (KJV):17** And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. 18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, 19 Serving the LORD with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: 20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. 25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. 26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. 28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

The elders of the church at Ephesus in verse 17 above were the overseers in verse 28 above. They were to feed the church of God. That is, they were to teach them the doctrine, or Biblical truth in the word of God. Paul continues his address in **Acts 20 (KJV):29** For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. 32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. 33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. 34 Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. 35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. 36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.

Paul was an example to the flock, who labored to support the weak, and he told the Ephesus elders to be the same. This is his command in **Philippians 3 (ESV):17** Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

And in **2 Thessalonians 3 (KJV):7** For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; 8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: 9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

And this was Peter's exhortation in **1 Peter 5 (KJV):1** The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

We see that the position of elder was not a ministry gift, but an office or position in a local church. Peter was an apostle by ministry gift, but a fellow elder in the local church. It is important to know this difference.

Now in order to understand further the difference between a ministry gift, and an office, let us look at the word "office" which is found in the following scriptures in the King James Version of the New Testament.

The first instance is in **Romans 11 (KJV):13** For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

The word translated "office" in the Greek in this verse is *διακονία* (pronounced diakonia). Vine says that the correct meaning of this word is "ministry". **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine,**

**Vol. II, page 132.** This is how it is translated in the English Standard Version: **Romans 11 (ESV):13** Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry:

The second instance is in **Romans 12 (KJV):4** For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

The word for “office” in this verse in the Greek is *πρᾶξις* (pronounced *praxis*), and means “a doing, deed (akin to *prasso*, to do or practice), also denotes an acting or function, translated “office” in Romans 12:4.”

**Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. II, page 132.** This word is translated “function” in the English Standard Version: **Romans 12 (ESV):4** For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

We can see by the context that the word “function” is the correct meaning intended here. Each member of the body has a function, not an office, because of their particular place in the body, just as an eye or a foot has a function.

The next instance is in **1 Timothy 3 (KJV):1** This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

The word for “office of a bishop” in the Greek is *ἐπισκοπή* (pronounced *episkopē*). Vine says that this word should be translated as “oversership”, **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. II, page 132.** The English Standard Version is as in **1 Timothy 3 (ESV):1** The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.

The word “office” fits in this context. The next instance is in **1 Timothy 3 (KJV):10** And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

The word for deacon is *διακονέω* (pronounced *diakoneō*), and is a verb in the present, active, imperative tense, and is translated “let them use the office of a deacon” in the King James Version. However, a more correct translation is “let them serve as deacons” in the English Standard Version as in **1 Timothy 3 (ESV):10** And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless.

The next instance is in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):5** And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

The word in the Greek for “office of the priesthood” is *ἱερατεία* (pronounced *hierateia*), and “denotes a priest’s office, Luke 1:9, Heb. 7:5”, **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. II, page 132.**

This word is translated “priestly office” in the English Standard Version in **Hebrews 7 (ESV):5** And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to take tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, though these also are descended from Abraham.

The idea is that the overseer, or elder, could take his position in the local church if he fulfilled certain requirements listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and in Titus 1:5-9. The overseer, or elder, was to watch over the flock, as a shepherd would his sheep. The overseer, or elder, was a different position than the deacon. The word “deacon” is mentioned in **1 Timothy 3 (KJV):8** Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

The word in the Greek for “deacons” is *διάκονος* (pronounced *diakonos*), and “primarily denotes a servant, whether as doing servile work, or as an attendant rendering free service, without particular reference to its character.” **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. I, page 272.**

The qualifications for a deacon are given in **1 Timothy 3 (KJV):8** Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. 11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

These positions of overseer, or elder, and deacon, relate to the organization of the local church as Paul reveals in **1 Timothy 3 (KJV):14** These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

A deacon would function as a helper of the overseer, the elder. The overseer, or elder, and the deacon were not body ministries. That is, the overseer, or elder, was responsible for a portion of the flock, or lot, as it were, of a local church. His overseership did not go outside the boundary of the local church. What happened in the early church was that the overseers of the local churches assumed the place and position of the apostles, who had authority over the churches which they had planted. When the apostles had been martyred or passed on, they no longer recognized the apostolic ministry. Today, we see that the position of overseer has been elevated to bishop, which, in today's understanding of the word, means an overseer of many churches in a given area. This is a substitute for apostolic ministry. This began very early on in the Church, and was also recognized by Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons.

Our vision of the Church must be as revealed in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):14** That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

What we must recognize today, if the Church is ever to fulfill Ephesians 4:14-15, is that all believers are members individually of Christ's body, and as such, they have a definite calling on their lives to fulfill a certain function, not an office, in the body of Christ. This is what Paul is saying in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):12** For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

When we believed in Jesus Christ and we were born again, we were sovereignly baptized into the body of Christ by the Spirit of God. We were each baptized into a particular place as we continue to read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):14** For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

And God made the decision as to where that place in the body would be for each one as we continue in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):18** But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. 24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.

It is by God's design that we are where we are in the body of Christ. The reason is so that there would be no division in the body as we continue to read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):25** That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

The word "particular" in the Greek is μέρος (pronounced meros), and means "a part, portion, of the whole, e.g. John 13:8". **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. III, page 159.**

This is the word for "part" in **John 13 (KJV):8** Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

The idea is that when we are born again, we are given a part, or place, in the body of Christ. This part is a function that will build up the body of Christ. As we well know, all the members of our body are necessary for the proper functioning of our bodies. As our bodies grow to adulthood, they are more able to perform their tasks. So it is in Christ. As we grow in grace and knowledge in Christ, we are more able to perform the God

given tasks He has appointed for us as in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Now with this understanding of the Biblical truth, or doctrine, about overseers, or elders, or bishops, and deacons, and ministry gifts, we are now equipped to look at how tradition is holding back the body of Christ from growing into the full measure of the stature of Christ.



## How Tradition Has Affected Us

Today we only hear about ministries such as pastor, evangelist, and teacher. Yet the teaching in the word of God is clear. The ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor teacher, exhorter, shewer of mercy, and giver are to continue until we all come in the unity of the faith, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of fullness of Christ. What holds us back from entering into all that the New Covenant in the word of God says that we have?

When we look at tradition in the past, we see that it has put a stranglehold on the truth in the word of God. That is, once a tradition has taken hold, it begins to create a blind spot over part of the word of God. Over time, this tradition will pave the way for other traditions to take hold, and create other blind spots. Before you know it, we will be unable to make sense of the word of God because of all of the blind spots.

For example, let's see what had happened to the Jews in Jesus' time as we read in **Matthew 15 (KJV)**: 1 Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, 2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. 3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? 4 For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. 5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; 6 And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

The Jews had come to value the tradition of the elders more than the word of God. Their tradition itself had become the word of God, and in effect had taken its place. It is evident that they did not know the word of God, for had they known what the word of God said, they would not have allowed their tradition to make the commandment of God of none effect. Not only so, but they had become hypocrites as we continue in **Matthew 15 (KJV)**: 7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. 9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Tradition is nothing more than the commandments of men. The commandments of men are just that, the commandments of men. They are not inspired by God. And tradition will actually make us blind if we value it more than the word of God, which is inspired by God. Jesus explains the simplicity of the matter as we continue in **Matthew 15 (KJV)**: 10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: 11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. 12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? 13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. 14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

They had allowed their tradition to make them blind. While Jesus was not so concerned about offending people as He was about telling the truth, the Jews wouldn't take the risk of faith that was required in telling the people the truth. We continue to read in **Matthew 15 (KJV)**: 15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. 16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? 17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? 18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: 20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

The disciples themselves had been blinded in part by the tradition of the elders. But at least they were open to the truth, and willing to take the risk of faith and let Jesus explain it to them so they could be set free.

Now some would say, well, that was the Jews' problem. Today we are in the Church. However, unfortunately, history proves that we in the Church are no different than the Jews. We have the old Adamic sin nature in our flesh just as they had, and we are capable of falling back on tradition just as they did. Let's look at a common tradition in the Church today for an example.

## The Easter Tradition

For example, let us look at the well-known tradition of Easter. This tradition, without exception in most of the churches today, still holds that Jesus died on “Good Friday”, even though we know that Jesus spoke as in **Matthew 12 (KJV):**38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. 42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

Jesus clearly said that, just as Jonah was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall He, the Son of man, be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. On another occasion, we see that Jesus again refers to this sign in **Matthew 16 (KJV):**1 The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. 2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. 3 And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? 4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

Did Jesus really mean three days and three nights, or did He mean something else? There is no doubt that the book of Jonah in the Old Testament specifically says that Jonah was in the belly of the great fish three days and three nights as we read in **Jonah 1 (KJV):**17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

If the Lord was to be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish, then why do we say that Jesus was crucified and died on “Good Friday”? If Jesus was crucified on Friday, and He rose from the dead on Sunday, He was only in the heart of the earth one full night, that of Friday, and one full day, that of Saturday, and possibly part of another day on Friday, and part of another night on Saturday. How come no one in the Church today seems to question this?

There are reasons why people might think that Jesus was crucified and died on Friday, for we read in **Mark 15 (NIV):**33 At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. 34 And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). 35 When some of those standing near heard this, they said, “Listen, he's calling Elijah.” 36 Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. “Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down,” he said. 37 With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

It was the preparation day on which he died as we continue in **Mark 15 (NIV):**42 It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, 43 Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body.

Apparently Jesus died on the day before the Sabbath. If all we had to read were these verses, we would have concluded that the Sabbath spoken of was the end of the week Sabbath which would have been Friday evening, according to the Jewish calendar, since Saturday was the seventh day of the Jewish calendar, making Sunday the first day. Now according to the Jewish calendar, the day began at sunset and ended the following sunset. This is why Joseph of Arimathea went for the body of Jesus before the evening came in Mark 15:42 so that the body of Jesus would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath which began at dusk, or the beginning of the evening.

The issue becomes clearer when we read that Jesus also rose from the dead on the day after the Sabbath as we read in **Mark 16 (KJV):**1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. 2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

Very early in the morning of the first day of the week would be Sunday by the Jewish calendar, since Saturday was the “end of the week” Sabbath in the Jewish calendar.

Now we then see that Jesus has already risen from the dead as we continue reading in **Mark 16 (KJV):**3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? 4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. 5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. 6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. 7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. 8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid.

Now Mark then summarizes, and tells us that Jesus rose on this first day of the week as we continue in **Mark 16 (KJV):**9 Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

Now we turn to Matthew who adds still more details as we begin reading in **Matthew 28 (NIV):**1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. 2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. 5 The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

In verse 1, the word “dawn” in the Greek is ἐπιφώσκω (Pronounced epiphōskō), and means “to grow light (epi, upon, phos, light)”, **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. I, page 270.**

So, if Jesus died on the preparation day, the day before the Sabbath, and He rose from the dead the day after the Sabbath, Friday would have been the day that Jesus would have had to die on, according to the Jewish calendar, if the Sabbath mentioned is the end of the week Sabbath. Since the end of the week Sabbath began Friday evening, and ended Saturday evening, Jesus would then have been in the earth Friday night, and Saturday day, and possibly part of Saturday night. This hardly equates to the three days and nights that Jonah spent in the belly of the great fish. There must be another explanation if we are to rightly divide the word of God.

## The Real Easter

Jesus promised that if we would seek, we will find. Now in order for Jesus to have been in the tomb three days and three nights, according to the Jewish calendar He must have been crucified on Wednesday during the day, having eaten the Passover meal on Tuesday evening. The day the Passover was killed and eaten was called the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath. This particular Sabbath was not “the end of the week” Sabbath as the early Church believed, which was mostly Gentile. This Sabbath was the Sabbath that began the feast of Unleavened Bread, as we shall see. For Jesus to have been in the heart of the earth three days and three nights, this particular Sabbath had to have begun on Wednesday evening, and lasted until Thursday evening in the Jewish calendar. This particular Sabbath was the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasted seven days and began and ended with a Sabbath as we shall see. This is why they had to get the bodies off the crosses and into the tombs before sundown.

Now because the Gentiles were not familiar with the feasts of the Jews, it is understandable that they would confuse the Sabbath which began the Feast of Unleavened Bread with “the end of the week” Sabbath. What is hard to understand is why this confusion has persisted to this present day in so many churches.

Now if Jesus was crucified on Wednesday, then He would have been in the tomb, according to the Jewish calendar, for three nights, that is on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights, and for three days, on Thursday, and Friday, and Saturday days. He then would have risen sometime after sundown on Saturday, which would be technically be Sunday, or the first day of the week, according to the Jewish calendar.

It is such a simple solution, yet it is things like this that divide the Church. With the tradition of Easter, we see how traditions that have been held for centuries, and which were held by the early church, can be the result of a simple misperception. Now to see the reality of this simple solution, let us look closer at what the Jews would have known that the Gentiles did not know.

## The Feasts

So, what did the Jews know that the Gentiles did not know? For one, the Jews knew about the feasts of the Lord that were to be celebrated at regular intervals every year. The feasts of the Lord were instituted when Israel left Egypt. The first feast to be celebrated by the Israelites was the Passover as we begin reading in **Exodus 12 (KJV)**:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, 2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. 3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: 4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: 6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. 8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. 10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

We see here that the Passover meal was to be eaten at night in verse 8 above, and that the Lord killed the first born of the Egyptians during the night at midnight as we read in **Exodus 12 (KJV)**:29 And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

So, the blood of the lamb had to be placed on the door posts by the Israelites before midnight of Passover in order for them to be spared.

Now this feast of the Passover was to be a remembrance of the deliverance of Israel from the slavery of Egypt as we continue to read in **Exodus 12 (KJV)**:11 And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD's passover. 12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. 14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.

Now there was another feast to be celebrated immediately following the Passover feast as we continue to read in **Exodus 12 (KJV)**:15 Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. 16 And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh

day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.

This feast, to be known as the feast of unleavened bread, was to be inaugurated with “an holy convocation”, that is, a Sabbath, when “no manner of work shall be done”. This Sabbath was to be on the first of the seven days, and then there was also a Sabbath on the seventh day of this feast. This feast, like the day of Passover, was also to be a reminder of the day when the Lord lead Israel out of Egypt as we continue to read in **Exodus 12 (KJV):**17 And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance forever. 18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. 19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. 20 Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.

Now the word of God explains the significance of these feasts. The lamb was the sacrifice of the Lord’s Passover when He passed over the houses of the children of Israel, and He killed the first born of the Egyptians in order to deliver Israel from the hands of their oppressors. And the feast of unleavened bread was a reminder that they left Egypt in haste, and did not have time to leaven their bread, but took it in their kneading troughs.

Moses then describes the celebration of the first Passover as we continue to read in **Exodus 12 (KJV):**21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. 22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. 23 For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. 24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever. 25 And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. 26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? 27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. 28 And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. 29 And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

Pharaoh could take no more and he called for Moses and Aaron as we continue to read in **Exodus 12 (KJV):**30 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead. 31 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. 32 Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also. 33 And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men. 34 And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. 35 And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: 36 And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians. 37 And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. 38 And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.

The feast of Unleavened Bread began the evening after the Passover as we continue to read in **Exodus 12 (KJV):**39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.

Now these feasts were commanded to be observed by all Israel so that they would remember the Lord, their deliverer, as we finish reading in **Exodus 12 (KJV)**:40 Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. 41 And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. 42 It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations. 43 And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: 44 But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. 45 A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. 46 In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof. 47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. 48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. 49 One law shall be to him that is home born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you. 50 Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. 51 And it came to pass the selfsame day, that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.

Now in order to see further that the feast of Unleavened Bread began after the Passover, we begin reading in Leviticus, chapter 23, as Moses first explains the celebration of the end of week Sabbath in **Leviticus 23 (KJV)**:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. 3 Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

We must keep in mind that in the Hebrew calendar, a new day started in the evening, or at dusk. This is because of their deference to **Genesis 1 (KJV)**:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

This phrase, "And the evening and the morning were the first day", is repeated for each of the six days in creation in Genesis, chapter one, in verses 8, 13, 19, 23, 31, and we then read in **Genesis 2 (KJV)**:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

So, in the Hebrew calendar, a new day started in the evening, or at dusk, and the Sabbath of rest was the seventh day.

Moses then tells us the exact timing of the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread as we continue in **Leviticus 23 (KJV)**:4 These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. 5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover. 6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. 7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. 8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

So, the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on the fifteenth day of the same month. This is also repeated in **Numbers 28 (KJV)**:16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD. 17 And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten. 18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein: 19 But ye shall offer a sacrifice made by fire for a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first year: they shall be unto you without blemish: 20 And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil: three tenth deals shall ye offer for a bullock, and two tenth deals for a ram; 21 A several tenth deal shalt thou offer for every lamb, throughout the seven lambs: 22 And one goat for a sin offering, to make an atonement for you. 23 Ye shall offer these beside the burnt offering in the morning, which is for a continual burnt offering. 24 After

this manner ye shall offer daily, throughout the seven days, the meat of the sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD: it shall be offered beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering. 25 And on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.

And this is again restated in **Deuteronomy 16 (KJV)**: 1 Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. 2 Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there. 3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life. 4 And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there anything of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning. 5 Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee: 6 But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. 7 And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents. 8 Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work therein.

In this passage in Deuteronomy we see why the two feasts might have been thought to be combined, since in verse 3 Moses tells them that no unleavened bread is to be eaten with the Passover sacrifice. Nevertheless, the passage in Leviticus 23:4-8 and the passage in Numbers 28:16-25 make it clear that the feast of the Passover was celebrated on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the first month, Abib, or Nissan as it was later called, and the feast of Unleavened Bread began on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, Abib, and lasted seven days.

So, we know that there was a Sabbath in the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread, on the fifteenth of the month, and a Sabbath in the last day of the feast of Unleavened Bread. And the feast of Unleavened Bread began the day after the Passover, on the fifteenth of the month, in the evening. Thus, the day after the Passover was a Sabbath, but it was not necessarily the end of the week Sabbath. That would only happen if the 14<sup>th</sup> of the first month fell on a Friday.

Moses then continues to explain the feasts as we then read in **Leviticus 23 (KJV)**: 9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: 11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. 12 And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. 13 And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin. 14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 15 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: 16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.

These feasts were not just random celebrations thought up by the Lord, but they were types or foreshadows of what was to come. Jesus was the “wave sheaf” as it were, or the first fruits of the resurrection from the dead, for he rose on “the morrow after the Sabbath” as in verse 11 and verse 15 above. Christ is also the firstfruits, as it is mentioned in verse 10 above, and as we read in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV)**: 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

And in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV)**: 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Then also we know that the Holy Spirit was poured out on Pentecost, which would have been 50 days after Christ's resurrection on “the morrow after the Sabbath”, as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV)**: 1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound

from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Now we continue to read about the feast of Pentecost in **Leviticus 23 (KJV)**:17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals; they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD. 18 And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD. 19 Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings. 20 And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. 21 And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations. 22 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God. 23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Then the feast of trumpets is mentioned as we continue to read in **Leviticus 23 (KJV)**:24 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. 25 Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

Moses also details the day of atonement as we continue in **Leviticus 23 (KJV)**:26 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 27 Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 28 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. 29 For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. 30 And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. 31 Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

We read over and over again that a Sabbath of rest was a day where no manner of work was to be done.

Then the feast of tabernacles in **Leviticus 23 (KJV)**:33 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. 35 On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. 36 Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. 37 These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, everything upon his day: 38 Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD.

Then the feast of booths in **Leviticus 23 (KJV)**:39 Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. 40 And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. 41 And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: 43 That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. 44 And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.



## Christ Our Passover

The apostle Paul says that Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us as we read in **1 Corinthians 5 (KJV):6** Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Now how is this so? Christ was our substitute, just as the lamb was the substitute for the firstborn of the Israelites. That is, Christ was the one sacrifice that was necessary for the Lord to pass over our sin for all time and eternity as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):24** For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Christ was once offered to bear our sins. This is written repeatedly so that we get it, as we continue to read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):12** But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;

And in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):9** Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

Only one perfect offering for sin forever is necessary as we continue in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):14** For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. 15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

Our sins have been remitted, and there is no more offering necessary for sin, as we continue to read in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):18** Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. 19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Now we know that the Passover feast was eaten in the evening, or the beginning of the 14th day of the first month, and that the 14th day ended at dusk the next day, as it says in **Leviticus 23 (KJV):4** These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. 5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover.

So, Jesus ate the passover meal with His disciples in the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, and in the next morning of the fourteenth day of the first month He was crucified and died at 3 PM, as we shall see. Therefore, He is our passover, sacrificed for us as Paul says.

## Jesus to Be Raised the Third Day

Now we know that Jesus said that He would be killed and raised again the third day in **Matthew 16 (KJV):21** From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

And again in **Matthew 17 (KJV):23** And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

And again in **Matthew 20 (KJV):19** And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

And this was well known to those who killed him as we read in **Matthew 27 (KJV):64** Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

We read this also in **Mark 9 (KJV):31** For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

And again in **Mark 10 (KJV):34** And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

And in Luke also we read as in **Luke 9 (KJV):22** Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

And again in **Luke 13 (KJV):32** And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

And again in **Luke 18 (KJV):33** And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

And again in **Luke 24 (KJV):7** Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

And two of the disciples mention this in **Luke 24 (KJV):21** But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done.

And again Jesus spoke as in **Luke 24 (KJV):46** And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

And Matthew mentions the sign of the prophet Jonah as he records Jesus' words in **Matthew 12 (KJV):38** Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. 42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

And Luke also mentions this sign as he records Jesus' words in **Luke 11 (KJV):29** And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. 30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. 31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. 32 The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

Who would ever be so bold as to claim that Jonah was really only in the belly of the whale two nights, and part of three days? But that is what is claimed by those who insist that Jesus died on Friday, and rose from the dead on Sunday morning. So there is a problem with this interpretation. We must look for a solution in the word of God.

## The Preparation Day

Now in Matthew, we read as in **Matthew 26 (KJV):17** Now on the first *day* of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?”

In, **The Inter-linear Greek-English New Testament**, we read the following:

**Greek:** Τῇ δὲ πρώτῃ τῶν ἀζύμων προσῆλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ τῷ Ἰησοῦ λέγοντες  
Tay de protay tone adzumon proselthon hoy mathetai tow Yesou legontes (pronunciation)  
Now on the first (day) of unleavened bread approached the disciples to Jesus saying

Ποῦ θέλεις ἐτοιμάσωμέν σοι φαγεῖν τὸ πάσχα  
poo thalais hetoimasomen soy phagein to paska (Greek Pronunciation)  
Where wiltest thou we may prepare for thee to eat the Passover.

Notice that the word “day” is not in the Greek text, but is inserted by the translators, but not without warrant. The word for day in the Greek is ἡμέρα (pronounced hēmera). An example of this word is found in **Matthew 26 (KJV):29** But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that **day** when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Since the feasts of the Passover and Unleavened Bread were consecutive in time, they were almost thought to be one feast. Nevertheless, as we saw in Leviticus 23:5-6, the Passover actually began on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the first month, Nissan in the Jewish calendar, corresponding to our month of April, and the feast of Unleavened Bread began on the 15<sup>th</sup>. This means that the day after the Passover was a Sabbath, since the first day and the last day of the feast of Unleavened Bread were Sabbaths.

Again we read in **Mark 14 (KJV):12** And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? 13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. 14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? 15 And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. 16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. 17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. 18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

And again we read in **Luke 22 (KJV):7** Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. 8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. 9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? 10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. 11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? 12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. 13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. 14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. 15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Now we see that the Passover was also called the preparation day as we read in **John 19 (KJV):30** When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. 31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

The preparation day to the Jews was the day before a Sabbath. The Sabbath was “an high day” because it was not the regular end of the week Sabbath, but the beginning of the feast of Unleavened Bread, which was a

Sabbath according to the law of Moses.

We continue to read in **John 19 (KJV):40** Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. 42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Now we shall soon see that there were two Sabbaths in the Gospel accounts. The next event was the order to secure the grave as we then read in **Matthew 27 (KJV):64** Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first."

## The Gospel Accounts

The Gospel accounts concerning Jesus' death on the cross begin in Matthew, chapter 26, and in Mark, chapter 14, and in Luke, chapter 22, and in John, chapter 13. We will now try to combine the accounts to show the sequence of events as they occurred in the crucifixion of Jesus.

Matthew begins his account two days before the Passover as we read in **Matthew 26 (KJV):1** And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, 2 Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. 3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. 5 But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

The leaders of the Jews were already conspiring to kill Jesus. Matthew continues his account in **Matthew 26 (KJV):6** Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, 7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. 8 But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? 9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. 10 When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me. 11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. 12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. 13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. 14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. 16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

We see that Jesus knew He was about to die in verse 12 above for He refers to His burial. This same account in essence is repeated in Mark as we begin reading in **Mark 14 (KJV):1** After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. 2 But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people. 3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. 4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? 5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. 6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on me. 7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. 8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. 9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her. 10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. 11 And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

Luke also begins his account in a similar way. We note that the meal was prepared during the daytime, and eaten in the evening which would be the beginning of the Passover feast day by the Hebrew calendar. And

we know that Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples as His last meal. We continue reading in **Luke 22 (KJV):1** Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

It seems that it was the Jewish custom of the day to lump both feasts together, and call it the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as we see in **Mark 14 (KJV):12** And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? 13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. 14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? 15 And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. 16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. 17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

They killed the Passover lamb during the day, but the actual feast of Passover did not begin until the evening, at dusk, which would be the fourteenth of the month of Abib in the Hebrew calendar, or Nissan as the month was later called as we have read in Nehemiah 2:1. This month is April in our current calendar.

We continue to read Luke's account in **Luke 22 (KJV):2** And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. 3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. 4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. 5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. 6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

The day finally comes as we continue to read in **Luke 22 (KJV):7** Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. 8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. 9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? 10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. 11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? 12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. 13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

Matthew also records this as we continue in **Matthew 26 (KJV):17** Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? 18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. 19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

## The Supper

Matthew then records that they sat down to eat in the evening as we continue in **Matthew 26 (KJV):20** Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. 21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. 22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? 23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. 24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born. 25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

Luke also speaks of the "hour" as we continue in **Luke 22 (KJV):14** And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

That this hour was at supper time is also stated in John 13:2 as we read in context in **John 13 (KJV):1** Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

We continue to read in **Luke 22 (KJV)**:15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. 17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: 18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. 19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. 20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. 21 But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. 22 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! 23 And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

So, after supper, the Last Supper was also celebrated, that is, Communion, as we also continue to read in **Matthew 26 (KJV)**:26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. 30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Now before they went out into the mount of Olives, apparently there was a discussion during or after supper about who was the greatest among them. Jesus then explains that the greatest among them is the one who serves as we continue in **Luke 22 (KJV)**:24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. 25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. 26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. 27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth. 28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. 29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

## After Supper

Now Matthew does not include the foot washing and the teaching of Jesus which occurred immediately after the Last Supper was celebrated. But John does. John records more than the other three Gospels about what happened immediately after supper had ended as we continue to read in **John 13 (KJV)**:2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; 3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; 4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. 5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. 6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. 11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. 12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

John also adds more about the betrayal of Judas as we continue to read in **John 13 (KJV)**:18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me

hath lifted up his heel against me. 19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. 20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. 22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. 23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. 25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? 26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. 27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. 28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. 29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. 30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

### **Peter's Denial Predicted**

Now John records that it was night in verse 30 above when Judas left to go to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. John then records a long teaching by Jesus from John 13:31 through John 18:1, and in it he records Peter's denial as we continue in **John 13 (KJV):**31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. 33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. 36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. 37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. 38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

Now we note that Matthew leaves out the foot washing of Jesus, and also His discourse that John records beginning above in John 13:31 through John 18:1. In the order of Matthew's words, it is after the Last Supper was celebrated that they sang a hymn and left for the mount of Olives. It seems that, sometime afterwards, Jesus again spoke of Peter's upcoming denial, whereas in John's account, they are still in the upper room when Jesus first prophesies of Peter's denial. However, in Matthew's narrative of these events, he adds that Jesus speaks of all the disciples being scattered as we continue to read in **Matthew 26 (KJV):**30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. 31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. 32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. 33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. 34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

We read this also in Mark's account. First, we read that Mark records Judas' betrayal, and then the celebration of the last supper in **Mark 14 (KJV):**17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. 18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. 19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? And another said, Is it I? 20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. 21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born. 22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. 23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. 24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is

shed for many. 25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

Then, just as Matthew, Mark records that they sang a hymn, and afterwards Jesus speaks of the sheep being scattered, and Peter's denial as we continue in **Mark 14 (KJV):**26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. 27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. 28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. 29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. 30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. 31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

It seems that Jesus spoke of Peter's denial twice. Luke's record is in line with John, as we see that Peter's denial is in the upper room, as we continue to read there also in **Luke 22 (KJV):**31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. 34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. 36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. 37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. 38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

It was after the above discourse that Luke records them leaving for the mount of Olives as we continue to read in **Luke 22 (KJV):**39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. 40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. 41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, 42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. 43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. 45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, 46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

The hour must have been late for we see the apostles falling asleep.

## **In the Garden**

Matthew also records the events in the garden as we continue to read in **Matthew 26 (KJV):**36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. 40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. 42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. 43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. 44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

And Mark also records the events in the garden as we continue in **Mark 14 (KJV):**32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. 33 And he



taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; 34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. 35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. 37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Coudest not thou watch one hour? 38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. 39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. 40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him. 41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

## Jesus' Betrayal

Now Matthew records the next events as follows as we continue to read in **Matthew 26 (KJV)**: 47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. 48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. 49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus and took him. 51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. 52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. 53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? 55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. 56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled. 57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. 58 But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

And Mark also records as follows as we continue in **Mark 14 (KJV)**: 43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. 45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him. 46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him. 47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. 48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. 50 And they all forsook him, and fled. 51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: 52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked. 53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. 54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

And also in Luke, we read of His betrayal as we continue to read in **Luke 22 (KJV)**: 47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. 48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? 49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? 50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. 51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him. 52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords

and staves? 53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. 54 Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

And John tells us that, after Jesus' prayer recorded in John, chapter 17, while in the room where they celebrated the Passover, they then went to a garden over the brook Cedron as we begin reading in **John 18 (KJV)**: 1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. 2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. 3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. 7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. 8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: 9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. 10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

### **The Fulfillment of Peter's Denial of Jesus**

Now before we answer the question when did Jesus die, let us look at the events which led up to Jesus' crucifixion. First, we see that John does not include the prayer time in the garden in his narrative, but we see that Jesus is then taken to Annas as we continue in **John 18 (KJV)**: 12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, 13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. 14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. 15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. 16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

The "other disciple" spoken of is the apostle John. Peter and John are now eyewitnesses of the proceedings. John now records Peter's denial as well, as we continue to read in **John 18 (KJV)**: 17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. 18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself. 19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. 20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. 21 Why askest thou me? Ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. 22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? 23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? 24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. 26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? 27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

We see here that the prophecy of Jesus that Peter would betray Him three times before the cock crowed was fulfilled. So we know also by this that it is now early morning, and John also says it is early as we continue to read in **John 18 (KJV)**: 28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

Luke also records the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy that Peter would deny Him three times as we continue to read in **Luke 22 (KJV):**55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. 56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. 57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. 58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. 59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean. 60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. 61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

Matthew likewise records not only the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy that Peter would deny Him three times, but also the discussion Jesus had with the High Priest as we continue in **Matthew 26 (KJV):**59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; 60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, 61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. 62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? 63 But Jesus held his peace, And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. 64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. 66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. 67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, 68 Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee? 69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. 70 But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. 71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. 72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. 73 And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee. 74 Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. 75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

And Mark likewise records not only the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy that Peter would deny Him three times, but also some of the discussion Jesus had with the High Priest as we continue in **Mark 14 (KJV):**55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. 56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. 57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. 59 But neither so did their witness agree together. 60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? 61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? 64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. 65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. 66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: 67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. 68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. 69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. 70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. 71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of

whom ye speak. 72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

## **Pilate Condemns Jesus**

We now come to the condemnation of Jesus in the morning as we continue reading in **Matthew 27 (KJV)**: 1 When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: 2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. 3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. 5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. 6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. 7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. 8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. 9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; 10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me. 11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. 12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. 13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? 14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly.

Pilate then sought a way to release Jesus, but was too weak to carry it out as we continue in **Matthew 27 (KJV)**: 15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. 16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. 17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? 18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. 19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. 20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. 22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. 23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. 24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. 25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. 26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. 28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. 29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. 31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

Mark also records this event as we continue to read his account in **Mark 15 (KJV)**: 1 And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. 2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto them, Thou sayest it. 3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. 4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? Behold how many things they witness against thee. 5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marveled. 6 Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. 7 And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. 8 And

the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them. 9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. 11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. 12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? 13 And they cried out again, Crucify him. 14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him. 15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. 16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. 17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head, 18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! 19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him. 20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

We are getting closer to the truth. Luke also records that, during the night, Jesus was beaten as we continue to read in **Luke 22 (KJV)**:63 And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him. 64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee? 65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him. 66 And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, 67 Art thou the Christ? Tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: 68 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. 69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. 70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. 71 And they said, What need we any further witness? For we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

Luke also continues his account in **Luke 23 (KJV)**:1 And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. 3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it. 4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. 5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. 6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. 7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. 8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. 9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. 10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. 11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. 12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves. 13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, 14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: 15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. 16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him. 17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) 18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: 19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) 20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. 21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. 22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. 23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. 24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. 25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

And John also records this event as we continue to read in **John 18 (KJV)**:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. 29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What

accusation bring ye against this man? 30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. 31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: 32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. 33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? 34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? 35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? 36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. 38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all. 39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

Pilate then had Jesus scourged as we continue in **John 19 (KJV)**:1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. 2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, 3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him with their hands. 4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. 5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! 6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. 7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. 8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; 9 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? 11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. 12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

John then says that Jesus was condemned by Pilate on the preparation of the Passover about the sixth hour as we continue to read in **John 19 (KJV)**:13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

Again, the preparation of the Passover was another way of saying that the day of the Passover was the day before the Sabbath, which made the day of the Passover a preparation day.

### **At What Hour was Jesus Crucified?**

And so, we must understand that the day before a Sabbath was called the preparation day. The Feast of Passover was on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the first month in the Jewish calendar, which began in the evening and continued to the evening of the following day. Unleavened bread was to be eaten with the Passover meal, but the Passover day itself was not a part of the feast of unleavened bread, nor was it a Sabbath. The prohibition against eating leavened bread on the Passover probably was the reason why the Jews referred to both feasts together as the feast of Unleavened Bread.

So, the Passover feast was to be celebrated on the fourteenth of Nissan, or April, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be celebrated beginning on the fifteenth of Nissan, or April, and it was to last for seven days, and was to begin and end with a Sabbath. Therefore, the Feast of the Passover could also be thought

of as the preparation day, since it was the day before the Sabbath that began the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is probably the context of what John says in **John 19 (KJV):14** And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

So, what did John mean by the “sixth hour” in verse 14 above? To answer this question, we must look at the context of what is written in all of the Gospels. We must look at the context of what is written, not what is tradition, to determine the answer to this question. And we must remember that the Jewish day began at dusk, or sundown, and ended at dusk or sundown the next day. But in Roman time, the day began at midnight. So, the sixth hour in Roman time would be 6 AM, while the sixth hour in Jewish time would be 12 noon since the daytime began at 6 AM for the Jews. We must determine which time is being used.

But first, we continue reading of Jesus’ condemnation in **John 19 (KJV):15** But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. 16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. 17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: 18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. 19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. 20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

Now Mark’s account of the same events mentioned above is as in **Mark 15 (KJV):1** And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. 2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto them, Thou sayest it. 3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. 4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? Behold how many things they witness against thee. 5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

Mark then places Jesus’ crucifixion at the 3rd hour as we read in **Mark 15 (KJV):21** And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross. 22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. 23 And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not. 24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. 25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

If the crucifixion occurred at the third hour in Mark, which would be 9 AM Jewish daytime, then how does John say that Jesus was before Pilate at the sixth hour? In Mark 15:1, Mark places the time that Jesus was before Pilate in the morning. John must be placing the time of Jesus’ condemnation by Pilate at 6 AM in the morning, using Roman time, because Mark places His crucifixion at the third hour, or 9 AM Jewish time.

Mark then also places the time of Jesus’ death at the ninth hour as we continue to read in **Mark 15 (KJV):26** And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. 27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. 28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. 29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, 30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross. 31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. 32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him. 33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. 36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. 37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

So, Jesus was on the cross for six hours, from the 3rd hour to the ninth hour in verse 34 above, and then He died at the ninth hour, that is, in Jewish daytime, 9 hours from 6 AM which would be 3 PM. Mark then records that Jesus was buried before sundown as we continue reading in **Mark 15 (KJV):38** And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. 39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him,

saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. 40 There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; 41 (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem. 42 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. 44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. 45 And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. 46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. 47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.

We notice that in verse 42, the words “when even was come” should be translated as “when even was coming”, for the word for “come” in the Greek is γενομένης (pronounced genomenes) which is a genitive, singular, feminine, aorist 2 participle in the Greek tense. The Greek participle indicates continuous action. The New International Version actually has it better as we read in **Mark 15 (NIV):42** It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached...

The scripture is telling us that Jesus died on the Preparation Day, the day before the Sabbath which began the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Sabbath began at sundown, so they were in a hurry to get Jesus in the tomb, in order to keep the Sabbath.

Now the account of Jesus’ death is also recorded in **John 19 (KJV):21** Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. 22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. 23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. 24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. 25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. 28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. 29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

Again, we see that Jesus died on the preparation day, and the Jews were concerned that the bodies would remain upon the cross on the Sabbath as we continue to read in **John 19 (KJV):31** The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. 32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: 34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. 35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

John was an eyewitness to these things. We continue with John’s record of the burial of Jesus in **John 19 (KJV):36** For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. 37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced. 38 And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. 39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. 40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden;



and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. 42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Again we see the Jews hurrying to get Jesus in the tomb lest they should be found working on the Sabbath.

Now Matthew adds still more details of Jesus' death as we continue to read in **Matthew 27 (KJV)**:32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. 33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, 34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. 35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 36 And sitting down they watched him there; 37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. 39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, 40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. 41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, 42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. 43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. 44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

In Luke we will see that one of the thieves actually repented. Now we continue in **Matthew 27 (KJV)**:45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. 48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. 49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. 50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. 51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; 52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. 54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. 55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: 56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children. 57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

In verse 57 we have the same issue as in Mark 15:42. Again the New International Version has a better translation as we read in **Matthew 27 (NIV)**:57 As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus.

As we continue, we again see that Jesus died on the preparation day in **Matthew 27 (KJV)**:58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. 59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. 61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre. 62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, 63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. 64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. 65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. 66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

Now we continue with Luke's account of Jesus' death in **Luke 23 (KJV)**:26 And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. 27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also

bewailed and lamented him. 28 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. 29 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. 30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. 31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? 32 And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. 33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. 34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. 35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. 36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, 37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. 38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. 44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. 45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. 46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. 47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. 48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. 49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things. 50 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counselor; and he was a good man, and a just: 51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. 53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. 54 And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. 55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. 56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.

Now again we see that the preparation day was the actual day that Jesus died, and they rested on the Sabbath which began the Feast of Unleavened Bread, “according to the commandment”.

### **When Was Jesus Raised from the Dead?**

To see when Jesus was raised, we begin reading in **Mark 16 (KJV):1** And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. 2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

In verse 1 we read, “And when the sabbath was past...” This could mislead us to think that the sabbath was the end of the week sabbath since no other sabbath is mentioned here. But since we know that the Jews celebrated the Passover just before the sabbath on the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread, we do not have to go down that rabbit trail.

Very early in the morning of the first day of the week would be Sunday by our calendar, since Saturday was the “end of the week” Sabbath in the Jewish calendar. And apparently Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome did not know that Nicodemus had already brought a ton of spices at Jesus’ burial as we read again in **John 19 (KJV):39** And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. 40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

We continue reading in **Mark 16 (KJV):3** And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? 4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. 5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. 6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. 7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. 8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid.

If Jesus was crucified on Friday, as Church tradition claims, then Jesus could only have been in the tomb one night, and parts of two days, because he rose from the dead on the first day of the week. This would make it impossible for Him to have fulfilled the type of the prophet Jonah who was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights. And Jesus Himself prophesied that He would fulfill this exact type. Is there another solution?

Now Mark then summarizes and tells us that Jesus rose on this first day of the week as we continue in **Mark 16 (KJV):9** Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

Apparently, Mary Magdalene got separated from Mary the mother of James and Salome, and became the first to see Jesus resurrected.

We continue reading in **Mark 16 (KJV):10** And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. 11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. 12 After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. 13 And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. 14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. 15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

We now turn to Luke and begin reading in **Luke 24 (KJV):1** Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

Now we know that the first day of the week in the Jewish calendar was the day after “the end of the week” Sabbath which would be our Sunday.

We continue reading in **Luke 24 (KJV):2** And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. 3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: 5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, 7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. 8 And they remembered his words, 9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. 10 It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

In verse 7 when Luke quotes the angel as saying, “The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again”, this could be part of the reason why the early church after the apostles had died, which was mostly Gentile and unfamiliar with the Jewish feasts, believed that Jesus was crucified on Friday. If Jesus was in the tomb on Friday, the Friday to Sunday would be technically three days, though not three full days, and still only two nights, but only one full night.

We continue reading in **Luke 24 (KJV):11** And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. 12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen

clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass. 13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

These two disciples were walking to Emmaus on the first day of the week, the resurrection day. We continue to read in **Luke 24 (KJV)**:14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. 17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? 18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? 19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: 20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. 22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; 23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. 24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. 25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. 28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. 29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. 30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

Jesus revealed Himself to these two disciples. They then shared this with the apostles as they left the same hour to Jerusalem in **Luke 24 (KJV)**:32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? 33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, 34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. 35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. 36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. 37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. 40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. 41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. 43 And he took it, and did eat before them.

We see here that Jesus proved Himself very much alive to the disciples. All His words were fulfilled as we continue to read in **Luke 24 (KJV)**:44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And ye are witnesses of these things. 49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high 50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. 51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: 53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Now we turn to Matthew who adds still more details as we begin reading in **Matthew 28 (NIV)**:1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. 2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the

tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. 5 The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

In Matthew 28:1 above, the word “dawn” in the Greek is ἐπιφώσκω (Pronounced epiphōskō), and means “to grow light (epi, upon, phos, light)”, **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Vol. I, page 270.**

We continue in **Matthew 28 (KJV)**:8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. 9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. 11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. 12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, 13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. 14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. 15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day. 16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew does not disagree with the other Gospels but simply adds more details. As we look at John's testimony, we see that it was still dark when Mary Magdalene went to the tomb as we begin reading in **John 20 (KJV)**:1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

John alone gives witness to what happened when Mary ran to tell Simon Peter as we continue to read John's testimony in **John 20 (KJV)**:2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. 3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. 4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. 5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. 6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, 7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. 8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. 9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

Isn't it interesting that Peter and the disciples still did not see the resurrection in the scriptures? Peter and John had to grow in grace and knowledge. And later, Peter knew the meaning of his own words in **2 Peter 3 (KJV)**:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.

We too must grow in grace and knowledge of the Scriptures. Now John gives the account of Mary's conversation with Jesus as we continue reading in **John 20 (KJV)**:11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, 12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. 14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Sometimes we think that Jesus is just the gardener, but if we would only look up! We continue in **John 20 (KJV):** 16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

Now Jesus had to first ascend to the Father before anyone on earth could touch Him. We continue to read in **John 20 (KJV):** 18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her. 19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. 20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. 21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: 23 Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. 24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. 26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. 27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. 28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. 29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Now Jesus had by this time ascended to the Father, and had come back to earth, for He now allowed Thomas and others to touch Him. John ends by recording in **John 20 (KJV):** 30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

It is by believing that we have life through His name. So, by these accounts we know that Jesus rose sometime after dusk on Saturday, which would have been the beginning of the first day of the week, or Sunday, according to the Jewish calendar. Exactly what hour he rose from the dead we are not told.

## So on What Day Did Jesus Die?

In order for Jesus to have been in the tomb three days and three nights, He must have been crucified on Wednesday, having eaten the Passover meal on Tuesday evening. The day the Passover was eaten began at dusk on the fourteenth day of April, and was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath which began the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This particular Sabbath was not “the end of the week” Sabbath as Church tradition has taught, but was the Sabbath that began the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For Jesus to have been in the heart of the earth three days and three nights, this particular Sabbath had to have begun on Wednesday evening, and lasted until Thursday evening in the Jewish calendar. This is why they had to get the bodies off the crosses and into the tombs before sundown on Wednesday, which was the beginning of the Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Now because the Gentiles were not familiar with the feasts of the Jews, it is understandable that they would confuse the Sabbath which began the Feast of Unleavened Bread with “the end of the week” Sabbath, and try to make it work. What is hard to understand is why this confusion has persisted to the present day in so many churches.

So, if Jesus was crucified on Wednesday, then He would have been in the tomb for three nights, that is, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights, and for three days, on Thursday, and Friday, and Saturday days, according to the Jewish calendar. He then would have risen sometime after sundown on Saturday, which would be Sunday, the first day of the week according to the Jewish calendar.

And this means that Jesus must have been crucified in a year when the 14th of Nissan fell on Tuesday

evening to Wednesday evening.

It is such a simple solution, yet it is things like this that divide the Church. We must be careful how we hear. With the tradition of Easter, we see how traditions that were held for centuries, and even by the early church, can be the result of a simple misperception. A careful reading of the Scriptures can set us free from these things.

## A Look at Church History

I believe that tradition has been, and is, a major obstacle to the Church finding the truth about the New Covenant, and therefore the true unity of the faith. If we could identify what is just tradition, and what is not according to Biblical truth, or doctrine based on the word of God, we could then let go of a lot of things that hold us back from true growth in Christ. The times we feel distant from God, and from each other, are a direct result of our not dealing with these things.

A look at the history of the early Church will help us see how traditions took hold in the early Church, and this will possibly make it easier for us to let them go.

Very early on in the history of the early Church there began to be a sacerdotal order in addition to the presbytery. Gradually this sacerdotal order began to take over the ministry of the Church which became more ritualistic in its practice. Philip Schaff, the noted Christian historian, states, “The idea and institution of a special priesthood, distinct from the body of the people, with the accompanying notion of sacrifice and altar, passed imperceptibly from Jewish and heathen reminiscences and analogies into the Christian church. The majority of Jewish converts adhered tenaciously to the Mosaic institutions and rites, and a considerable part never fully attained to the height of spiritual freedom proclaimed by Paul, or soon fell away from it. He opposed legalistic and ceremonial tendencies in Galatia and Corinth; and although sacerdotalism does not appear among the errors of his Judaizing opponents, the Levitical priesthood, with its three ranks of high priest, priest, and Levite, naturally furnished an analogy for the threefold ministry of bishop, priest, and deacon, and came to be regarded as typical of it. Still less could the Gentile Christians, as a body, at once emancipate themselves from their traditional notions of priesthood, altar, and sacrifice, on which their former religion was based. Whether we regard the change as an apostasy from a higher position attained, or as a reaction of old ideas never fully abandoned, the change is undeniable, and can be traced to the second century. The church could not long occupy the ideal height of the apostolic age, and as the pentecostal illumination passed away with the death of the apostles, the old reminiscences began to reassert themselves.” **History of the Church, Volume II, Clergy and Laity, page 123, Philip Schaff.**

And when we look at the writings of the second century, one name stands out far from the rest. Irenaeus, an early Church bishop in Lyons, France, lived between 120 and 202 A.D., approximately. We know Irenaeus was writing his third book in his five book series, *Against Heresies*, during the reign of Eleutherius, who was the bishop of Rome from approximately 174 to 189 A.D., because he refers to Eleutherius in his third book in the present tense. Now the writing of Irenaeus gives us a telescopic view into the thinking of the early Church. Irenaeus was defending the Church of his time against the Gnostic heresy. To combat this heresy, he quotes the Scripture frequently to try to support the traditions and practices, as well as the truth of the Church, in his day.

In his book, **Against Heresies, Book IV, Chapter 8, paragraph 3**, he asserts, “And all the apostles of the Lord are priests, who do inherit here neither lands nor houses, but serve God and the altar continually”.

Irenaeus argued that, because the Levites did not inherit lands or houses, but serve God and the altar continually, so likewise the apostles were priests because they did not inherit lands or houses. Irenaeus further asserts that the disciples had a “priesthood of the Lord”, again in **Against Heresies, Book IV, Chapter 8, paragraph 3**, where he states, “To His disciples He said, who had a priesthood of the Lord, to whom it was lawful when hungry to eat the ears of corn, For the workman is worthy of his meat.”

We note that the words “priesthood of the Lord” are, in the Latin, *Domini Leviticam substantiam*, which literally mean, “the Lord’s Levitical substance”. Irenaeus is asserting that, since the apostles were priests of the Lord, it was lawful for them to pluck and eat the ears of corn on the Sabbath.

Irenaeus then reasons in the same paragraph, “But who are they that have left father and mother, and have said adieu to all their neighbours, on account of the word of God and His covenant, unless the disciples of the Lord? Of whom again Moses says, “They shall have no inheritance, for the Lord Himself is their inheritance.”

Irenaeus was defending the Church in his time against the heresy of the Gnostics. As he did so in his writing, He searched the Scriptures to defend all the current practices and teaching of the Churches since he felt



that the apostles had given over their place of government to the bishops. And the bishops had, according to Irenaeus, received a certain gift of truth from the apostles, as he says in **Against Heresies, Book 4: Chapter XXVI, paragraph 2**, “Wherefore it is incumbent to obey the presbyters who are in the Church,—those who, as I have shown, possess the succession from the apostles; those who, together with the succession of the episcopate, have received the certain gift of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father”.

Irenaeus believed that this “certain gift of truth” was passed down through the succession of the bishops who could trace their appointment to an apostle. This teaching, known as “apostolic succession”, continues to this day in the Roman Catholic Church. But truth is not passed down by the laying on of hands. Truth is only acquired as we walk in the light of the word of God. We must be hearers and doers of His word, and not just hearers only. As we walk in the light of His word, and are taught by the Spirit, and by Spirit filled teachers, we grow in grace and knowledge.

Now in regards to the Church’s belief in a sacerdotal order in Irenaeus’ time, we know that there has been a change in the priesthood when Christ died and rose again, and became a great high priest after the order of Melchisedec as we read again in **Hebrews 7 (KJV):11** If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. 13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

The priesthood has been changed. The Levitical priesthood was only given under the Old Covenant. Jesus is now our great High Priest in heaven after the order of Melchisedec. And Jesus has an unchangeable priesthood because He ever lives to make intercession for us. And Jesus will only ever make one offering for sin, and that is the offering He made when He died on the cross for us. We now have no need of any other priesthood under the New Covenant.

Now, we also see Irenaeus’ reliance on tradition in fighting the Gnostic heresy in the following statement in **Against Heresies, Book 3: Chapter II, paragraph 2**, “But, again, when we refer them to that tradition which originates from the apostles, [and] which is preserved by means of the succession of presbyters in the Churches, they object to tradition, saying that they themselves are wiser not merely than the presbyters, but even than the apostles, because they have discovered the unadulterated truth. For [they maintain] that the apostles intermingled the things of the law with the words of the Saviour; and that not the apostles alone, but even the Lord Himself, spoke as at one time from the Demiurge, at another from the intermediate place, and yet again from the Pleroma, but that they themselves, indubitably, unsulliedly, and purely, have knowledge of the hidden mystery: this is, indeed, to blaspheme their Creator after a most impudent manner! It comes to this, therefore, that these men do now consent neither to Scripture nor to tradition.”

Now Irenaeus is fighting heresy, which is a noble task. And he is right to defend the Church in this regard against the Gnostics who were a heretical group in his time. But to assert that tradition “is preserved by means of the succession of presbyters in the Churches” is not totally relying on the word of God to defend the Church. In fact, he is making tradition equal in authority with the inspired word of God.

Many today hold that tradition is an inspired commentary on the word of God. Or they treat tradition as if it was almost the word of God, or even equal with the word of God. Once tradition has a foothold like this, it becomes greater than the word of God. This is what happened to the Jews in Jesus’ time. They held their tradition in greater esteem than the word of God, and their loyalty to the tradition of their elders caused them to break the commandments of God in order to keep their tradition. The word of God is inspired by God, unlike tradition which has no certain origin. Let us remember Jesus’ words in **Luke 6 (KJV):46** And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: 48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. 49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

We must hear His words, and do them to build our foundation on a rock.

## He Is the Rock

The Scriptures always refer to God Himself exclusively as the Rock. He is a God of truth as we read in **Deuteronomy 32 (KJV):4** He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

We need to remember the rock that gave us birth as we read in **Deuteronomy 32 (KJV):18** Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

Our Rock is mighty and is for us as we read in **Deuteronomy 32 (KJV):30** How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up? **31** For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

He is the Rock in whom we trust as in **Deuteronomy 32 (KJV):37** And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted,

There is no rock like our God as we read in **1 Samuel 2 (KJV):2** There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

And in **1 Samuel 22 (KJV):32** For who is God, save the Lord? and who is a rock, save our God?

And in **2 Samuel 22 (KJV):2** And he said, The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; **3** The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

And in **2 Samuel 22 (KJV):47** The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.

And He is the Rock of Israel as we read in **2 Samuel 23 (KJV):3** The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

And He is my rock in **Psalms 18 (KJV):2** The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

Who is a rock but our God as in **Psalms 18 (KJV):31** For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God?

Let Him be exalted as in **Psalms 18 (KJV):46** The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

Let us cry to our rock as in **Psalms 28 (KJV):1** Unto thee will I cry, O Lord my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

He is my rock and my fortress as in **Psalms 31 (KJV):3** For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.

He is always on for me as in **Psalms 42 (KJV):9** I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

He is the rock that is higher than I as in **Psalms 61 (KJV):2** From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

He is the rock of my strength as in **Psalms 62(KJV):7** In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

He is my rock and my redeemer as in **Psalms 78 (KJV):35** And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.

He is the rock of my salvation as in **Psalms 89 (KJV):26** He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

He is my rock as in **Psalms 92 (KJV):15** To shew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

And in **Psalms 94 (KJV):22** But the Lord is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

He is the rock of our salvation as in **Psalms 95 (KJV):1** O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

He is the stone the builders rejected in **Psalm 118 (KJV):22** The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

He is the stone of stumbling and rock of offence in **Isaiah 8 (KJV):14** And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And the rock of our strength in **Isaiah 17 (KJV):10** Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips:

He is the foundation stone, the corner stone, and the one we believe in as in **Isaiah 28 (KJV):16** Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

We look to Him as in **Isaiah 51 (KJV):1** Harken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.

With God as our rock we are told by Jesus to take no thought for our life in **Matthew 6 (KJV):25** Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Nor for clothes as in **Matthew 6 (KJV):28** And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

Nor for tomorrow as in **Matthew 6 (KJV):34** Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

And not even for what we shall speak when we are being persecuted as in **Matthew 10 (KJV):19** But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

Instead we are to rejoice always as Paul encourages in **Philippians 4 (ESV):4** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

And finally, think on things which are true as in **Philippians 4 (ESV):8** Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

And we read in **Isaiah 26 (KJV):3** Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Why? Because the Lord is my rock.

## He That Is Spiritual

Paul warns the Corinthians in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):1** And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

Paul differentiates the Corinthians between those who are spiritual and those who are carnal. He says that the Corinthians were as carnal, even as babes in Christ. That is, the Corinthians were not growing spiritually. They were not walking as spiritual men and women, but as new believers, that is, as babes in Christ. Paul then explains what he means as we continue in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):2** I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. **3** For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? **4** For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? **5** Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? **6** I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. **7** So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

We see here that Paul is not talking about those who are saved and those who are unsaved, but he is speaking to believers, although they are believers who are walking as mere babes in Christ in their experience. Paul then describes their carnality. There was envying, and strife, and divisions among them. With these attributes in their lives, they were walking as mere men, and not deferring to the Spirit of God indwelling them. The Corinthians did have the Spirit of God indwelling them as Paul reveals in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):16** Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

But the Corinthians were walking as if they didn't know that the Spirit of God was in them. After they had believed in Jesus Christ, they were saved and born again. The Spirit of God was now the life of their spirits. They were new men and women in Christ. They now had a choice to walk in the Spirit, and be led by the Spirit, or they could continue walking in their flesh, as if the Spirit of God was not in them.

Now Paul also says that they came behind in no gift as we read in context in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):4** I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; **5** That in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; **6** Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: **7** So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: **8** Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The testimony of Christ was confirmed in them, since they came behind in no gift in verse 7 above. And they were exercising spiritual gifts, and being zealous of them as Paul reveals in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV):12** Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

So, Paul then gives them an order for how they should exercise spiritual gifts as we continue in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV):13** Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret. **14** For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

Paul explains that when I speak in a tongue, my spirit prays, and my understanding is unfruitful. That is, the one who prays in a tongue does not know what he is saying, and so he doesn't understand what he is saying. The reason we pray in tongues when we are alone is to edify or build ourselves up in the Spirit as Paul explains in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV):4** He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

This is why he must pray that he may interpret, if he is in a group, so that others may be edified. Paul then encourages us to pray, not only in tongues, but with our own words, that is, with our understanding as we continue in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV):15** What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. **16** Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of

thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? 17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. 18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

The Corinthians were speaking in tongues, otherwise Paul would not say that he was speaking in tongues more than all of them were. And Paul says in verse 17 that they were giving thanks very well when they spoke in tongues, but the problem was that the “other is not edified”. That is, if they prayed in tongues in private, they would give thanks very well, but in the presence of others, they should pray for an interpretation if they speak with tongues so that the other could be edified. The one who speaks in a tongue, even though he does not understand what he is saying, edifies himself because he is praying by the Spirit of God, who is giving him the words to speak in his spirit. Paul explains in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV)**: 1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. 2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. 3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. 4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. 5 I would that ye all spake with tongues but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

So, the Corinthians were praying in tongues in front of others when there was no one to interpret, and they were out of order in their operation of spiritual gifts. We continue to read in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV)**: 19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. 20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. 21 In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. 22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

Paul explains that the reason they are out of order when they speak in tongues in the church without one to interpret is because of the “unlearned” or “unbelievers” who may be present in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV)**: 23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

The word in the Greek for “unlearned” is *ἰδιώτης* (pronounced *idiōtēs*). This word means “unlearned” or “unversed” in something. That is, the “unlearned” or “unversed” have no knowledge of spiritual gifts. That is, they have never exercised the gifts of the Spirit, so they have no experiential knowledge of them.

Paul then reveals the correct order of spiritual gifts as we continue in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV)**: 24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: 25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. 26 How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. 27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. 29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. 30 If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. 31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. 32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. 33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

That is, the prophet has control over when he prophesies, for his spirit is subject to his own will in verse 32. So Paul is saying that the Spirit of God will not move us to prophesy when another is already prophesying. Paul then encourages the women not to interrupt the meetings in **1 Corinthians 14 (KJV)**: 34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. 35 And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. 36 What? Came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only? 37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. 38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. 39 Wherefore,

brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. 40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

We must note that Paul is not saying that women cannot exercise spiritual gifts in the Church, for we read in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):**4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. 5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

It is probable that Paul is addressing the custom of the culture of his time, as we read in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):**11 Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. 12 For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God. 13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

It makes no difference to us in our day whether a woman prays to God uncovered. The point is, women have ministries just like men have ministries although a woman's authority in the Church is not the same as a man's.

So Paul is not commanding us to not use the gifts of the Spirit, but to exercise them decently and in order. All operation of spiritual gifts should be done according to Paul's instructions in the word of God. And the mere operation of spiritual gifts does not make one spiritual for Paul says in **1 Corinthians 13 (KJV):**1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

We can exercise the gifts of the Spirit, but if we do so without love, it doesn't profit us anything. So the gifts of the Spirit exercised without the fruit of the Spirit do not profit us. We must exercise the gifts of the Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit. This will build us up, and those who we minister to will get the full benefit of our ministry.

## How Do We Become Spiritual?

We must understand that the one who is just born again is a babe in Christ. This one is in need of the pure milk of the word as Peter reveals in **1 Peter 2 (KJV):**1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

It is by the sincere milk of the word that we grow spiritually. We must let the word of Christ richly dwell within us as in **Colossians 3 (KJV):**16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Again, Peter commands in **2 Peter 3 (KJV):**18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.

We are not to remain as children, but we are to grow up in Him in all things as Paul reveals in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):**14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

The apostle John reveals that there are stages of spiritual growth in Christ as we read in **1 John 2 (KJV):**12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

A child in the Lord is one who rejoices in sins forgiven. This refers to the experience of new converts. The young man in the Lord has grown in grace and knowledge to the point where he knows his authority over the wicked one, and Satan has no foothold on him, and he has overcome the wicked one. The father in the Lord knows by experience Him who is from the beginning. That is, he walks with the Lord daily, and even moment by moment, and is dependent on the Lord for direction in his life. He knows Him who is from the beginning and recognizes His authority over all creation, and His sovereignty in all areas of life, before time and to eternity. These are the stages of spiritual experience, and they are not speaking of natural development.

We grow in the Lord as we feed on the word of God. At first, we are as children who must get the milk of the word of God. We must just read it to become familiar with it. Then, as we are taught the Biblical truth, or the doctrine of the word of God, we grow up to know our authority in Christ, and we overcome the wicked one. This is what is referred to in **Hebrews 6 (KJV):1** Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

These Biblical truths are the elementary principles of the word of God. If we stay here, we grow dull of hearing as we read in **Hebrews 5 (KJV):11** Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. 12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. As we continue growing in the Lord, we grow up in Him in all things to be mothers and fathers in the Lord.

Strong meat refers to the doctrines of the word of God. These are the themes derived from the Bible itself. So how do we grow? We must have spiritual nourishment. This we get from reading and studying the word of God. The word of God cleanses us as Jesus reveals in **John 15 (KJV):3** Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

We are cleansed as we read or are taught the word of God in verse 3 above, and in **John 17 (KJV):17** Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

We must abide in Him to bear fruit as we continue to read in **John 15 (KJV):4** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

As we read and study the word of God, we receive light. The Spirit of God illuminates our minds with the truth in the word of God. But it is the word of God rightly divided that will renew our minds. This was Paul's encouragement to Timothy in **2 Timothy 2 (KJV):15** Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The words "rightly dividing" are a translation of the Greek word ὀρθοτομέω (pronounced orthotomeō), and means literally "cutting straight." Wuest Words Studies says that this may refer to "the stone mason's art of cutting stones fair and straight to fit into their places in a building." **Words Studies in the Greek New Testament, Kenneth S. Wuest, Volume II, pager 135.**

When we study the word of God rightly divided, we then become more aware of sin in our life which we need to confess in order to be cleansed. This is what the apostle John is teaching us in **1 John 1 (KJV):6** If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 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 cleanseth us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

As we receive the light of the word of God in reading or studying, we them must walk in that light. The Christian life is one of continually turning to the Lord as we read in **Isaiah 30 (KJV):15** For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

As our conscience is cleansed by the word of God, we have a new standard. As we receive new light in the word of God, we can surrender our old ways of thinking, our old perceptions, our hurt feelings. As we are progressively cleansed in this way by walking in the light of His word, we grow in grace and knowledge, and our sense of the presence of God in our lives grows also. This process of sanctification is also described by Paul in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):**21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

As we then become aware of sin in our lives, we must confess it and turn to the Lord in that area so that we do not repeat the same failure. We are told to “put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts”. All the old ways will eventually be put off as we are faithful to yield to the Lord, and allow Him to cleanse us. Paul then gives examples of what to put off in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):**25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

It is not that we cannot feel anger, but that we do not react in anger. We are free to feel all of our feelings, for God made us to have feelings. It is what we do with our feelings that may be a problem. As we walk in the light of His word, we are progressively cleansed from our past sinful way of living. We learn a new and living way. This is a gradual process of growth. There are no 90 day wonders, but as we are faithful, He is more faithful. As we read and study His word, and walk in the light of it, we will become doers of the word, and not hearers only as James encourages in **James 1 (KJV):**22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

The word itself will change us as we surrender to it. And we must present ourselves a living sacrifice as Paul encourages in **Romans 12 (KJV):**1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

By surrendering our bodies as living sacrifices, holy, and acceptable to God, we will not be conformed to this world, and we will be transformed by the renewing of our mind. This renewal in our mind takes place as we receive the truth in the word of God for ourselves. As we surrender to the word of God, in as much as we know, He renews our minds and empowers us to prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

As we are taught in the word of God, we can also enter into the operation of the gifts of the Spirit. This will benefit us and those we minister to. With the knowledge of the word of God rightly divided, we will feel safe to walk in the Spirit, and to be led by the Spirit. In this way we will become spiritually minded as Paul describes in **Romans 8 (KJV):**5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

When we receive Christ, we receive the Spirit of God, being born again of the Spirit. This is what Paul describes as Christ in you as we continue to read in **Romans 8 (KJV):**10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.



When we are born again, the Spirit is the life principle of our spirit. This insures our resurrection as we continue to read in **Romans 8 (KJV):**11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Because the Spirit of God is the life principle of our spirit when we are born again of the Spirit, we have power over our flesh to be led by the Spirit as we continue to read in **Romans 8 (KJV):**14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

## God's Wisdom

The things of God are outside the box of our natural mind or understanding as Paul reveals in **1 Corinthians 2 (KJV):**1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

The word “perfect” in verse 6 in the Greek is τέλειος (pronounced teleios), and “signifies having reached its end (telos), finished, complete, perfect”. **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine, Volume 3, page 173-174.** The idea is that Paul speaks wisdom among those who are mature, who can take “strong meat” as we see in **Hebrews 5 (KJV):**14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

The words “full age” are a translation of the same Greek word τέλειος (pronounced teleios) as that used in 1 Corinthians 2:6, and which is there translated as “perfect”.

Paul then explains that he that is spiritual understands the things of God, because he or she has the Spirit of God who enables us to understand as we continue in **1 Corinthians 2 (KJV):**7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

The reason the things of God must revealed to us by His Spirit is because they are His thoughts, just as we have our own thoughts as we continue to read in **1 Corinthians 2 (KJV):**11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

The natural mind, unaided by the Spirit of God, cannot understand Biblical truth. Neither can the carnal believer. This is why we have so many divisions among us. It is because of our carnality. It is the one who is

spiritual, that is, who has surrendered his or her life to the Spirit of God, who can understand the wisdom of God, and spiritual things.

Let us put off our former worldliness, and fellowship with the world, and let us live courageously for the Lord, walking in the Spirit of truth as in **John 8 (KJV):31** Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

We must abide in Him, for without Him we can do nothing as in **John 15 (KJV):4** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

## In Conclusion

First, we looked at what the Bible says about covenants. It is important to know what was added by the Lord in each covenant, and what has been fulfilled, in order to enter fully into the freedom of the New Covenant, and experience its abounding grace.

Looking at the time of the gospels, we saw that Jesus preached and taught in a way that prepared His disciples to make the transition from the Old Covenant of the law to the New Covenant. He gives us a glimpse of a new and living way, and of life as it is supposed to be lived in the New Covenant.

After we studied the accomplishments of Jesus' death on the cross, we see that we have been justified and given a standing as righteous ones who are now called saints, or holy or sanctified ones because of what Jesus has done for us. God has made us accepted in the beloved through Jesus Christ.

There is then only one doorway into the New Covenant, and that is Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. And He has inaugurated for us a new and living way, not of striving to be saved or to keep ourselves saved, but of the rest that comes by surrender to Him moment by moment, and day by day, as we walk in the light of His word.

The apostles and early church disciples had to grapple with the place of the law in the New Covenant. The place of the law in the New Covenant, and just as it was in the Old Covenant, is only to lead us to Christ. Once we are in Christ, the law cannot condemn us because of our new birth by the Spirit of God, and our standing as righteous ones before the Lord. No one shall now condemn the ones the Lord has justified, for if God is for us and has justified us, who shall condemn us?

Now as we grow in grace and knowledge of His word, we become aware of His purpose for our individuality. Being members of His body, and having been set in His body where it pleased Him, we have a function in His body that fits our individuality. This function in His body relates to how we are expected by Him to serve Him and others, and it will relate to the type of ministry we are to perform.

The rest of service is not a striving to build a kingdom of our own, but a humble yielding to the Spirit of God in allowing Him to work through us, and do the works He Himself has ordained for us to do. As we serve God and others in whatever He puts before us, we will find His will for our lives, and enter into the blessing of the rest of the inheritance He has planned for us.

We must be as the Psalmist wrote in **Psalm 119 (KJV):9** Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

It is the truth of the word that sanctifies us as Jesus spoke in **John 17 (KJV):17** Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

It is the truth in the word of God that cleanses us and sets us free. Therefore, it is the truth that will unite us.

We must yield ourselves as servants of the Lord, and let His words abide in us as we read in **John 8 (KJV):31** Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; **32** And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

We must continue in the word that we have received in order to grow in grace and knowledge. We do not have to fear whether or not we will understand the word of God. Jesus' promise is that we will know the truth if we continue in His word, surrendering our lives to Him, and we will be made free in this process.

Let us rely upon the Lord, our rock, and trust in Him and not in man. As we let go of what is just tradition, we will experience the freedom of the word of God, and the joy and rest of the Lord, who rejoices over us with singing as we read in **Zephaniah 3 (KJV):17** The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

The Lord our God in the midst of us is mighty. Let us do all things for His glory.